

BOUNDLESS

**SECRETS TO REALISING AND
ROCKING YOUR HIDDEN POTENTIALS.**

RAHINA IDRIS

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*This book is dedicated to
My mother, Hannah, for her love and support always.*

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Introduction

“Honey, where would you like to have dinner this evening?”
It was a lovely day and I was with my husband. We were going out on a dinner date; I was all dolled up and ready to spend quality time with my love.

“Oh, anywhere is fine,” I answered absentmindedly, putting on my earrings.

He was not impressed. “Tell me where you would like to go and we’ll go there.”

I looked at him, a little bit confused. “Anywhere is fine,” I repeated. He frowned a bit. “Honey, just tell me where you want to eat!”

By now I was getting irritated. “Why do you like asking me where I want to go every time? Just choose a place, and I’ll be fine with it.”

“It’s not about me but you. I want you to choose where you want to go and eat today.”

Before long this had turned into an argument. I didn’t know why he kept asking where I wanted to go since he had always chosen a restaurant before now. “Honey, wherever you choose is fine with me,” I sighed.

He paused and looked me up thoroughly. “You know why I ask all the time? It’s because I have noticed over the years that you always like to pass on the responsibility for decision-making to others. I’m doing

this not because I don't know where I want to go out to eat but because I want you to dig inside yourself and see that you are always looking to others for answers to your own questions. You are constantly seeking people to tell you what to do.”

His words unsettled me quite a bit, and after our dinner that night, I took some time to reflect on them. I concluded that he was right and that I needed to make some changes in my life. That was one of the significant turning points in my life.

Determined to be intentional and honest with myself, I reflectively analysed my journey as the baby of my family- large in size, rooted in tradition and culture, as well as loud in fun and interactions. Energy could be effusive and tempers often let loose, but only when ‘Baba’ was not in sight. And as far as fulsome energies went, my Dad did immortalise himself in us. He could laugh, play, and be stern all in one day.

All these traits of childhood were necessary to leave no one un-elevated. Nonetheless, in an environment where cultural hierarchies were in no short supply, many among us stood a little chance of not being reshaped, subsumed or sociologically arrested by the impulses of dominant and influential folks; the price of which could mimic many things but cultural.

Like many large families- the debate of who struggled more in the face of biological and sociological competition is often downplayed- the impact these had on me personally, and sometimes to the detriment of my own self-belief, was that I ignored my strength and hid behind the symptoms.

The competition and its symptoms, I must admit, played their role in shaping my behaviour relative to the pampered child I was. In my teens, I struggled with my self-esteem. Though, I had so much ambition,

my actions and inactions constantly fought the person I was meant to be or become. These ultimately created limits and boundaries for growth and experiential learning.

As far as learning went, I remember as an eleventh grader my school introduced a news reading session at the school assembly. Randomly picked, a student was selected to research and present news items every week. Always excited about analysing the performance of fellow students as the weeks progressed- I soon experienced my moment of unease. My description of reading the news to the entire school was at first terrifying, then it became excruciating. So many things crossed my mind: the fear of what people would think, the fear of not being good enough, the fear of being judged. This was my first real experience of speaking in public, which stayed with me long after that.

Thinking back, it was easy to analyse everything to the students whom I played with, laughed with, and disciplined when needed but whom I found difficult to engage or face intellectually. Not because I didn't have the capacity to do so but rather my self-confidence was inadequate.

I gradually started finding ways to manage these fears years later when my purpose kept on pushing me even when the I can't bell still rang in my ears.

How many times have you told yourself you cannot achieve a particular goal? Then you attended one event, listened to a radio programme, had a chat with someone, had a dream, or even a wonderful meal, and you found yourself rethinking your decision? Suddenly, you wake up from your slumber and get back to the real world of action.

The real world out there is harsh and unforgiving, but the good thing is you can simplify it, if you are determined to succeed. We deal

with life's complexities without giving ourselves a break, without allowing ourselves to breathe; yet we blame it on life. Life isn't the problem; you are the problem.

I am so glad you have this book in your hands right now. It has been something I have always wanted to do. As much as possible I wish the ideas I share in it would impact lives. Speaking and writing have always been a secret passion for me, and I am thrilled to share that dream with you in the publication of this book.

The whole idea for this book is to help people who are struggling with low self-esteem and battered self-confidence deal with and overcome them. I wish to help the ones who are trying to find themselves so that they can live the kind of life that they really want.

There are so many out there who are battling with one crisis or the other. It could be psychological trauma; it could be physical or emotional trauma that has held them back for so long. Often, they don't believe in themselves, constantly plagued with a feeling that there is so much to do, yet they can't seem to achieve anything. So, this book was written to help them unlock that fire that is within them.

I believe that beyond coaching, my clients should have a reference point - something this book will provide. There is someone out there who feels lonely, drowned in their thoughts of how to get out and by reading this, they will find reasons to change the way they see life and make something good out of it.

So, welcome to my world.

It is hardly possible to build anything if frustration, bitterness, and a mood of helplessness prevail

~ **Lech Walesa**

Helpless

Life can become dismal when you discover your potential but lack the resources to go for your dreams. When you have so much fire burning inside of you but lack what you require or the power to set yourself free and go on to be the person you know you should be.

I got to that point in my life a few years ago. There was so much inside of me, yet I couldn't muster any productive momentum the out of the abundance, only sitting and gazing at my needs and desire to chase my dreams. My confidence level was shy of lofty heights, from the littlest of things to the biggest of issues. I remember one lovely summer in London: I had such heaviness in my heart. I was running some errands, hopping on a bus from Brent Cross Shopping Centre and sitting on the lower deck. The bus was full. As it moved along it felt like everyone was staring at me, although I knew no one among the other passengers. When I got to my stop I couldn't disembark; I sat there laden with the burden in my heart. I sat, paralysed by a strange fear, fighting the feeling until we got to the last stop. I had to take another bus back to my

destination before I finally found the courage to get off and continue with my errands.

This episodic feeling had played out a number of times in that period of my life. I would lose myself only to find me losing myself again. I never did quite understand the feeling of 'losing oneself only to find losing oneself again' until I began to dig deep and find answers from within me. And that set me free.

When you battle with these intense emotions they can so overwhelm you that you find yourself doing things you ordinarily wouldn't do. Sometimes you are completely irritated by the emotions but powerless to take control of them. Your mind continually plays these games, which you can quickly lose.

Are you at that point in your life where you feel you have so much to offer but your inner demons are holding you back? The good news is you are not alone - a lot of people go through these phases, which could be as a result of so many factors. Some of these factors are explained below:

THE ENVIRONMENT

Individuals are born with different energy types and levels. Some are positively infectious, others can be negative and uninspiring, while quite a few are neutral. This is because we are born a certain way, but sometimes various factors invariably shape us into something we are not and may not even desire. This could be a dilemma occasioned by environmental factors which include family orientation, abuse, instability, and poverty. These factors can contribute towards changing individuals and their outlook on life. They become opposites of who they are meant to be - from having so much confidence to totally lacking in it. This

affects their bearing, as they lose track of who they are or where they are going in life.

This reminds me of a man I once met in a market in Abuja. I went to buy fabrics, and as I was bargaining with the shop assistant, I happened to catch snippets of a conversation happening outside the shop. I paid close attention and saw a young man standing with a wheelbarrow and waiting for customers so that he could carry their shopping to their cars. He looked scruffy in his tattered clothes; clearly, he looked like someone struggling. But he spoke excellent English with a distinct accent. This man sounded like someone who could do very well as a newscaster, for he really spoke better than a lot of graduates I had met around.

I asked him if he went to school and he said he was a dropout. I couldn't help but ask where he learnt to speak so well; and he said that everything in life was determination. I couldn't agree more. He had turned into a person of interest in the market; someone people engaged with so that they could hear him speak while they listened in awe and admiration. He had talent, but the environment he found himself limited him, and he was not able to grow beyond the circus.

The environment has a massive impact on who you become. The people with whom you spend most of your time affect your behaviour. The saying, 'Show me your friends and I will tell you who you are'; and another famous saying, 'Birds of a feather flock together', are perfect examples of how our environment and the people we relate with can shape whom we eventually become.

ABUSE

There is so much abuse in the world - from physical molestation to emotional trauma; from psychological to sexual violence. No one is safe from these predators; children and adults can be abused in one form or the other.

Some children are so deeply scarred that they cannot even disclose their pain to their parents or an adult - they would rather wallow in it and manage it to the best of their ability. They start losing trust in people and eventually in themselves. This can lead to deep emotional trauma, which they would not recover from, and which would ultimately follow them into adulthood, unless they seek help.

Children are happy creatures, and sometimes in the course of their growing up, they can miss something vital. That is why parents need to engage their children and inspire trust in them. Let your children know that you are their best friend, and most importantly, when they eventually share their pain with you, try not to react in a way that will make them stop coming to you. Give your children a secure, loving environment, please; so that even when they are hurt, they can still come to you to seek help in solving their problems.

Sadly, even adults in trauma tend to behave like children. A lot of times they go through it alone, unwilling to seek help for fear of the unknown or loss of security. Generally, trauma or abuse can affect the growth pattern of both adults and children.

CULTURAL BELIEFS

In Africa, our various cultures are at the centre of all that we do. There

are lots of limiting beliefs that hold people back from their dreams, and these are more common with women because of the pervasive patriarchal system we operate. Happily, this is gradually changing, and our people are beginning to realise they need not allow cultural beliefs to stop them from achieving their goals.

The above points are factors hindering people from actualising their dreams; but getting out of these situations can be daunting and challenging. In my career as a life coach, I have received a lot of messages and had discussions with many people who find it very difficult to express themselves in public. I believe some of that have to do with orientation. In some cultures, children are not allowed to talk in the midst of adults; children are not allowed to look an adult in the eye; and these become a part of them as they grow up. Even when they outgrow that stage, it becomes effortful to grow out of these ingrained habits.

Have you ever felt helpless? That feeling of wanting to do more but lacking the courage to do so? You stand by watching others live a fulfilled life, and you wonder why, why, oh, why? Why can't I do the same things? Why can't I achieve the same results? Why does life have to be so complicated? These questions keep whirling endlessly in your mind. You wonder how you can be free, how you can be delivered, how you can get out of yourself and be who you want to be. It is tough out there, and without a mind willing to take risks, it becomes hard to compete, hard to grow, hard to get the things you want in life.

You wake up every day feeling helpless because you have goals you would want to achieve, which for now are only a figment of your imagination and will continue to be until you set yourself free. Your mind handicaps you and stops you from taking the necessary steps that will lead to fulfilment - how painful and sad that could be. You mask your

pain daily and forge on as if everything is perfect - you live every day wishing you could be someone else, hoping you could achieve the things you dream about, and you wake up the next day and repeat the cycle.

You get angry at your friends who try to give you advice because you feel they don't know how it feels to be you; therefore, they should not tell you what to do. It is funny how someone else can identify the power you have in you, but you cannot see it. That is why it is imperative to have people around you who would say it to you as it is; people who will stop at nothing to point out to you when you are going in the wrong direction. The choice would remain yours, whether to take advice and run with it or to ignore it and stay put in agony longer than necessary.

Dear friend, that helpless feeling is real and can be overwhelming. However, nobody said living life would be easy. It would be best if you fought for what you want, and that fight will be the fight of your life. In the next chapters, I will share my tips on how to fight and fight well.