

**Made for**  
**MORE**

**How I Graduated With a First Class  
and How You Can Too**

**EMMANUEL OWOYEMI**

Made for More: How I Graduated With a First Class and  
How You Can Too

Emmanuel Owoyemi

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Made for More: How I Graduated With a First Class and  
How You Can Too

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# Dedication

To God, my source of strength, wisdom and life.

To my father, whose example as a writer and mentor has lit the path before me.

# Appreciation

First and foremost, I want to thank my wife. After more than a year of struggling to complete this book, you gave me the motivation I needed to finally bring it to life. Thank you for creating the right environment, for the insights we shared, and for your unwavering support in every way. This book would not exist without you.

I am deeply grateful to my parents. To my father, your example as the author of five books has been a guiding light. Thank you for being a mentor, for instilling the values that make success attainable, and for showing me the way. To my mother, thank you for your constant prayers, encouragement, and steadfast support.

To my siblings: Sister Taiwo, Sister Tope, and David, thank you for being a reliable support system and a source of strength.

To my mentors, thank you for your wisdom, guidance, and belief in me. Your words and example have shaped my journey and continue to inspire me to reach higher.

And to my mentees, thank you for trusting me enough to listen, apply, and put in the work. Seeing your results is one of my greatest joys, and it reminds me that these principles truly work.

# Preface

I still remember sitting in class and wondering why some students worked harder than anyone else yet had little to show for it. They stayed up late, filled their notes, and gave their best, but when the results came, disappointment followed. I could not ignore it. Why do some people put in so much effort and still struggle, while others rise almost effortlessly?

That question drove me to search for answers. Along the way, I discovered something powerful: success is not about luck or background, it is about principles. And principles always work, no matter who applies them.

While at university, I began sharing what I was learning with those coming behind me. I told them the strategies

I used, the mistakes I made, and how I recovered. Soon, I began to see transformation. Students who were on a second class lower moved up to a second class upper. Some advanced from a second class upper to graduating with a first class. Their testimonies proved to me that these principles were not just mine; they could be reproduced in anyone's life.

Later, when I founded Stellar Oasis, an academic mentorship programme, the results only confirmed this truth. Some participants went on to achieve a perfect 5.00 GPA. Others who once struggled began to excel beyond their expectations. Every success story reinforced the same reality: with the right principles, results can be replicated anywhere, by anyone.

That is why I wrote this book. I did not want these lessons to remain confined to mentoring sessions or personal conversations. I wanted to create something every student could access, a guide you can hold in your hands, filled with truths that can change your academic journey and your life.

This book is more than theory. It is my story: the times I rose, the times I fell, and the ways I found strength to rise again. Inside, you will learn about identity, discipline, resilience, time, relationships, and faith in God.

You will see how ordinary students, through consistent principles, became extraordinary.

I believe you picked up this book because, deep down, you know you are made for more. And you are. My prayer is that as you read, your eyes will be opened, your confidence will grow, and you will begin to walk in the success God has already written into your design.

Welcome to a new chapter of your life. Let us begin.

# Success in Your DNA

## **Everyone Wants to Make It**

When I was at the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), I was part of a programme called Catch Them Young (CTY). Every new session, we reached out to freshers to welcome them, give them directions, and help them settle into campus life.

One question I often asked them was, 'What do you plan to achieve here? What CGPA are you aiming for?' Their answers were strikingly similar. 'I want to graduate with a 5.0.' 'I am aiming for a first class.' At the very least, most said, 'I want to finish with a strong 2:1.'

I never met anyone who said, 'I just want to fail.' Not one person said, 'Let me just manage a third class.' Everyone came in with fire in their eyes, determined to do well. That experience taught me something important: nobody truly desires failure. Deep down, every human being carries the hunger for success.

### **Different Faces of the Same Hunger**

On campus, that hunger shows up in many ways. For some, success is academic excellence. They come in with a clear picture of graduating with honours. For others, it is leadership. From 100 level, they contest for course representative. By 200 level, they are running for faculty positions. Before long, they are aiming for the students' union. I still remember in my 300 level, campaigning for my friend Banky when he ran for Welfare Director. We put in energy, spread his name everywhere, and when he finally won, the celebration felt like a national victory.

Others chased success through business. Students sold clothes in hostels, baked snacks, styled hair, or built small online ventures. What started as a side hustle often became the foundation for bigger things. Personally, many of the skills I rely on today started for me in those university years, when I too was hungry to learn and grow.

There were also those who found success in passion. Musicians, dancers, footballers, actors — they began performing at small hostel shows, fellowships, and campus events. For some, that was the path that later opened doors beyond the university gates. The faces of success were different, but the hunger was the same.

### **Beyond the Campus Walls**

This hunger is not unique to students. Step outside campus, and you will see it everywhere. A market woman in Lagos wakes up at dawn, determined to make enough sales to send her children to better schools.

A young man in Sokoto with no steady electricity still dreams of becoming a doctor. A girl in Port Harcourt imagines building a fashion brand that will make her known across Africa.

Wherever you look, you will find the same thing: people striving, hustling, and pushing because deep down, nobody wants to live a wasted life.

## **A Reflection**

Looking back, I see how true this was for me as well. I was not different from the freshers I met during CTY. I also came in with goals, determination, and a desire to succeed. The difference is that my view of success kept expanding.

At first, it was about grades. Later, it was about building skills and serving in leadership. Over time, it became about impact — how what I was learning and doing could influence others. That shift shaped the way I saw myself and the path I began to walk.

One thing remained constant though: the fire. The hunger to succeed never left.

## **The Universal Truth**

This is the truth I want you to hold on to as you begin this book: every human being desires success.

The details may differ. For one person, it is a first class. For another, it is politics. For another, it is business or creative talent. But the fire is the same. Nobody plans to fail. Everyone is reaching for something more. That fire inside you is not random. It is a sign that success is part of your design.

## **Student Takeaways**

- Nobody truly desires failure.
- The hunger for success shows itself in different ways: academics, politics, business, or creative talent.
- Success-hunger is not limited by background; it is a universal drive.
- That inner fire is proof that you were designed for more.

## **Closing Line**

Every human being carries the seed of success. The hunger you feel is proof that you are made for more. But desire alone does not guarantee the outcome. In the next chapter, we will begin to explore why success is not an instant event but a journey you must walk with patience and purpose.

# Success as a Journey

I entered FUTA as a direct entry student in 200 level. By 300 level, I had a roommate who had joined the university from 100 level. He was one of those students who arrived with high hopes. His WAEC and JAMB results were excellent, and he was confident he would graduate with a 5.0.

In 100 level, he performed extremely well. Most of the courses felt like a continuation of what he had already mastered in secondary school. By the end of that first year, his GPA was 4.9. With results like that, it was easy for him to believe the journey ahead would be smooth.

But everything changed in 200 level. The courses became tougher, the workload heavier, and the system

more demanding. The same level of effort that had worked in 100 level could no longer carry him through. By the time I was sharing a room with him in 300 level, I could see the frustration. His grades had started to slip, and his motivation was fading. The dream of graduating with a first class was replaced with simply hoping for a 2:1.

By 400 level, the pressure only increased. Without mentorship, effective time management, or resilience, he could not recover fully. In the end, he graduated with a 2:1.

That experience made something clear to me: success is never guaranteed by how you start. It is not about a single year or a single victory. It is a journey that demands consistency at every stage.

### **Why the Journey Mindset Matters**

If you see success as a one-off event, you will become impatient. You will expect quick results and feel discouraged when progress does not come quickly. But when you see it as a journey, you prepare your mind for growth, setbacks, and even delays.

Every challenge becomes training, not punishment. Every delay becomes preparation. Every step, whether

forward or backward, is shaping you into someone who can handle the greater responsibilities ahead.

### **Milestones Are Not the Destination**

Think about travelling from Abuja to Lagos. On that road, you pass through Lokoja, Benin and Ore. Each of those towns shows you are making progress, but none of them is Lagos.

It is the same with life. Admission into university, passing your first exams, taking up a leadership role, or even graduating; these are all milestones. They are checkpoints. They are not the destination.

The danger is stopping at one checkpoint and thinking you have arrived, or hitting a rough stretch and believing the journey is over. Both the smooth roads and the difficult ones are part of the trip.

### **Why Many Give Up Too Soon**

In my time at university, I met many freshers who declared boldly, 'I must graduate with a first class.' Yet by the second year, many had lost momentum. Some were distracted by freedom. Others faced family or financial struggles. Some underestimated how much more demanding the work would become.

The common thread was this: they expected a straight,

easy road. When they met challenges, they became discouraged. Some abandoned their dreams completely.

The truth is that success is never meant to be instant. It has always been a journey.

### **Your Journey is Yours Alone**

Your path will never look exactly like someone else's. Some of your mates may run faster, others may seem slower. Yet your road has been designed for your lessons, your strengths and your opportunities.

That is why comparison is pointless. It is like judging a fish by how well it climbs a tree. The only person you should strive to surpass is the version of yourself from yesterday.

## **Student Takeaways**

- Success is not instant; it is a journey.
- The fire of 100 level must be sustained beyond the early excitement.
- Milestones are proof of progress, not the final destination.
- Challenges and setbacks are part of the journey, not evidence of failure.
- Your path is uniquely yours, and comparison is a waste of energy.

## **Closing Line**

Do not rush the process. Do not despise the process. Success is not about a single shining moment; it is about consistency over time.

In the next chapter, we will uncover something even deeper: before you can truly walk your journey well, you must first settle a vital question: Who am I?

# Success as an Identity

## **The Labels We Wear**

There was a day in class when a lecturer asked a question. He called on one of my classmates, but the young man quickly shook his head. 'It is not people like us that can answer this question,' he said, pointing towards me and some of my friends.

I froze for a moment. Why would someone already decide that brilliance belonged to a certain group, but not to him?

And he was not the only one. I had classmates who would say, 'B is for people like us. C is for us. A is for them.' They wore these labels as if they were written on

their foreheads. It was not their intelligence that was the problem, it was the identity they had accepted.

**Here is the truth: how you see yourself shapes how you act, and how you act shapes the results you get. Success begins as an identity long before it becomes a result.**

### **The Row of A's**

I still remember my final year in a course taught by Dr Opatola. He came to class with our results before they were officially released. Row by row, he began calling out our grades.

I usually sat with my close friends, and when he got to our row, the results came like a rhythm: 'A... A... A... A.' My classmates were not surprised. They had already labelled that row 'the row of A's.'

But that day, a student who was not part of our circle happened to sit in the row. When her result was announced, she had a B. The lecturer was immediately surprised and asked, "Why do you have a B when everyone else here has an A?"

That moment struck me and taught me that results follow identity. By then, excellence had become part of how we carried ourselves, how we studied, how we encouraged one another. The A's were simply the fruit of an identity already planted.

### **Identity Before Results**

Identity is like a seed. For instance, a mango seed can only produce mangoes. In the same way, what you believe about yourself eventually produces your results. If you wear the identity of 'average', you will act average. If you embrace the identity of 'excellent', your actions will begin to align with that truth.

### **True Identity is Found Only in God**

No man, no self-help book, and no motivational seminar can tell you more about who you are than the One who made you.

A product's purpose is best understood by its manufacturer, not by other customers, and not by trial and error. Likewise, your true identity can only be fully discovered in God.

Colossians 3:3 says, 'Your life is hidden with Christ in God.' If your life is hidden in Him, then only He can reveal its full design. Psalm 100:3 reminds us, 'Know that the LORD, He is God; it is He who made us, and not we ourselves.'

**You did not create yourself, so you cannot fully define yourself. The Creator's intent defines your true identity.**

### **The Story of Jabez**

Jabez is a perfect example of how identity can either cage or release destiny. His mother gave him the name Jabez, meaning 'sorrow', because of the pain she experienced at his birth. Imagine being called 'sorrow' every day of your life. That was an identity imposed on him.

But Jabez refused to settle for it. He prayed, 'Oh, that You would bless me and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain.' And God answered him.

**His story teaches us this: you do not have to accept every label given to you. Even if it has followed you from birth, you can exchange false identity for God's true identity.**

## **The Danger of False Identity**

When you accept a false identity, you lower your potential. You stop trying. You start living according to a script you did not write.

I learnt this lesson personally during my time at the polytechnic. After one semester, I had a GPA of 3.67, which was a distinction. One of my guardians celebrated with me when she heard the result, but then she asked about the student who was topping the class. That student had been in the system before us and was already well known. His GPA was around 3.8.

When I told her, she replied, 'You cannot meet up with him.'

At the Federal Polytechnic then, the best student in each department and year was given a cash prize of N10,000 and free accommodation for the next session. Everyone wanted it. So when she made that comment, it did something to me. Without realising it, I accepted a label in my spirit: that no matter how hard I worked, I could not reach that level.

By the second semester, things became even tougher, and for a while, I believed I would not be able to maintain a distinction. But at the end of the year, I

discovered I was the only one in my class who wrote a distinction, and I was just 0.01 behind the supposed 'untouchable' student. It struck me deeply. I had not aimed to catch up with him because I had already accepted the limitation that was spoken over me.

**That experience taught me a life lesson: never keep quiet when limiting words are spoken over you. Reject them immediately, because words are powerful. Creation itself was shaped by words. From that time forward, I decided never again to allow anyone to set boundaries on my success with their words.**

When I later gained admission into university, I refused to ask others, 'How are you coping? Are you still in first class?' I knew their answers could plant limitations in my mind. Instead, I chose to guard my spirit, to avoid those who might limit me, and to set my identity in line with what God says about me.

## **Four Forces That Shape Identity**

Whether you realise it or not, there are influences constantly shaping how you see yourself. These forces either affirm your true identity or feed a false one.

### **Parents and Family**

From birth, family begins shaping self-image with words, actions and expectations. In Nigeria, names are powerful declarations. Names like Ayomide ('my joy has arrived'), Oluwaseun ('thank You, Lord'), or Chukwudi ('God exists') feed a sense of divine purpose.

But careless nicknames or negative words can plant seeds of false identity. A child constantly called 'mumu' may begin to act the part, even if he was born brilliant.

### **Environment**

Your surroundings silently set the boundaries of what feels possible. A student raised in an environment that celebrates ambition is more likely to reach higher than one raised where mediocrity is normal.

This is why some students from small towns enter university and suddenly see new possibilities; the environment expands their sense of identity.

### **Peers**

The people you spend time with shape how you see yourself. Friends who challenge you to grow reinforce

your true identity. Friends who normalise laziness or lack of seriousness push you into false identity. My row of A's was proof. The atmosphere created by my friends made excellence the norm.

### **Circumstances**

Life events, whether victories or failures, also shape identity. Passing an exam can reinforce confidence. Failing can either motivate you to improve or trap you into believing, 'I am not smart enough.'

**Circumstances do not define you, but how you interpret them can.**

### **How to Rediscover Your True Identity in God**

Romans 12:2 says, 'Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.' This transformation is about exchanging false identities for God's truth.

#### **Step 1: Accept Your Current Reality**

Do not live in denial. Like Gideon, acknowledge where you are. God is not intimidated by your current state.

#### **Step 2: Ask for Light**

Pray like Jabez: 'Lord, show me who I am in You.' Ask Him to remove the labels of fear, shame or failure. Ephesians 1:18 speaks of 'the eyes of your understanding being enlightened.'

### **Step 3: Search the Scriptures**

God's Word is your identity manual. Just as you read a product manual to understand its features, you must read Scripture to know who God says you are.

- You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14).
- You are more than a conqueror (Romans 8:37).
- You are God's workmanship, created for good works (Ephesians 2:10).

### **Step 4: Write and Confess the Word Daily**

Keep declaring God's truth until it moves from head knowledge to heart conviction. Say it until you believe it. Believe it until you live it.

### **Success as an Identity**

Carrying success as your identity means living in alignment with God's design before the world recognises it. If God calls you a leader, start leading in small ways now. If He calls you excellent, work with excellence now. This is not pretending, it is living in truth ahead of time.

Identity is not what people see in you. It is what God says about you, and what you choose to agree with.

## **Producing After Your Kind**

Just as a mango seed can only produce mangoes, you will always produce results that match your inner identity. If you want a different harvest, you must plant a different seed, which is God's Word, in your heart.

**When you live from your true identity in Him, you do not chase success. You express it.**

## **Student Takeaways**

- Success starts with identity before results.
- Identity can be true or false
- Family, environment, peers and circumstances all shape identity.
- False identity cages potential; true identity unlocks it.
- Your true identity is found only in God, not in labels or opinions.

You can shift from false to true identity through awareness, prayer, Scripture, confession and right associations. Success is not about chasing outcomes but about living from God's design.

## **Closing Line**

You are not what your friends, lecturers or past failures

have called you. You are who God says you are. Once you embrace that true identity, your life begins to align with it. In the next chapter, we will explore self-awareness. It is the inner mirror that shows you who you are, what drives you, and how that identity shapes your choices.

# Self-Awareness: Knowing Yourself

In life, many people set out to work based only on what they have heard or inherited. They repeat experiences, instructions and thought patterns passed down from others, without ever pausing to ask if those ways are truly right for them. They assume, Since this is how it has always been done, let me also do it that way.

This unexamined living pushes us to follow the majority rather than to pause, reflect and ask the most important question: Why?

Self-awareness is about that pause. It is about asking honest questions of yourself: Why do I think this way? Why do I act this way? Is this path truly mine, or am I copying someone else's journey? Without such reflec-

tion, many people end up stalling their own progress.

### **The Myth That Almost Trapped Me**

There is a common belief I heard as a student: If you want to succeed in school, just focus on academics. Do not get involved in extracurricular activities, do not join politics, do not go to fellowship, do not even attend church. Just face your books.

The myth sounded wise, but it also planted fear. Students who believed it avoided everything outside the classroom, terrified that any distraction would ruin their academics. What they did not realise was that this mindset could become an identity; a label that ruled their choices and limited their potential.

### **I nearly fell into this trap myself.**

In my first year at the polytechnic, I faced serious financial struggles. There were days I had no money and no food. It is called SAPA: being broke and hungry. Thankfully, I had learnt computer repair skills between 2010 and 2012. By my second year, I printed business cards and began fixing laptops and printers for lecturers and students.

The business grew quickly, and I soon earned enough to stop calling home for support. But I noticed a shift: in the year I focused heavily on business, I could not maintain a distinction. For two semesters, my grades dropped. Thankfully, because I had built such strong distinctions in my first-year semesters, I still graduated with distinction overall.

At first, this seemed to confirm the myth. I thought, Maybe you really cannot combine business and academics. Maybe people were right all along. That thought began to shape my identity; just as I explained in the previous chapter.

### **A Turning Point**

I decided to seek counsel from a mentor. I asked her directly, Should I really be doing business while in school? Her reply shocked me. She said, In fact, students who run businesses often perform better academically than those who do not. They learn discipline, time management and resilience that others miss.

Her words broke the false identity forming in me. Instead of believing I had to choose between academics and business, I realised I could excel at both if I approached them with wisdom.

When I later entered FUTA as a direct entry student, I carried this new mindset with me. I restarted my business, repairing laptops and printers while pursuing my dream of graduating with a first class. I was determined not to repeat my polytechnic mistake.

One day in church, my pastor preached about David in the Bible. David was a shepherd, a warrior, a singer and a leader — yet he excelled in all. That scripture opened my eyes: If David could do many things well, then so can I.

That was the turning point. I stopped limiting myself and embraced the identity that I could combine academics, business and service, and still thrive.

By God's grace, I graduated with a first class, running four different businesses by my final year, and finished as the best graduating student alongside my friend with a CGPA of 4.70.

### **Knowing Your Own Rhythm**

But self-awareness is not only about big decisions like business and academics. It is also about recognising your personal rhythm and how you function best.

For example, there is another myth that says, If you want good grades, you must attend night classes and spend long hours in the library.

Through self-awareness, I discovered that this was not true for me. I realised my most productive hours were not at night but in the early mornings. I am the kind of person who sleeps early. Sometimes, I would go to bed as early as 7 p.m., then wake up by 2 a.m. refreshed and ready to start my day. Those quiet hours became my most productive period.

So, I never forced myself into night classes. I knew if I missed proper rest, my brain would not function well. While my friends carried their books to night class, I stayed in the hostel and studied on my own terms. The truth is, throughout my years in FUTA, I never attended a single night class, and I hardly stepped into the library. The only time I went was when I needed to locate a lecturer. Yet I still graduated with excellent results.

The lesson is this: I was not trying to replicate what worked for someone else. Instead, I paid attention to how I was wired. That awareness gave me confidence to focus on methods that matched my makeup, rather than joining the crowd.

This does not mean you should reject mentors or role models. Guidance is important. But self-awareness means testing advice against your own design. You are a product of a Master Manufacturer. You were crafted in a particular way to function effectively in that way. To copy blindly is like taking two completely different devices and forcing them to operate with swapped components. It will only cause frustration.

Some students struggle academically not because they are dull but because they are trying to copy systems that do not fit them. They follow friends into study routines, reading styles or schedules that simply clash with how they are wired.

Instead of copying, pause. Ask yourself: What are my strengths? What are my weaknesses? What rhythms bring out my best focus? Then leverage those strengths fully.

For me, reading in solitude worked far better than group study. But I did not despise group learning altogether. While I preferred to study alone, I also valued conversations afterwards where friends and I compared what we had learnt. For another student, group reading may be the key to understanding. And that is fine too.

**The principle is simple: do you. Do what works best for how you were designed. That is the heart of self-awareness.**

### **Student Takeaways**

- Self-awareness means pausing to ask why, not just copying others.
- Myths and handed-down beliefs can create false identities.
- Knowing your strengths, weaknesses and rhythms protects your growth.
- Mentorship and God’s Word bring clarity where experience may mislead.
- You can excel in multiple areas if you learn balance and discipline.
- The key is not to copy blindly but to do you.

### **Closing Line**

Self-awareness is the foundation of growth. You cannot change what you do not first acknowledge. When you know yourself — your patterns, strengths and limits — you can shape your future intentionally. In the next chapter, we will explore one of the greatest influences on self-awareness and identity: your associations.

# The Power of Associations

In the last chapter, we explored how success begins with identity and self-awareness. But here is the hidden truth: your associations will either strengthen that identity or weaken it. Who you spend time with is not just influencing your habits, it is shaping your self-image, your decisions, and your destiny.

## **The Power of Three**

When I think about the role of associations in success, my mind goes back to two close friends I had at FUTA. By the time we graduated, all three of us finished with first class honours, with two of us even leading the class with a CGPA around 4.7.

It did not begin as a master plan. I first became friends with Ife in 200 level, as we stayed in the same hostel in FUTA. By 300 level, I also got to know Akin, one of Ife's close friends, and the three of us soon became a trio. We had our differences when it came to studying. They often read during the day and late into the night, but I never liked night reading. Instead, I made it a habit to wake as early as possible to study in the morning. But we built a system: after studying individually, we would meet to discuss, share and explain. Whoever did not understand something asked, and another broke it down.

If no one got it, we reached out to seniors or lecturers. Each of us had unique strengths: one was strong in calculations, I introduced tech methods that made things faster, and the third was excellent at breaking down analysis. Instead of competing, we complemented each other. That atmosphere of collaboration changed everything.

One of us even started with a 2:1, but by the end, he graduated with a first class honours. That experience showed me that success is not only about effort, it is also about associations.

## **We Are All Products of Influence**

Whether you have a circle or not, one thing is certain: you are a product of influence.

The voices around you, the examples you watch, the habits you normalise — all of them are shaping you silently. If you keep company with people who trivialise academics, you will start to see seriousness as “doing too much.” If you spend time with those who treat excellence as normal, excellence will start to feel natural to you too.

**Influence is never neutral. You are either being pulled higher or being dragged lower.**

## **Know Yourself Before Choosing Others**

Here is the mistake many students make: they rush into associations without first understanding themselves. But if you do not know who you are, you will not know who you need.

## **Understanding yourself begins with clarity on:**

**Your values:** Some values are bendable, but others are non-negotiable. Know the difference.

**Your temperament:** Your personality affects how you connect with people.

**Your strengths and weaknesses:** You need people who complement your gaps, not duplicate your struggles.

**Your trade-offs:** What you are willing to give up and what you must hold firm to.

When you are clear on who you are, you will recognise the kind of people who can sharpen you instead of confuse you.

## **Symbiotic, Not Parasitic**

Nobody enjoys an association that is one-sided. The best circles are symbiotic where everyone is giving and receiving value.

In my trio, each of us had something to contribute. That is what made the bond strong. If one person had only taken without giving, the balance would have broken.

And do not think you have nothing to offer. Even if you

are not the best academically, you can add value in other ways:

**Your time:** helping to submit assignments.

**Little acts:** bringing extra sheets of paper, reminding a friend of deadlines.

**Practical support:** contributing to food, transport, or small kindnesses.

Everyone has something to give. The key is to refuse to be a parasite.

### **The Three Kinds of Associations You Need**

To grow, you need different layers of associations. They all play different roles:

#### **Upward Associations (Mentors and Role Models):**

These are people ahead of you who have walked the path you want to walk. They save you from years of mistakes and give perspective.

#### **Lateral Associations (Peers on Your Level):**

These are your close friends, like my circle of three. They understand your struggles, share your goals, and keep you accountable.

#### **Downward Associations (Those You Mentor):**

These are people behind you who you help. Pouring into others strengthens your own growth and reminds you how far you have come.

A healthy life has all three: you learn from those above you, grow with your peers, and give to others, which brings blessings in ways you could never have imagined..

### **Nobody Can Pull Alone**

There is another truth: do not build a circle where you are the only strong one. If you are always the one pulling others up, you will eventually get tired. You are not God. You need peers and mentors who can also pull you higher.

This is why it is dangerous to only surround yourself with people you are better than. Growth comes when you are stretched by those ahead of you and sharpened by those beside you.

## **The Myth of Self-Sufficiency**

Many of us were raised with the mindset of self-sufficiency. From childhood, we were trained to face challenges on our own, to “stand strong” without relying on anybody. That parenting style formed us into people who thought dependence was weakness.

But in truth, that mindset is incomplete. Scripture says, “It is not good for man to be alone.” This was not only about marriage, it was about life. God designed us for connection.

Even when you seem to be doing well on your own, the point is this: you could be doing far more with the right associations. Association multiplies what you already carry. It does not replace your strength, it amplifies it.

### **Student Takeaways**

- Your circle is shaping your future consciously or unconsciously.
- Influence is never neutral; you are either rising or sinking.
- Know yourself — your values, temperament, strengths and weaknesses — before building associations.

- Healthy circles are symbiotic, not parasitic. Everyone must give and receive.
- You need upward (mentors), lateral (peers), and downward (mentees) associations to grow.

Do not only pull others up, ensure you have people who also pull you higher.

### **Closing Line**

Your destiny is too important to surround yourself with the wrong people. The right associations do not just support you, they shape you. In the next chapter, we will uncover the principle that makes every association and every ambition sustainable: discipline, the force that keeps you consistent when motivation fades.

# Focus and Discipline – The Twin Engines of Consistency

## **Why Focus and Discipline Matter**

By now, you already know the building blocks of success. You have seen how identity shapes who you are and how associations either lift you or pull you down. But here is the truth: none of these matter if you do not practise them consistently.

Consistency is the real difference-maker. And consistency has two engines: focus and discipline.

We live in a world full of distractions. Notifications buzz, friends call, parties happen, and social media is always waiting to steal your attention. Distraction is not always loud; it is subtle, attractive and dangerous. Ten minutes on WhatsApp, another fifteen on TikTok and before you

know it, the hours you planned to spend studying are gone.

I experienced this firsthand during my finals in FUTA. My birthday fell right in the middle of exams. Messages were rolling in, calls were buzzing, and it felt nice to be celebrated. But I had a tough calculation paper that same afternoon, and I had not covered enough ground.

That day, I realised something: if I did not shut the world out, I would fail myself. I locked my phone in my locker and forced myself to focus. That decision saved me.

**Distractions are thieves that wear smiles. They don't necessarily look dangerous, but they silently steal from your destiny.**

### **Focus: The Power of Concentrated Energy**

Think of sunlight. Spread out, it only warms the earth. But through a magnifying glass, it can burn paper. That is the difference focus makes.

When you focus, you direct your energy on one thing at a time. Without it, you scatter your efforts and achieve

little.

Focus is deciding that in these two hours, you are only studying chemistry, not mixing it with Instagram.

Focus is saying no to a friend who wants you to “quickly escort” them somewhere during your study block.

For me, focus also meant managing even the things I loved. I enjoy football, and as an Arsenal fan, watching matches gave me joy and stress relief. But I had to discipline myself to watch only Arsenal’s games. If I had tried to keep up with every match, I would have wasted hours.

Focus is about choosing what matters most, even if it means cutting back on things that are good but not essential.

### **Discipline: The Muscle That Keeps You Going**

Focus alone is not enough. You may start strong, but what happens when you no longer feel like it? That is where discipline comes in.

Discipline is the ability to do what must be done, even

when you do not feel like it. It is the quiet, daily sacrifices no one claps for nor see, but everyone respects and celebrate later.

Discipline is waking up early to revise, even when your body wants to sleep in.

Discipline is choosing to attend lectures instead of staying in bed.

Discipline is resisting peer pressure to waste time on things that do not align with your goals.

During my campus days, one personal discipline shaped me deeply: I never read passively. I always had a biro in my hand. I underlined, scribbled, solved calculations repeatedly. I wrote as I read, because I discovered that what I wrote stuck faster than what I just read. That habit made even difficult courses easier.

Discipline does not always feel good in the moment, but the results are always worth it.

## **How to Build Focus and Discipline**

- **Set Clear Priorities**

You cannot focus if you do not know what matters. Write down your top goals each semester. This clarity helps you say no to distractions.

- **Break Goals Into Small Daily Habits**

Big dreams collapse without small steps. Do not aim to finish a textbook in a week. Aim for 5 to 20 pages a day.

- **Design an Environment That Helps You Win**

Do not rely on willpower alone. I knew my phone was a major distraction, so I learnt to keep it away during study hours and even locking it in my locker when necessary. Likewise, do not study on your bed if it makes you sleepy. Create an environment that forces you to focus.

- **Spot Subtle Distractions Early**

Distractions do not look dangerous: “just one quick chat,” “just one more highlight reel.” Recognise them for what they are — small thieves that add up.

- **Create Accountability**

Share your goals with a trusted friend. Knowing someone will check on you keeps you disciplined.

- **Reward Progress**

Discipline is not punishment. Celebrate small wins. Finished a chapter? Treat yourself. Rewards make the habit sustainable.

- **Learn to Say No Without Guilt**

Every “yes” to distraction is a “no” to your future. Saying no does not make you rude; it makes you intentional.

### **The Price and Reward of Consistency**

Discipline costs you something now but rewards you later. Distraction rewards you now but costs you later.

Look at every student who graduates with honours, every athlete who wins a medal, every entrepreneur who builds something lasting, behind them is a life of focus and discipline.

Success is not about doing the right thing once. It is about doing it again and again, even when no one is watching.

## **Student Takeaways**

- Distractions are subtle thieves; stop them before they grow.
- Focus multiplies your results by directing your energy.
- Discipline sustains progress when motivation fades.
- Consistency is the real test of success.
- The cost of discipline is temporary; the cost of distraction is permanent.

## **Closing Challenge**

Your habits may set the direction for your life, but without focus and discipline, you will not last on the journey. Success is not built on excitement alone; it is built on daily consistency.

The truth is simple: distractions will always come, but the disciplined are those who decide to shut them out and stay focused on what truly matters. Success does not come to the most talented or the most gifted; it comes to those who show up, stay focused, and keep going even when they don't feel like it.

In the next chapter, we will look at another tool that turns discipline into visible progress: time management, the art of directing your energy into the hours of your day.

# Mastering Your Time — Taking Charge of Your 24 Hours

## **A Testament of Time**

I once met a young lady who gained admission into OAU. Around her 200 level, while I was on IT placement there, I encouraged her to consider starting a small business. Her answer was immediate: “OAU is stressful. Lectures are plenty. Fellowship is demanding. I am already serving as vice-principal, and now I’ve been picked as the sisters’ coordinator too. There’s simply no time.”

Her excuse sounded convincing. After all, she was balancing academics, fellowship leadership and personal life. Who could blame her for feeling overwhelmed?

Fast forward to 400 level. We revisited the conversation, and this time we carefully looked through her schedule. We asked hard questions: What can you adjust? What can you delegate? How can you leverage people around you? How can you create time where it seems there is none? Slowly, she began to understand a new truth that time is not created, it is managed.

By 500 level, often regarded as the busiest period in university, she shocked herself. She started her business. She continued serving in fellowship, this time in the missions subgroup. And in that very season — the most hectic semester of her university life — she wrote her first ever first-class results.

**Her story is proof of a simple truth: there is always time. The question is whether you will master it or waste it.**

### **The Familiar Lie**

Many students live under a familiar lie: “There’s no time.” We whisper it to ourselves when assignments pile up, when our phones eat into our study hours, when responsibilities feel overwhelming. But the truth is this: time has always been there. The issue is not the

amount of hours we have but what we do with them. I know this because I lived it.

### **My School Life: A War of Worlds**

When I entered FUTA, my life was pulled in three directions at once. There was school, with its endless assignments, practicals and exams. There was church, where I served as an assistant pastor, prayer cord, choir cord and designer. And there was business, where at one point I was running four different ventures simultaneously.

From the outside, it looked impossible. In fact, people warned me constantly: "If you want to do well in school, you must drop everything else. Forget church. Forget business. Just face your books."

It sounded logical. After all, academics alone could keep a student awake all night. How could anyone add ministry and business to that load? But I refused to believe it. And over time, I proved it wrong.

By 200 level, while many of my mates were still adjusting to university life, I was repairing laptops and printers for lecturers and students. I managed the departmental

lab. I was growing as a designer, handling branding, publications and illustrations. By 500 level, I had partnered with a friend to run a printing centre where we produced projects and assignments for students.

And all this was while still serving faithfully in church: designing materials, leading prayers, conducting rehearsals, attending meetings week after week, and occasionally preparing sermons.

If you had looked at my schedule, you might have expected me to fail or even collapse from exhaustion. But I did not. I thrived. Not because I had more hours than anyone else, for we all had the same twenty-four, but because I learnt, painfully and intentionally, to master my time.

### **The Weight of Busyness**

One lesson came quickly: busyness is not productivity. Many students looked busy — always rushing, always tired, always overwhelmed. Yet when you measured their output, there was little to show.

That's when I learnt my first truth about time: time is equal for everyone. Billionaire or broke, lecturer or fresher, spiritual leader or struggling student. We all have the same twenty-four hours. The difference lies in how we spend them.

In my world, wasting time was never an option. I could not afford idle conversations that dragged on for hours, nor could I afford to wander aimlessly across campus after fellowship just to keep someone company. Those little moments mattered, and I chose to use them for something more productive.

So I cut them out. Not because I hated people, but because I valued my time too much to give it away carelessly.

### **Buying More Time**

Another truth I discovered is this: you cannot create more time, but you can buy more time. For me, this meant learning to leverage money, people and technology.

**Money:** I didn't do my laundry myself. Not because I was lazy, but because those two or three hours could

be invested in studying, preparing a sermon, or completing a project. Paying someone else to do it freed me for higher-value tasks. That wasn't luxury; it was wisdom.

**People:** I trained others in skills I already knew so I could delegate effectively. Friends became part of my time strategy. They reminded me of deadlines, updated me on announcements, and covered for me when I was overwhelmed. Collaboration saved me.

**Technology:** Long before AI became mainstream, I embraced tools. I used Google Docs to type on the go and Google Forms to collect project data. While others struggled with manual processes, I moved faster. Looking back now, I often smile and think: if tools like ChatGPT had existed then, my work would have been ten times easier.

### **The Silent Thieves**

But managing time isn't just about working faster. It is also about cutting off silent thieves.

One of mine was idle gist. After fellowship, people would say, "Let's escort this person to their hostel." It felt harmless, but before I knew it, an hour was gone

which can not be recovered.

Another thief was indulgence disguised as rest. There is nothing wrong with relaxation. In fact, I always created space for it. But there's a line between healthy recreation and wasteful indulgence. If it did not refresh me or build me, it had to go.

Here's the sobering truth: if something is stealing your time, it is stealing your greatness.

### **Collaboration Saves Time**

Greatness is rarely a solo project. Even in managing time, people matter.

There were days I was drowning in work, and a friend's reminder of an assignment saved me. Other times, classmates passed on important information I had missed. Without that collaboration, I would have crashed.

Even God did not create the world alone; the Father, Son and Spirit worked together.

## **The Hard Truth**

Here's the hard truth: time is neutral. It is not your friend or your enemy. It simply becomes what you make of it.

You can choose to waste it, but you cannot choose the consequences. Waste an hour today, and you'll pay in stress tomorrow. Waste a day, and you'll pay in regret later. Every day, you are either investing in your future or postponing it.

## **Looking Back**

When I look back on my university years, what amazes me is not that I survived, but that I grew. I built businesses. I served faithfully in church. I pursued my design career. And I still graduated with an excellent result. Not because I had more hours than anyone else. I simply learnt to make every second count.

## **Student Takeaways**

- You have the same twenty-four hours as everyone else. The issue is not time but how you use it.
- Every idle moment can either be wasted or invested. Use breaks, delays and waiting periods wisely.
- You cannot create more time, but you can buy more time through leverage: outsource tasks, delegate to trusted people, and use technology to work smarter.
- Cut off silent thieves like idle gist, endless scrolling and unplanned activities.
- Collaboration multiplies your time. The right people can keep you accountable, fill your gaps and save you from failure.
- Time is neutral: wasted time is wasted destiny; mastered time is multiplied life.

## **Closing Word**

The truth is simple: time will either serve you or master you. What you decide to do with your twenty-four hours determines who you become tomorrow. Handle your hours carelessly, and you will keep postponing your future. Invest them wisely, and the little you do daily will compound into greatness.

And this leads us to the next step. Time, no matter how well managed, is useless if it is filled with shallow

or destructive patterns. After learning to master your time, you must learn to build winning habits that make discipline second nature. Because habits are the bridge between time well managed and success well lived.

# Winning Habits — Small Choices, Big Results

## **Habits Run Your Life, Whether You Notice or Not**

I learnt early that habits, not big one-off choices, shape the life you live. Back in my polytechnic days, there was a lecturer who insisted we reproduce exactly what was in his manual. He wasn't interested in our ideas or interpretations, all he wanted was word-for-word answers.

Now, cramming was never my strength. I knew if I tried to swallow the manual whole, I would fail. But instead of giving up, I formed a habit. I began writing while I read. Not just passively looking at the manual, but actively copying it into small pieces of paper, line by line.

Those slips of paper became my secret weapon. I folded them and carried them everywhere. If I was going to the toilet, I carried one. On the way to church, I slipped one into my pocket. Between conversations, I would pull it out, glance over two lines, and repeat them until they stuck. I turned idle moments into learning moments.

That habit changed me. It wasn't glamorous, and it didn't feel dramatic, but over time it trained my brain to learn faster, retain longer, and maximise every second.

When I eventually moved from the polytechnic to the university, things got tougher. The courses were heavier and the material far more demanding. Writing everything out wasn't always possible. So I adjusted. For handouts too bulky to rewrite, I formed another habit: underlining.

It sounds small, but underlining trained my mind to see the essence. It made me focus on what mattered most, instead of drowning in pages. Every underline became a marker in my brain, something my eyes and memory could return to later. It was another small, quiet habit that kept me afloat in a sea of information.

## **Why Habits Beat Motivation**

I also learnt that habits beat raw motivation every time. Motivation can inspire you, but it can't sustain you.

Take calculation courses, for example. I once studied for a paper by going over examples once or twice, convinced I had mastered them. But when I entered the exam hall, my mind went blank. It was humiliating. I knew I had read, yet I couldn't recall the steps.

That failure taught me a lesson: calculation courses are mastered by repetition. So I changed my approach. For another course, I decided to calculate every example at least ten times. Night after night, I would redo the problems until my hands and brain could reproduce them effortlessly.

During the exam, when I saw questions that looked confusing at first glance, I found myself smiling. My habits had done the work long before that moment. I didn't need last-minute panic. I didn't need extraordinary luck.

## **My daily repetitions carried me.**

That is the secret of habits: they run automatically, whether you feel like it or not. Just like brushing your teeth doesn't depend on inspiration, habits take over where motivation fails.

## **Good vs Bad Habits: Both Compound**

Of course, habits are neutral. They don't care whether they help you or hurt you, they simply compound.

In one season of my university life, I let bad habits creep in. I skipped classes for meetings and trainings, convincing myself I could always catch up later. That was the semester I wrote my lowest GPA.

It was painful, but it taught me something vital: bad habits compound just as fast as good ones.

After that, I corrected my course. I made attending lectures a non-negotiable habit. I trained myself to show up consistently, even on the days I did not feel like it. That simple choice became one of the pillars of my recovery. I will unpack this turning point more fully in the next chapter.

## **Unlearning Bad Habits**

Winning habits don't just appear out of thin air. They are often born when you confront the bad ones you've been carrying and deliberately replace them. That requires raw honesty with yourself.

I had to face this in school. My lowest GPA came because I built the wrong habits (skipping classes). At first, I excused myself with the line, "I'll catch up later." But later never came, and the results were painful.

The only way forward was to unlearn. I made class attendance a non-negotiable habit. I chose quick, purposeful conversations over endless chatter. I replaced wasted scrolling with research, sketching, or rest.

### **If you want to win, you must ask yourself:**

- What habits are wasting my time?
- What habits are slowing my progress?
- What habits do I need to replace with better ones?

Maybe for you it's checking your phone first thing in the morning. Replace that with fellowshiping with God, reviewing your notes and journaling. Maybe it's wasting

long breaks in the day. Replace that with quick reviews or short power naps. The point is this: you don't just build good habits; you also discard the bad ones.

### **Shaping Habits That Win**

Building winning habits isn't about tearing your life apart overnight. It's about small, intentional adjustments you repeat until they become part of you.

I saw this in my own life. Writing while reading started as an inconvenience, but over time it became natural. Underlining handouts became automatic. Recalculating examples ten times became instinct. Attending classes stopped being a struggle; it became part of my system.

That's what winning habits look like, not giant leaps, but quiet steps repeated until they shape who you are.

### **Here are key strategies I learnt along the way:**

- **Start Small**

Don't aim to study five hours a day if you've never managed one. Begin with 20–30 minutes. Growth compounds by steady addition, not sudden leaps.

- **Make It Visible and Attractive**

Use sticky notes, alarms, or checklists. Reward yourself when you keep a habit. Your brain needs to taste the satisfaction.

- **Design Your Environment**

Don't fight temptation; remove it. If reading on your bed makes you sleepy, go to the library. If your phone distracts you, put it in another room.

- **Surround Yourself With the Right People**

Habits are contagious. If your friends read, you'll read more. If they procrastinate, you'll procrastinate more. My circle kept me accountable to deadlines I might have missed and that's the power of the right people.

- **Track Your Progress**

Keep a log. Tick off days when you studied, revised, or courses you read. Humans are wired to "keep the streak alive." For me, seeing pages of sketches or underlined notes reminded me that I was growing.

Habits don't grow by wishing. They grow through intentional action

## **Why Students Quit Too Early**

Here's why many students never experience the reward of winning habits: they quit too early.

They start journaling for a week and see no difference, so they stop. They study daily for two weeks and see no instant jump in grades, so they give up. They start eating better but don't see physical changes after a month, so they return to junk food.

But habits are like seeds. Before fruit appears, roots grow underground. The effort looks wasted at first, but in reality, something is happening beneath the surface. When you quit too early, you cut off the roots before the fruit can ever appear.

I could have abandoned my note-folding system because it felt inconvenient. I could have stopped redoing calculations because it was tiring. But sticking with them long enough allowed the compound effect to show. Those habits became invisible engines of my progress.

## **Students' Takeaway**

- Habits, not intentions, decide your results.
- Writing while reading, underlining, and repetition turned inconvenience into mastery.
- Both good and bad habits compound; one produces growth, the other regret.
- Winning habits don't just appear; you must unlearn bad ones.
- Start small, track, and grow until your habits become automatic.
- Don't quit before the results show; roots grow before fruits appear.

## **Closing Word**

Habits are the invisible architects of your destiny. They don't shout, but they build or break you silently, one day at a time. My life (from folded notes in the polytechnic to reworking calculations at the university) proves that greatness is less about sudden brilliance and more about daily disciplines that stick.

But habits alone are not enough. Even the most consistent student will still face pressure, make mistakes, or hit seasons of failure. That is why you need more than winning habits; you need resilience. And that's where

we are going next: how to bounce back when life knocks you down, handle pressure without breaking, and avoid burnout while you keep moving forward.

# **Resilience – Bouncing Back, Handling Pressure, and Avoiding Burnout**

## **Everyone Falls, but Not Everyone Rises**

Failure is one of the hardest pills to swallow. For many students, the moment they see a bad grade or miss an opportunity, it feels like the end of the road. Pressure also weighs heavily: deadlines, family expectations, financial struggles, peer comparisons. And then there's burnout; the quiet exhaustion that sneaks in after running on empty for too long.

Here's the truth: failure, pressure, and burnout are not signs that you are weak. They are signs that you are human. What separates those who succeed from those who quit is not that the successful never fall; it's that they keep getting up.

## **Redefining Failure, Pressure, and Burnout**

Too many people let setbacks define them. They see failure as a verdict instead of feedback. They let pressure crush them instead of refine them. They mistake burnout for weakness instead of a signal to recharge.

Think of a catapult. When it pulls back, it's not retreating in defeat; it's gathering force for a stronger launch. Failure works the same way if you allow it or think of gold. It gains value after passing through fire. **Pressure doesn't destroy; it purifies and sharpens.**

And burnout? Even machines wear down and need repair. Even your phone needs charging. You're not a robot; you will get tired. Resilience doesn't mean ignoring rest; it means knowing when to pause, recharge, and return stronger.

### **My Story: From 4.45 to 5.00**

In my 300 level, I recorded my lowest CGPA ever: 4.45 in one semester. For someone aiming higher, it felt like a crushing blow. I thought my academic journey was on a downward spiral.

But instead of sulking, I asked hard questions. What went wrong? I realised I was splitting myself between lectures and an agency where I was learning creative skills. That meant I missed classes. I also noticed I wasn't using past questions to prepare, and at the time I didn't have the right academic circle to keep me grounded.

Those lessons became gold. I adjusted my schedule, became intentional with my study habits, and sought better associations. The result? The very next semester, I bounced back with a perfect GPA of 5.00.

**That season taught me one of life's greatest lessons: resilience isn't about never falling. It's about refusing to stay down. Every failure contains the seed of a comeback, if you're willing to learn from it.**

## **Why We Struggle With Failure and Pressure**

- **Identity Confusion**

Too often, students equate grades with self-worth. A poor GPA doesn't mean you are a poor person; it simply means your methods need adjustment.

- **Fear of Judgement**

Many hide failure because they're afraid of what others will say. But resilience starts with honesty: admitting, "This is where I am, but it's not where I'll end."

- **Lack of Coping Strategies**

When pressure mounts, some collapse because they've never built healthy outlets. They distract themselves instead of confronting the challenge.

- **Ignoring Rest**

Burnout comes when you push without pause. You cannot pour from an empty cup.

## **Practical Steps to Build Resilience**

- **Accept Reality Without Shame**

Denial doesn't change facts. The first step to recovery is admitting the truth of where you are; whether it's a failed test, stress, or exhaustion. But don't confuse fact with finality. Your current state is only a phase, not the end.

- **Review and Learn From the Past**

The secrets of tomorrow's success are hidden in yesterday's mistakes. Did you procrastinate? Did you skip lectures? Did you misuse your time? Don't waste pain rather mine it for insight.

- **Design a Recovery Plan**

After identifying causes, create solutions that fit your reality. Maybe it's joining a study group, reducing social media time, or restructuring your schedule. Resilience isn't just bouncing back emotionally, it's bouncing back with a strategy.

- **Silence Fear and Doubt**

Fear often exaggerates the future: "You'll never recover. You'll always fail." Challenge those lies. Replace them with truth: "This is temporary. I can grow from this." Speak life over yourself until it sinks in.

- **Rest and Recharge**

Sometimes resilience is not about pushing harder but pausing wisely. Go for a walk, play a sport, watch a film, laugh with friends. Rest isn't laziness; it's maintenance.

## **Students' Takeaway**

- Failure is not your identity, it's feedback.
- Pressure is not your enemy, t's a refiner.
- Burnout is not weakness, t's a sign to rest and re-charge.
- Every setback contains a lesson to prepare you for a comeback.
- A comeback is always possible, sometimes even stronger than the fall.

## **Closing Challenge**

Resilience is not about avoiding storms; it's about learning to dance through them. The question isn't whether you will face failure, pressure, or burnout, you will. The real question is whether you'll let them break you, or whether you'll bounce back stronger.

**I once fell to 4.45. I rose with 5.00. Your failures don't define you. Your bounce-back does.**

# Stay Winning – Turning Victories Into Stepping Stones

## **Success: A Stepping Stone, Not a Ceiling**

Success is something we all crave and rightly so. It brings joy, recognition, and validation. But here's the danger: success can easily become a limitation if you treat it as a final destination instead of a stepping stone.

Think of the student who finally scores a 4.5 CGPA. The initial excitement is undeniable, and the applause from friends and family feels rewarding. But after a while, if that same student relaxes and says, "I've done enough," the journey stalls.

Meanwhile, others are stretching for 4.9 or breaking new ground in research, leadership, and innovation.

The difference is not in ability but in mindset.

**You don't clap for the same success twice. If your story always circles around what you achieved yesterday, people stop listening. Success is powerful, but it loses value if it is not multiplied.**

### **Today's Win, Tomorrow's Limitation**

Many people unknowingly let today's achievements become tomorrow's limitations. I knew a graduate who earned a first-class degree. His result was remarkable, but he wore it like a badge for years, always introducing himself as "best in class." Over time, the shine faded because he never converted that degree into skills, value, or impact. He stayed frozen in one victory.

On the other hand, another graduate from the same set celebrated her result briefly but quickly asked herself: "What's next?" That question pushed her to apply for competitive scholarships, build new skills, and position herself for bigger opportunities.

A few years later, both of them could say they had first-class degrees but only one was still winning.

This is what makes success dangerous: it feels final, but it's really just a checkpoint. **If you camp at one level, the victory that once set you apart will eventually make you irrelevant.**

### **The Balance of Celebration**

Don't get this wrong, it is good to celebrate your wins. In fact, it is necessary. A milestone achieved is proof that your effort paid off, and it deserves gratitude and joy. But the key is balance: celebrate, then reset.

Athletes who win gold medals don't retire immediately after the race; they go back to training for the next competition. Musicians who win awards don't stop producing; they raise their standards higher.

True winners know how to clap for themselves and then move on. Celebration should fuel hunger, not kill it.

### **The Levels of Influence**

Every success expands your sphere of influence, but how far it stretches depends on whether you keep building.

For some, success is being “the best among my friends.” For others, it’s being the best in the department, the faculty, or the university. But for those who refuse to stop, their influence grows nationally, and eventually, globally.

**Imagine the tragedy of stopping at “best student in your family” when you were designed for global impact. Staying winning means refusing to let one level of recognition blind you to the greater levels ahead.**

### **How to Stay Winning**

- **Always Ask “What Next?”**

Every achievement should trigger a new question. Winning a scholarship? Great. Now ask: How can I use this platform for bigger opportunities? Finished as best in class? Good. Now ask: How can I turn this degree into a tool for solving real problems?

- **Surround Yourself With Challengers**

The company you keep determines how far you go. If everyone around you praises you as though you’ve arrived, you’ll soon believe it. But if you stay around people who are doing greater things, their achievements will stretch your imagination. Seeing someone graduate with a 4.9 CGPA when you’re content with 4.5 reminds

you: there's still more to reach for.

- **Convert Success Into Value**

A certificate, a position, or a title is not the end. The true measure of success is in the value you create from it. A first-class degree is great, but if you cannot turn it into solutions people need, it becomes nothing more than paper. Staying winning means asking: How can I make this achievement relevant in the real world?

- **Stay Hungry, Stay Humble**

Hunger keeps you moving. Humility keeps you teachable. The most dangerous phrase you can say after success is, "I already know enough." Winners stay curious, willing to learn, and always pushing for more.

### **Students' Takeaway**

- Success is not a bus stop; it is a checkpoint.
- You don't clap for the same achievement twice — keep writing new stories.
- Celebration is good, but don't let it kill your hunger.
- Surround yourself with people who stretch your possibilities, not only those who applaud you.
- Convert success into lasting value that impacts others.

## **Closing Challenge**

The goal is more than a single victory; it is sustained success. Guard against today's applause robbing you of tomorrow's triumph. Don't live in the memory of a past victory when greater possibilities are calling.

Celebrate, reset, ask "what next?", and push again. Because there is always more. Stay humble. Stay hungry. Stay winning.

# Faith That Works – The Ultimate Advantage

## **Why Human Strength is Never Enough**

By now, you've learnt a lot from this book: success is in your DNA, it is a journey, it flows from your identity, and it requires habits, resilience, discipline, focus, and the right associations. These principles work but here is the truth: there is a limit to what human strength alone can achieve.

As students, you already know this. There are days when your discipline fails you, when resilience feels empty, when your body is too tired to keep pushing. There are moments when, despite doing everything right, the results don't match your effort. It's in those moments you realise: we are not machines. We are

human. We have limits. That's why you need something greater. That's why you need faith.

### **The Power of the Supernatural**

Faith introduces you to a power beyond the natural. It is the supernatural ability of God working through you. When Paul wrote, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me," he wasn't exaggerating. He was describing what happens when divine strength meets human effort.

Think of it this way: you can run on your own strength and go far. But with God, it's like stepping on a moving walkway at the airport and the same steps you take carry you further and faster, with less strain. Faith doesn't cancel hard work; it multiplies it.

### **My Story: Why Faith Made the Difference**

I have seen the power of faith in my own journey. Back in the polytechnic, I once wrote a test of 10 marks. After cross-checking my work, I concluded that I had missed one question and told myself, "I was certain I would miss that question and score 9. But when the results came out, I hadn't missed it at all, instead, I lost marks on another question I was so sure I had answered correctly. That was when I understood deeply that the

words we speak carry power. Words are spirit, and they shape reality.

Later, in my first semester at university, I had a test where my performance wasn't strong. By human standards, my score wasn't enough to give me hope. Yet I held on to faith, believing that God could turn things around. When the final results came, I had the best grade in the class. How do you explain that? There are results that human logic cannot account for except to say, "This is the hand of God."

I have a mentee and in his 400 level he was already discouraged. He believed he had lost the chance of graduating as the best in his department. When he shared his fears, I prayed with him and encouraged him not to give up. I also shared how, in my own 300 level, I was not even the top of my class. I was around third or fourth place. Yet by 400 level, I leapt into first position, not because of my calculations or strategies alone, but because of God's intervention.

That mentee eventually went on to graduate as the best in his department. His story, like mine, is proof that there is a dimension of life where God rearranges the order of things, lifting you from the back to the front.

Scripture says, “You shall be the head and not the tail.” I’ve seen it happen, both for me and for others. That is why I boldly say: faith works.

### **Why You Need Faith to Truly Succeed**

- **Because life will test you.**

Principles like resilience and focus are powerful, but storms will come that principles alone cannot calm. Faith anchors you when everything else shakes.

- **Because you need wisdom beyond books.**

There are moments in academics and in life where formulas don’t apply. Faith connects you to divine wisdom that sees beyond human limitation.

- **Because you need a Helper.**

Jesus promised the Holy Spirit as a Helper who will guide us into all truth, even bringing to remembrance what we’ve studied. That includes your academics.

- **Because you need peace.**

Success without peace is failure in disguise. Faith gives peace that human strategies cannot produce.

## Steps to a Life of Faith

- **Believe and Confess** – Accept that God loves you and that Jesus died for you. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Also, confess that He is Lord over your life, for “with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:10).
- **Surrender** – Admit your limitations and hand over your life to Him. Success is sweetest when God directs it.
- **Confess** – Speak your faith. The same way habits are built by repetition, faith grows by the words you speak daily. Say what God says about you until it shapes your reality.
- **Walk with Him** – Join a Bible-believing community, serve God with your gifts, and let Him lead every area of your life. Serving Him isn’t a distraction — it’s an advantage.
- **Keep Growing** – Read the Word, pray consistently, and share your faith. The more you do, the more your capacity expands.

## **Students' Takeaway**

- Human effort has limits; faith connects you to supernatural strength.
- Serving God adds to your life; it doesn't subtract.
- True success requires more than skill; it requires God's wisdom, peace, and guidance.
- Faith is not just for church; it is a daily advantage for academics, career, and life.

## **Closing Word**

This book began with the idea that success is in your DNA. It ends with this truth: success finds its ultimate expression in God. Your journey will demand discipline, habits, resilience, and wisdom but without faith, you will eventually hit a wall. With faith, there are no walls too high, no valleys too deep, and no dreams too impossible.

So, believe. Walk with God. Lean on His strength. And as you do, you will not just win, you will keep winning, in this life and for eternity.

# About the Author



Emmanuel Owoyemi is a First-Class graduate of Quantity Surveying (2021) from the Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA), where he emerged as the Co-Best Graduating Student in his department. That

same year, he received the award for Best Graduating Student (South-West Universities Category) at the 29th Biennial NIQS Conference in Abuja.

In 2024, Emmanuel founded Stellar Oasis, an academic mentorship programme that has since helped countless students unlock their potential and achieve remarkable academic success. He is also a sought-after speaker,

having graced conferences, seminars, bootcamps, webinars, and other platforms where he shares practical insights on success, career growth, and personal development.

Beyond mentorship, Emmanuel is a visionary entrepreneur. He is the CEO and Co-Founder of Thinktech Product Labs, the company behind innovative solutions such as Reckon IO (a real-time construction material estimator), Certfill (a certificate automation platform), and the CACSA App (a community-driven mobile platform). He also leads Favsys Studios, a design and branding agency that helps organisations tell their stories with impact.

Through his journey, Emmanuel has discovered that success is not defined by background but by timeless principles that work for anyone who applies them. Made for More is his way of sharing these principles—drawn from personal experience, lessons from setbacks, and stories of students he has mentored into success.

Emmanuel loves exploring fresh ideas, investing in personal growth, and learning across disciplines. His life mission is simple: to help people realise they are made for more and to equip them with the tools to rise to their best selves, even as he strives daily to become the

best version of himself.