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A GUIDE FOR LIVING A HAPPY LIFE

LIVING WITHOUT REGRETS

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INTRODUCTION

One may ask, can there be a life free of regrets, is it possible that someone can live his life without having any regrets? The answer is yes, BUT it all depends on you because you are the one who can make your life whatever you want it to be. So it is your actions in life that will determine whether you will live in regrets or not.

In the pages of this book lie the steps which if anyone follows the person will live his/her life without having anything to regret. Also in this book, you will see what those living in regrets did wrong in their lives and also learn what to do in order to avoid making the same mistake.

Your life is the greatest assets that you have and for that reason, it's not right for you to live it in regrets. If life should be lived successfully, it needs a guide or a manual. Just as every product will have a manual on how it is to be used, so is LIFE, it needs a guide so that it will be lived successfully and that is what this book is all about.

When you apply the lessons in this book in your life, I assure you that your life will not remain the same, there will be a positive change in your life.

HOW TO LIVE YOUR LIFE FREE OF REGRETS

First of all, I will define what it means for one to live a life free of regrets because you can't live a life free of regrets if you don't understand what it entails. Just like a builder who would not like to make an uncorrectable mistake will always work with his blueprints or plan when building a house, a life free of regrets is a life that is properly planned and lived as it was planned. It's a type of life that is lived carefully in order to avoid doing things which might lead one to regrets. Again it is such a life that one puts down his intention and how to achieve them at different stages in life.

To make it clearer, a regret free life is such that one decides what he wants to be in life, what he wants to achieve in life and focus his attention on those things that he want without going into other things which will stop him from achieving his dream life.

On the other hand, a regrettable life is a type of life that is full of mistakes because of wrong actions or steps taken by the person which the person wishes that it could have been better if he had not taken those wrong steps. A regrettable life, is an unplanned life, it's a life that is lived without any purpose or direction. This type of life is identified with bitterness and sorrow at the end of it because by that time it has become too late for the person's mistakes to be corrected. Regrets in life are the results you see when you have failed to do the right things which you are supposed to do, in order to make your life better which includes planning your life properly.

There are many factors which can lead people to live a regretful life but this book will focus on some of those factors which I believe are the major ones.

These factors are;

A) LACK OF PROPER PLANNING

B) BY MAKING WRONG CHOICES

- C) LACK OF FOCUS**
- D) FAILING TO UTILIZE ONES OPPORTUNITIES**
- E) INVOLVING ONESELF IN IRRELEVANT THINGS**
- F) NOT MANAGING ONES TIME PROPERLY**
- G) ASSOCIATING WITH NEGATIVE PEOPLE**
- H) AVOIDING ONES RESPONSIBILITIES**
- I) LIVING TO PLEASE OTHERS**

Let us start from the number one which is lack of proper planning- There is a popular saying that goes like this, if you fail to plan, you have planned to fail. Lack of proper planning will lead you into doing things which you are not supposed to do. Note that planning is important in every ones life because no one has ever achieved great things in life without sitting down to plan the steps which he will take in order to achieve what he wants. So your life can not be better if you do not have any plan on how to make it better.

When you have a life plan, you will be able to know what to do at each stage of your life unlike the person who does not have any plan for his life will do whatever he feels like doing at any time he feels like doing them. Having a plan on how to live your life will help you not to live after another person's life. Planning your life properly is very important because it serves as a guide to living a happy life.

HOW CAN ONE SET A PLAN FOR HIS LIFE

Before you can set a good plan for your life, first of all ask yourself; what type of life do I want to live so that at the end of my life I will be happy, what do I want my life to be like? There is every need for you to envision the type of life you want before setting any plan. The essence of this is, if you know the type of life that you want to live, you will be able to set plans that will enable you to live that type of life that you want.

Again, when you know the type of life that you want to live, it will be easier for you to know the kind of actions that are needed for that type of life to materialize. If you don't know the type of life you want to live, know that it will be difficult for you to know the type of plans to set. That is why it's very important for you to envision the type of life you want to live then set good plans that will enable you to live your dream life.

Not having a plan for your life will make you to get yourself involved into many things which are not important to your life. The number one reason why people imitate or copy others is because they don't have any plan for their lives. Because no body will have the time to imitate another person when he has set some plans on how to live his life.

Remember that your life will only have a direction when you have a plan for it and live it as you have planned it. Also note that a building cannot be constructed as it is drawn if the plan or blueprint was not used in building it. In other words, you can set a nice plan for your life but if you don't live it as you have planned it, there wouldn't be any change in your life.

There is a need for you to determine the type of life that suits you, then set your plan; this should be some steps or actions which you intend to take in order to achieve your dream life.

MAKING OF WRONG CHOICES

Making wrong choices always lead to ‘had I known’. If you choose B when you are supposed to choose A, you are going to regret making that decision. The number one reason why people make wrong choices is because *they don’t know exactly what they want from life*. And the second reason is *impatience* while the third one is *by not analyzing the options they have* before choosing.

These reasons will be explained one after another, so let’s start with ‘not knowing exactly what one wants in life’ If you do not know exactly what you want to achieve in this life, you will always be making wrong choices. This is because you will always feel like choosing any available option without considering what that option is all about or what impact it will have in your life.

On the other hand, if you know exactly what you want in life, you will be able to make good choices that will help you to achieve that thing. For instance, if you want to become successful in life, your choices and your actions must be the same with the choices of the successful people, if not, success will be far from you. If you have a goal to achieve or a mission to accomplish, the choices you make should be the ones that will lead you towards achieving your goals and accomplishing your mission.

The people that do not know what they want in life always make wrong choices and this inevitably leads to regrets. They fail to understand that their destiny is made when they make any choice as posited by Harish Mehta “it is in your moments of Decision that your Destiny is made”

The second reason why people make wrong choices is impatience. When you make a decision in a haste, there is every tendency that you are going to make a wrong choice. You can’t make a good choice whenever you are in haste. So never make any decision whenever you find out that you are in haste.

The third reason why people make wrong choices is, by not analyzing the options they have before choosing- before making any choice, there is need for you to think well about the options you have to know the one that will favour you most. Analyzing your options very well is very important so that you will find out what each option will do to you when you choose it. You will find out the option that will make you better and the one that will worsen your situation.

I want you to know that any wrong choice you make will definitely affect you, even if you didn't see it immediately, it must surely come. There is a negative consequence for any wrong choice you make and this consequence is not what you can avoid. Let's take this instance, if a farmer should choose to sleep during farming season, he is making a wrong choice and when he will see the consequences of his choice is when other farmers are harvesting their crops and then he will not have anything to harvest and this means that he will be in lack for that period.

It is an undisputable fact that if you fail to follow the road that leads to a particular destination, you are going to find yourself at the wrong place. When you fail to choose wisely, you will always get bad results.

Today, so many people are living in pains because of wrong choices they made earlier in their lives. I am going to tell you a story of a woman who made a wrong choice in her young age which she later regretted. This woman had opportunity of going to a higher institution because her parents were capable of sponsoring her. But she didn't go to school again because she chose not to go. The parents of this woman begged her to go to school in order to be educated but she refused because of one thing which I'm going to tell you now.

There was an entrance examination which everyone wishing to enter into higher institution must write and this woman had written this examination two times and failed both times and for that reason she decided not to go to school again and made up

her mind to start doing manual jobs for people. Despite her parents plea for her to try and write the examination one more time that she might succeed but she refused.

Those days were when it was only few individuals that attend school, and these were the children of the rich people. Those days any one that graduates from school is sure of getting a good job and this was why the parents of the woman wants their daughter to be educated but she didn't agree with her parents. This woman later started doing manual jobs for people until she got married. And the man that married her was not rich enough to take care of the responsibilities of the family alone. So both of them managed to run the family as they could.

By the time this thing was happening, the people that supposed to be the woman's mate in school if she had entered are making good income through their jobs and what this woman was earning is too small to compare with what her mates were making. At a time this woman started regretting this choice she made when she was with her parents. What she tells herself is, if she had known she would have tried that entrance examination for the third time that she might have succeeded. But at that time it was too late for her to do anything about it.

This is to tell you that any wrong choice you make in life will definitely affect you whether you make it intentionally or not. Whatever your present situation is maybe as a result of the choices you made in the past. You don't need anybody to tell you the type of choice you have been making in your life. It is easy to find out the type of choices you have been making in your life and that is to look at the results you are currently getting in life.

If you have been making the right choices, your present situation in life will show that. On the other hand if you have been making wrong choices in your life your present situation will also show that. Most times in life, people fail to understand that one cannot be better than his/her choices. There is no way you will make a wrong choice

and expect your life to be better. Your life is a total of your choices, you are what you choose because its your choices that makes you what you are.

Since you will be affected by any choice you make, there is need for you to think very well before making any choice. Know what you want in life and then make the right choices that will enable you to get that thing that you want.

LACK OF FOCUS

There is no hope for anyone who lacks focus in life because such a person will be easily distracted and anybody who is easily distracted cannot achieve anything worthwhile in life. When you lack focus your attention will always be on many things at the same time. The people that lack focus are easily influenced because they have nothing they are working towards. Bear in mind that if you are not focused in life, there are a lot of things that will distract you and these things are things that are of no value.

If you lack focus, you will spend your entire life achieving nothing. Successful people all over the world are known to be focused people because no one can become successful in life if he or she is not focusing his attention on the thing or business he wants to be successful at. I want you to know that nothing in this life can be impossible for someone who is focused to achieve.

For that reason, let there be something meaningful you are focusing on to achieve because if there is nothing you are focusing on, your attention will always be on many things and when your attention is on many things you will end up achieving nothing. Lack of focus cannot take you anywhere in life because there is nothing you will gain in life when it's difficult for you to focus your attention on one particular thing you want to achieve.

What is that thing that will make you happy when you become, what are things you want to achieve in life, what height do you intend to reach? I want to assure you that all these things are possible only if you will focus your mind on them. Note that it is only when you focus your mind on something you want to achieve that the right steps or ideas will start to come to you on how best to achieve that particular thing. Try this by yourself and find out that it is true. It has worked for a lot of people and it will also work for you.

Lack of focus has made some people to fail in achieving their goals in life. For instance someone may have a goal or something which he intends to achieve but does not know the steps he is to follow in order to achieve that. And for that person to achieve his goals It is only by focusing on them that the person will see the right steps or ideas to follow in order to achieve those goals.

But what if such person lacks the ability to focus his mind on his goal, what if the person is the type that is easily distracted, do you think that that goal will be achieved? The answer is no. That is why I said that lack of focus has stopped some people from achieving their goals in life. I don't know about you, are there goals you have set for yourself which you have not achieved, are there plans you have set to accomplish something yet you have not accomplished that? Find out what is stopping you from achieving what you want, if its lack of focus, there is need for you to be focused in order to achieve what you want.

FAILING TO UTILIZE ONES OPPORTUNITIES

There is a popular saying that opportunities comes but ones. But from my own experience in life, sometimes opportunities come more than once. But the problem is, will the person those opportunities are coming for be able to realize that those opportunities are for him and utilize them. Because there are people that

opportunities will come to and they will fail to discover that the opportunity is for them. And if they later realize themselves those opportunities has passed.

One of the reasons why people miss out on their opportunities is PROCRASTINATION. Not acting when you are supposed to act will make you to lose your opportunities and if you later act when the opportunity has gone, your actions will be in vain. But if you know certainly what you want to achieve, you will be able to act when the opportunity comes for you.

Note that failing to make good use of the opportunities that comes your way can lead you to regrets, especially when you have waited for such opportunity for a long time. In life opportunities for advancement comes to everyone but its only few that utilizes their own.

Opportunities call for ACTION and not for RELAXATION. There is something you are expected to do with every opportunity that comes your way. In other words, there is a step you are supposed to take whenever an opportunity comes your way.

There are some people who are looking for one opportunity or the other but when that opportunity comes its either they fail to make use of that opportunity or that they are not aware that the opportunity they are waiting for has come. Remember that opportunities can always come to you but if you are not on watch, you will miss them.

When you utilize the opportunity that comes your way, it's to your own advantage but whenever you fail to utilize any opportunity, you lose the benefit that that opportunity came with.

One of the disadvantages you will have for not making good use of your opportunities is that you will remain at a stagnant position in life. Because there is no way you will progress in life when you have failed to utilize the opportunities that have been coming your way.

Why it's important that you should make good use of every opportunity you have is because such opportunity may not come to you again. There is no guarantee that any opportunity you failed to utilize will come back to you, therefore make use of every opportunity that comes to you as soon as it comes because if you fail to do that, later in your life you will regret not making use of that opportunity.

It is paramount that you do something meaningful with every opportunity that comes to you so that if such opportunity did not come again, you will be happy for having achieved something with the one that came previously.

Another reason why it's important for you to make good use of the opportunities you have is that, you wouldn't live forever. Opportunities will continue to be but you wouldn't continue to be in existence.

INVOLVING ONESELF IN IRRELEVANT THINGS

Involving yourself in irrelevant things entails, doing things that are of no importance, indulging in things that have no gain. Most times people get themselves involved in trivialities and this is mostly done by people who do not have any purpose for their life. There are other people who do things without having any purpose for doing that.

Check your day to day activities to know if there is a good purpose behind them or not. Will those activities you do on daily bases help you to achieve your goals in life. And if you find out that they are not going to help you achieve your goals, it's high time you stop them. You don't have to indulge yourself into something that will not benefit you.

You should ask yourself this question, if I continue with my present actions, where will they lead me to, am I going to become successful in life with them? It is when you have

asked yourself this question and answered it sincerely that you will be able to find out where your present actions will lead you to.

It is obvious that you cannot achieve greatness in life when you always involve yourself in irrelevant things. People fail to achieve great things in life not because they are capable of achieving it, but because they get themselves involved in worthless things.

At times people get themselves involved into something simply because their friends are doing that. But it's not supposed to be so. You are not supposed to indulge into anything you do not have a good reason for doing or having in mind something which you want to achieve from it. Before you indulge into anything, it's important that you ask yourself this question, what impact will this create or have in my life after it has been done. Will this thing that I want to indulge in benefit me in any way?

If you ask yourself these questions before indulging in any act, it will help you not to indulge yourself in irrelevant things. It will also help you not to do what you are going to regret later in life.

One of the reasons why people have regrets in their lives is because they rush into things without knowing what that thing is all about. Or without considering if there is any negative consequence attached to that thing they want to go into.

If you can learn to think before you act, it will help you a lot in life to avoid putting yourself into a problem that you may not come out from. If you are not sure of what you want to do, leave it and do the ones you are sure of.

NOT MANAGING ONES TIME VERY WELL

Time factor is very important in every one's life. The way you use your 24hours matter a lot. What do you do with your time, meaningful things or unmeaningful things. Bear in mind that time waits for nobody and that if you don't use your time effectively, you will have yourself to blame. If you fail to accomplish a task that requires like one hour to be completed within that hour it means that you don't manage your time properly.

Be aware that any minute or hour you waste in a day will have an effect on your total achievements for that day. Since time is one of the great assets that you have, it should be used effectively. There is a time to do everything, so do not use the time that is meant for work to play because if you do that it will affect you negatively.

As the day breaks, you should start with your most important tasks and finish them before going to the less important ones. You need to be a good time manager if you are to accomplish anything in life. For instance, if you use your 24hrs to sleep and another person uses his own to work, by the end of that day that person will have something meaningful to show as his achievements for that day while you that slept throughout the day will have nothing to show.

Be conscious of your time, know how you spend your time and what you use it for. Time cannot slow its speed because you have not achieved anything for the day. Anytime you spent in doing irrelevant things cannot come to you again.

So do meaningful things with your time because your time is limited

ASSOCIATING WITH NEGATIVE PEOPLE

When you associate yourself with negative people they will kill your dreams. One of the ways of knowing them is that they live their lives aimlessly. They are the mediocre, and confused in life. When you mingle with such people, they will influence you in a negative way. Another reason why you don't have to associate with them is because they don't have anything good to offer you.

If you want to be great, associate with the great people and not the failures. If you want to be successful, associate yourself with the successful people and not the losers. If you want to be an achiever, associate with the achievers and not those that will discourage you by telling you that what you want to achieve is impossible.

The negative people will do their best to stop you from pursuing your goals in life. And if you don't go away from them you are going to regret the time you spent with them. Any friend who cannot encourage you to be your best is not worth staying with.

You should ask yourself, what have I learnt from these friends of mine, what impact have they had in my life. If you find out that they have not created any positive impact in your life since you started associating with them, then you have to leave them and move on with your life.

Any time that is spent with the negative people will be a wasted time because nothing good can come out of them. The Bible says that we should not be equally yoked with unbelievers. So know the type of people you associate with. Negative people have negative mindsets and nobody can become successful in this life with a negative mindset.

AVOIDING ONES RESPONSIBILITIES

When you fail to respond to your responsibilities, you are doing yourself a big harm. In life, people create a lot of problems for themselves by failing to do what they are supposed to do for their lives to be better. Most times some people allow others to remind them of doing their responsibilities without finding it out by themselves. Such people fail to understand that what makes one responsible is the person's ability to respond to his responsibilities without being told.

Whenever you avoid your responsibility, you also avoid the good thing which might come out if that responsibility was responded to at due time. For you to progress in life, it is your responsibility to set goals for yourself and work towards them. If you don't do that, no one can do it for you.

If you discover that you are not moving on the right track or that your life is not going at the right direction, it is your responsibility to figure out what is not working well in your life and correct it. This is because nobody can do this for you.

When you find out that there is something you lose for any of your responsibilities that you fail to carry out, you will always respond to your responsibilities.

Due to the fact that it's easy for people to avoid their responsibilities has made some people to forget that there is a consequence for any of their responsibilities they didn't respond to. That is why John Mason said in his book "The Impossible is Possible" "it is easy for us to avoid our responsibilities but we cannot easily avoid the consequences of avoiding our responsibilities"

Let us take a student as an instance here. It is the responsibility of a student to attend lectures; it is the students' responsibility to study hard in order to excel in his examinations. Note that it can be very easy for any student to avoid these

responsibilities, but that student cannot avoid failing his examinations because that is the consequence he deserves for avoiding his responsibilities.

At each stage of your life, there are some needful things that you are supposed to do for your life to become better. And when you don't do them, you remain at one position. If you fail to respond to your responsibilities, time shall come when you shall regret not doing so.

Know that your life is your responsibility to live, and no one can live your life for you if not you. Most people have the habit of blaming others for any bad result they get in their lives, but if you discover that you are the one responsible for your life, you will stop blaming other people for the result you see in your life. Why you may be blaming people for your poor results is because you have failed to do what you are supposed to do in your life which is responding to your responsibilities. Waiting for people to come and change your life can be considered as a waste of time. It is you who should assume that responsibility of making your life better.

Do not expect people to start asking you; how are you living your life or how can I help you to improve your life. You can hardly see this because everybody is busy with his own life. And since everybody is busy with his/her own life, why not start responding to your responsibilities because if you fail to do them, no one else can do them for you.

If you don't know that you are responsible for the type of life you live, know it today because no other person was created to be responsible for your life if not you. No matter how bad your life might be, people may not show concern simply because they are most concerned with their own lives. So you should assume responsibility of your life and know that it is you that owns your life. In your personal life you should be a leader and not a follower- because a good leader assumes responsibility for the group he leads.

LIVING TO PLEASE OTHERS

One of the worst mistakes you can make in life is to live your life in order to please people. It may be for you to gain their affection or to get any benefit from them. But whatever the reason might be, life is not meant to be lived like that.

The way others see you doesn't matter, but what matters most is how you see yourself. If you live to please people, you will regret it later in life. Think about this, if you live your life to please people, how then can you achieve your goals in life, if those people's way of life are contrary to your own way of life. How can you live your dream life?

There is no way you can become or accomplish what you have planned in life when you are living your life just to please people. Remember that life is too precious and short for you to live it in order to please people. Living to please others will lead you to abandon your goals, plans, dream to do what those people like.

Most times in life, people bother themselves too much trying to find out what they will do for people to like them, but this does not make any sense. Do what you know that is right whether people like it or not. Robert Collier has this to say "Do whatever you know that is right and ask permission of no man". Live the type of life you have planned to live, pursue your dream notwithstanding what people might say. If doing the right thing will make people not to like you, do it. Their likeness or hatred does not guarantee your success or failure. Any life lived in order to please people is a wasted life. You should be concerned with what you do with your life, once you are doing the right thing go on with it.

Is it not unreasonable that one will live his/her life only to please his fellow man or woman. Who is that person that you will live your life to please, do you not know that

we all have one life to live and if you should use this one life to please people, do you think that you will have another life in which you will live to please yourself? Instead of living to please man, live to please your Maker.

In summary, for you to live your life free of regrets, plan your life very well and live it as you have planned it. Make good choices that will enable you to live as you have planned. And let your choices be the ones that will lead you to achieve the goals you have set for yourself.

Be focused and do not allow anything to distract you from pursuing your dreams. It is true that there must be distractions, but pay no attention to them.

Utilize every single opportunity that comes to your way because if you miss them there is no guarantee that the same opportunity will come to you again.

Never get yourself involved in doing irrelevant things, because it stops you from achieving great things in life.

Making good use of your time is very important because we all have a limited time to spend here and therefore our time should be used in doing something meaningful.

Associating with negative people will just kill your dreams. They will discourage you from getting what belongs to you. So know whom you spend your time with.

Always respond to your responsibilities, it is your responsibility to make your life better because no one else can change your life if not you.

Do not live to please people. Always do what you know that is right whether people like it or not.

Finally, you can live your life without regrets but it all depends on you to choose that. From the pages of this book, you have seen some factors which can lead one into a life of regrets. It is now your duty to avoid those things which can lead you into a regrettable life by applying the lessons in this book in your life.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sopuruchukwu Okafor is a prolific writer whose aim is to convey life-changing messages to people through writing and speaking. He is also a gospel artist, composer and a song writer.

He believes that the best way to find happiness in life is by impacting positively to people's lives thereby making them to be the best they are meant to be.

His mission is to make people understand the meaning and value of life to the end that those living their lives aimlessly will start living a purposeful life.

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