

Volume 06, Issue 10: Self Education

Reading is a neglected practice yet one of life's biggest opportunities. Reading opens windows of opportunities to things that were foreign to us. Unfortunately, after completing formal education, few of us want to read again.

Books are a store of wealth. At every graduation ceremony, the second President of Kenya, who was the Chancellor of all public Universities would charge the graduating class to read by stating, "I give ye power to read." How many of us after graduating make a commitment to read? Sadly, a majority of graduates read only newspapers and magazines.

One of the contributing factors to this is that there's no motivation to read. We have emphasized the importance of certificates so much that we do not value books. After all, when you read a book no one gives you a certificate for that.

The greatest university of all is the collection of books we have read. Reading makes up for what parents and schools do not teach us. We should form a habit of reading and encourage children to acquire the discipline of reading.

Formal education may get you a well-paying job. But it is self-education that gives you the skills to succeed in life, beyond just book balance. Self-education helps you acquire life skills and success principles that are not covered in a school curriculum.

*What we become depends on what we read after all the professionals have finished with us –
Thomas Carolyn*

Develop a hunger for reading. I was impressed by The Apostle Paul's hunger for reading evidenced by his writing to his protege Timothy asking for his parchments and books. Even at old age and in prison, Paul was anxious to grow. The Old Testament scribe, Ezra, also believed in the growth of the mind. He devoted himself to study the Law of God, to obey it and to instruct

the people of Israel in it.

Some of us have zeal but no knowledge. We desire to be used of God to bring transformation in our societies but we are not equipped. Read widely and extensively to position yourself for noble assignments. Because Ezra's mind and spirit were full from his reading, God tapped him for the gigantic undertaking of leading a large task force of men across the wilderness to rebuild Jerusalem.

Read widely to know how to tackle issues in life. The society is changing; we are changing, and almost everything within, about and around us is changing. We are faced with diverse challenges, dilemmas and problems that we do not know how to solve. We face challenges on career choices, how to run a successful business, how to communicate effectively, marital problems, parenting issues, sickness, handling finances, being single, divorced or separated, handling success, etc. That is why we need to read widely to open a window of opportunity in these areas of life.

When we read books, they take us to places we have never been before. We meet great minds and experts whom we could have never met otherwise. Sometimes we hide behind prayer when what we need is knowledge. In certain issues, it is not only prayer that we need, but also the knowhow to handle challenging issues in life.

We must read and learn all the time. Knowledge helps us manage our lives. Married with two children, coupled with a demanding career, books have helped me a lot on how to balance my life, how to relate with my husband, how to raise my children, how to manage resources, how to grow in intimacy with God, and so on. There are many things around me competing for my attention, but I have committed to create time to read.

The best part is that we don't have to go out of our way to create time to read if we are determined. You can read as you wait at the bank, clinic, restaurant, salon, and on a bus ride. There's always time to read. Advanced technology has made it even easier as we can now read by listening to audio versions of books. We are living in a digital generation, most tablets and smartphones can convert text to speech. This way, you can read as you drive, as you cook, as you exercise, even as you wait on queue at the supermarket.

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Reading is an investment, and not a time passing routine. Improve your capability to handle life in this day and age by grabbing your opportunities to read. Don't be content with the knowledge you have, reach out for more and keep growing as a person, intellectually, and in all areas of interest to you.

Lillian Chebosi