

# 3 Key Steps I Took to Personal Transformation

In 2019 I experienced a significant bout of stress and anxiety.

I had feelings of overwhelm and felt palpitations. I went to see a doctor and then a specialist. A series of tests were done, an ECG was done, blood tests were carried out, cardio & heart checks, blood pressure checks, x-rays — the works!

There was nothing wrong with me. Absolutely nothing! I was fine and remain fine. For this I am thankful.

On the day all the test results were being reviewed, after I was told everything was in perfect order; I was asked other questions — are you stressed? Are you anxious about anything?

These questions set me on a journey! Yes, I was overwhelmed. I had quite a few stressors triggered but the most subtle culprit of all was ‘worry’. It was hidden, I was spiralling inside — I had allowed a lot of negative self-talk and was questioning my worth, my value and what I was doing with my life.

*Worse still I wasn't talking to anyone about it!*

A lot of it was to do with pressures and expectations from the world around me. Spoken, unspoken and also imagined expectations from the people around me. I had let these thoughts run rampant and I had allowed myself to believe them.

Today, I am set free of those feelings. Everything settled down because I started to learn how to pay attention to the well-being of my soul. I practiced deep-breathing, mindfulness, and a lot of laughing but more than those I dealt with the health of my soul, my mind! It began with very baring, very hard questions, introspection, and self-reflection. All inspired and under-pinned by the quote below culled from a very special book I love to live by.

*Beloved, I wish above all things **that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.** Apostle Paul 3 Jn 1: 2*

In my journey to self-transformation, which I am still very much on — the following three things have and continue to help me:

## 1. ACCEPTING MYSELF

Acceptance has been the biggest ingredient for transformation in my life. Accepting myself, accepting motherhood and accepting parenting! For a long time, I didn't feel like it was enough by the many world standards. I felt I needed to prove more, to be more, to matter more. Oh the #mindlessdeception

In conversations, it felt so good to spout “I'm the Head of Digital Transformation at padink-kadink or the Team Lead of New Media at klikklok” because I hadn't fully grasped my own identity, or should I say I had somehow misplaced it. Never quite feeling enough and unconsciously working out comparisons and still feeling dissatisfied with my life.

Now however, as much as those things are great in the right place— they no longer matter as much as the social expectations I considered so greatly then and the uber significance I had attached to them.

I had ignorantly made them out to be the meaning of my existence; #wronglyso — for when you find the source of all life and the reason He planted you here on earth — that purpose is rooted in identity; satisfying the deepest parts of 'YOU' that words cannot always successfully articulate.

I've released myself from so much pressure. It was a process both baring and painful, but the surrender has been 360 worth it. I will wear many hats in my long life, live many lives too. Right now, in this season one of my predominant hats and one of my major preoccupations is mothering and writing; and guess what? it's totally fine — I'll be more than alright!

Research has shown that some the benefits of self-acceptance include but are not limited to mood regulation, a decrease in depressive symptoms, an increase in positive emotions, a sense of freedom, autonomy and improved self-esteem — gloriously put 'Liberty'.

## 2. KILLING COMPARISON

If you are quaking with feelings of inadequacy for and in any area in your life; chances are you are comparing your life and outcomes with that of another.

I must tell you now, comparisons are a poor method by which to measure your self-worth and/or value. A danger of subtle yet destructive consequences. Comparing leads to a joyless existence; on the days you feel like a million bucks it's all the shebang but when someone else appears to be doing better than you anticipated they would or when you find you are underperforming by any standard- "30 millionaires under 30", "the 'fortuned' 40 under 40" — the intimidation, depression and overwhelm will pack a punch!

Psychologists agree that comparing ourselves to others steals our joy and stalls our progress not only will we always find someone who is better than us at something or another, but we elude the fact that no-one's life is perfect despite what we may like to imagine.

### **3. LEARNING TO REST**

I realized something else; I didn't know how to rest; physically, mentally, spiritually. How to slow down, to be present and enjoy things fully. How to enjoy me, my children, my spouse, my opportunities, my gifts. I hadn't learnt how to just let go and enjoy everyday life.

I had allowed activity, busyness and dissatisfaction steal my attention from the many blessings I had been given. My soul, my mind needed to REST but so did my body. For it had to flourish for all to be refreshed. Soul REST — not just a platitude but a desperate need for most and many. I had gotten so used to carrying burdens and never putting them down.

We all need REST, it is restorative. It takes care of us inside and out, so instead of continually consuming information and adding more and more things to do to our already bulging to-do lists which when we fail at, will plague us with guilt, then feelings of inadequacy which then ignite the vicious cycle full throttle — we may need to sit still for a bit instead.

Lack of rest (be it mental, physical, or spiritual) is bad — It only wrinkles the soul, sours the mood, ails the body and hurts our relationships.

We call it STRESS — but it is a true and ugly mess.