



*Silent
Tears*

THE STORY OF SASHA

- What if we told you that the communication breakdown between you and your tantrum-spewing adolescent can be rectified?
- What if we showed you how parenting your adolescent need not be a confusing or distressing time for you but one of fun and continuous evolution for the both of you?
- What if you discovered a company specially committed to coaching your adolescent into a wholesome adult using specially curated wellness curricula?
- What if we take you on a discovery journey using unconventional parenting tools and DIY approaches to everyday parenting scenarios?
- What if we introduced you to an upgrade version of yourself and then take you on that journey to evolve dynamically so as to nurture an enfolding relationship between you and your adolescent?

“If you could relate to any one of those musings, then you are right where you should be – here! We spend our time curating the www (wellness, wholeness and winning) experience for adolescent and adolescent managers. If you want this experience, it’s time you started looking in a new direction and we are here to be your guides.”

- TSAGEandTBOG

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Then I saw the look! Trepidation flowed through my entire being and I muttered a prayer up to the Creator! “Lord, if you will help me, I will never get caught up in this again”.

Apparently, He didn't seem to hear me as Tunde's gaze went all over me with his eyes stopping briefly on my already exposed breasts. He held me harshly and spoke to me in a voice I had never had him use on me. His eyes were hard and cold, I couldn't see the Tunde I knew. His jaw was set and I knew what was coming. I had been advised never to be alone with a guy so as not to get raped but Tunde had never been that kind of guy to me. He had been sweet and pure and perfect. But the person standing before me looked like the devil himself...

DEDICATION

To everyone who is determined not to let the past confine them, nor the present define them; to everyone who is willing to let the future compel them; and to everyone on a personal journey to Wellness, Wholeness and Winning!

Part One

THE STORY OF SASHA

Will I ever find this love I truly desire?

It's been many years and I can't seem to bring myself to
trust anyone.

I still feel scared and helpless,

Will this torment end?

I see the one my heart beats for,

Yet I can't move further to bask in the warmth of this love
he offers me,

Will this dent forever cause me to live a life of
dissatisfaction and longing?

Will it all go away so I can swirl in this beauty his radiance
brings to me?

... sighs...

My name is Sasha and this is my story...

THE PAST

... where it all began...

THE HOME PLACE

I am the first of five children, born into the strict home of a Nigerian lower-class family. Our residence was at Makokoⁱ in Lagos State – an abode named as the World’s biggest floating slum. Life was tough for us. We rarely saw our father as he worked multiple jobs just to make ends meet. And the few times he was home, I’d rather he wasn’t.

My mom? Well, she also worked multiple jobs while she was alive. She passed in a tragic car accident when I was seven. But as far back as my memory can travel, I barely remember us having a “*me and mom*” time. She was typically out before we woke up and returned long past our bed time. She was a home cleaner while she was alive. Growing up in a *slum* did not help my self-esteem either. Worse still, it was generally believed by our *ghetto* community that the male child was better off than the female child. That may explain why I rarely felt affection

from my father as much as my immediate younger brother did. I grew up feeling insecure because I felt nobody loved me and since my dad preferred my brother to me, I tried by all means possible to become a boy. That was the origin of my tom boyish traits.

I yearned for my dad's attention as the deer pants for water. I disliked my brother immensely because he had my father's heart. I remember days when my brother would intentionally wrong me and then run to our dad for refuge. He would weave the story so beautifully against me but so shallow that even a child would know it was a blatant lie, yet my dad would beat me blue black! My dad is really smart, I mean, he was the most literate person in my community. No one attains that by being a dunce, right? But somehow with my brother in the picture, it was a totally different story.

I was the best in class (*I don't know how I managed to achieve that*) and also the best athlete all through from junior

school to high school. This brought me more popularity than I wanted. With it came responsibilities I would originally have covered from like becoming the class monitorⁱⁱ, helping teachers out with administrative responsibilities among others. I had it going for me but the one thing every human needs to thrive was missing; LOVE!

I grew up hating myself for being female and started searching for love and finally I found it!

... Or so I thought...

TUNDE

He was everyone's dream guy. A lot of the girls were after him and he was always happy to be the centre of attraction. I really don't know how I got his heart but I was glad I did anyways, and I wasn't willing to let him go. However, there were other girls who were very interested in him and while I was naïve, they were very exposed. It made me feel even lesser as a person and though I strived to compete in being like them, I just could never measure up. They had lived the exciting life while I had always lived a sheltered life. I had insecurities, oh quite a lot. I was plagued with a very low self-esteem and a poor sense of self-worth; it really damaged me. Unfortunately, I had no idea at the time that these were the things that plagued me and I had no idea the import they would eventually have on me.

I had fears whether logical or paranoid. I had gotten this love and I had no intention of letting go. But with these girls all over my guy, how do I compete? The one thing to bring me joy became the source of my everyday heartache. As girls with means and hotter bodies seductively winked at my man, I would watch anxiously hoping he would behave the same way I would if another man looked at me with such lust but disappointingly, he would always take the bait, leaving me with a shattered heart.

Now I know that I was in a make-believe relationship but back then, it felt like an answered prayer to my desperation of wanting to be loved...

TUNDE AND SASHA

I met Tundeⁱⁱⁱ when I was just sixteen. He was taller than his age, a slender but well-built nineteen-year-old boy with a seductive aura around him. He had this charisma that attracted the ladies just as ants are drawn to sugar. He knew how to get any girl he chose, and I had no idea why I was the lucky one. I was attracted to him from the very first day I set my eyes on him but being a shy girl, I was too scared to even as much as say “hello”. I had a weakness; one I still have till date. When I have my eyes on a man, no one else matters. This made the other guys have a lot of problems in getting my attention. So, when Tunde suddenly started paying me attention, you can imagine how elated I felt. He would talk at length with me and he made me feel so special. There was a way he gazed at me. He had this intense, penetrating look that made it feel as though he was piercing through my very soul.

So, here I was encapsulated and enraptured by this attention and affection he paid me. He took me to their house at Lekki^{iv} and I met his siblings, they were so nice to me. I was literally at home with them. I was so glad I had found this love. Everyone acknowledged our relationship and knew we were a couple. I often would hear side remarks like, “*that’s Tunde’s new babe*” and it always felt like I was soaring. I was the lucky one, I was proud of me **smiles**.

He suddenly asked me to meet him up one evening at his residence while I was preparing to go out for an important function. He was aware of my outing so I knew that whatever he needed me for might be an emergency. “*That’s so unlike Tunde*”, I thought. “*Could he have deteriorated?*” I knew he had been pretty ill during the week and I ensured I was always available to cater to his needs the best I could. We had our regular meet up time, so it was quite disturbing for him to request my presence long before I was due to come. I got him

some avocados, peppersoup^v and a bottle of coke. I knew these were his favourite. I got to the house and observed that the door had been left ajar. That was even more worrisome because the door was always closed. I hurried in and I saw him in the sitting room all alone, crying. I dropped all I held and ran to him. He sat up and held me in his embrace. It was so warm and cozy. I wondered what would make the keeper of my heart cry. I asked him what was wrong and he looked me square in the eye, that same look that always made me feel like there was no one else in the world. He held me tighter and this time began caressing me. This was my first time ever. I couldn't place the flurry of emotions I felt. It was a mixture of ecstasy and fear. Ecstasy because it opened the floodgates of tremor and pleasure but fear because I knew where it was headed and, for the first time, I didn't want this. I allowed him caress me a while and he gave me my first kiss. I didn't know how to respond so I let him lead. I realized that I was getting

caught up in the euphoria of the moment and I broke the kiss. I asked him upfront why he called me to which he responded that he wanted me. I told him that he couldn't have me yet, wondering where my boldness came from, seeing we were all alone and I was highly disadvantaged if he attempted to force his way on me; but Tunde wasn't that type of guy, or so I thought.

Then I saw the look! Trepidation flowed through my entire being and I muttered a prayer up to the Creator! *“Lord, if you will help me, I will never get into a relationship until I discover purpose”*. Apparently, He didn't seem to hear me as Tunde's gaze went all over me with his eyes stopping briefly on my already exposed breasts. He held me harshly and spoke to me in a voice I had never had him use on me. His eyes were hard and cold, I couldn't see the Tunde I knew. His jaw was set and I knew what was coming. I had been advised never to be alone with a guy so as not to get raped but Tunde had never been

that kind of guy to me. He had been sweet and pure and perfect. But the person standing before me looked like the devil himself. I told him to let go of me with every courage I could muster but what was the courage of a helpless girl in the face of such a well-built physique? He told me there and then that he would deflower me and leave his signature forever imprinted on my heart. I didn't hear that right! The one treasure I was keeping for my husband was about to go down the drain. As I bit his hand to let go of me, he gave me a terrible slap and I was disorientated with my ears buzzing alongside. I fought back but he hit me even harder. He tore my clothes and I was before him in just my pants. I was crying, fighting and pleading but even to my own ears they sounded so lame. He stripped me naked and began to lick my body when I heard a voice scream, "What's going on here!!?" I had never been so glad to hear an adult voice in my life like I was this day. His dad had come home unexpectedly to meet us in that position.

Tunde ran out of the house and his dad went in to get me some clothes and asked me to take a shower. He offered to get me food, but I declined. I had no appetite. He asked me if I had been violated. Fortunately, I had not been and he heaved a sigh of relief. He apologized to me and told me to tell no one else as they would lock up his only son if the authorities got wind of it. I promised not to tell a soul. Not like my dad would care anyways, he'll simply be upset that I had a boyfriend at my age and embarrass me rather than emotionally help me. So true to my word, I kept mute. He dropped me off very close to my slum, since cars could not venture that route and I went in still visibly shaking. I was really lucky that no one was at home to ask me obvious questions. I got to change back into my own clothes without raising questions from anyone. While I laid on my bed, I realized that truly the Creator had heard my cry to save me.

I got to school the following day, wondering how to face Tunde, and then, I heard mutterings around me as I passed. I wondered what was happening. Why was I getting unnecessary stares from everyone in class? Well, I wasn't in the dark for too long as Jeff, the one guy who had had a crush on me since I was in Junior school came up to me with pain in his eyes asking me why I allowed Tunde sleep with me. He was almost crying as he told me how much he had loved me all those years and how I had refused to give him a chance but rather chose Tunde who everyone knew was just with me because he had a bet with the boys that he would take my virginity and make nonsense of my 'good-girl' reputation. I was dumbfounded as realization hit. So, all those moments, all that affection, all the attention, were just a heartless kiss-and-tell ego trip. I was the one girl no other guy could get, so he just had to get me so as to boost his popularity. I froze up. "No! He wouldn't bring tears to my eyes at this point", I calmly told

myself. I wanted to explain all that happened to Jeff but I also remembered I made a promise to Tunde's father not to let anyone know what transpired in the house that evening. I stared at Jeff and burst into tears. He hugged me, my second hug in less than 24 hours and I flinched. I ran out of that embrace, out of the class and took permission to leave school on the grounds of ill health. Well, it got approved as my emotional unwellness reflected outwardly. I was moody at home but learnt to keep a straight face so as not to draw any attention to myself. *After all, if my dad had shown me as much love as he showed my brother, I would have been spared all the hurt,* I told myself, hating him even more. I braced up for school the following day and put up a face that portrayed a state of mind that didn't care what anyone thought, though I was damaged on my inside. Jeff did all he could to get me to talk to him, but I wouldn't. I was too damaged to know who to trust.

Jeff was a sweet soul and I saw that he loved me genuinely but I had made a mistake thinking Tunde loved me too, “*what made Jeff any different?*” I bemoaned.

THE PRESENT

... where you are...

SASHA

It's yet another Valentine's Day – a day I have grown to detest. It's also been ten years since the near-rape incident. It's been ten years of loneliness, of telling myself that “*men are scums*”. It wasn't like my entire being was consumed with wanting a man in my life [or hating them either], but I had been damaged as a child which had opened me up to unhealthy expectations and as a fallout of those expectations I had set myself up for further damages – a vicious cycle born and I didn't know how to end it. Although, I am a Board member at one of Nigeria's topmost advertising agency and I also run my own perfume line, I am still alone, very much in pain and very much damaged.

I haven't been with another since Tunde but I had loved another besides Tunde. Even though I hide behind feminism, I

know that I use that as my cover up to explain away the turmoil I feel.

Over the years, Jeff crosses my mind a lot more than I would love to acknowledge especially on Valentine's Day. After graduation, Jeff took me on a valentine date, my first date actually as Tunde and I never really went on any. He told me how he felt about me and said to me that even if Tunde had violated me, he would not mind, as long as I was his. Although we never dated, I knew that I loved him genuinely, in a way I never even loved Tunde, but that was a fact I was not going to admit. That was ten years ago.

“What has become of Jeff? I hope he's doing alright. I hope he has found the woman who would love him as he deserves”, I muttered to myself as I stood before the mirror getting dressed for an outing with myself.

How did I lose so much trust in men? How can one event tamper with every certainty I had known? How can the once

upon a time sweet, innocent and loving girl, become transformed into this hurt, damaged and distrustful woman? I miss me a lot. I cry many times when I remember how my childhood experiences defined my path and made me into a broken entity. I am doing well in my career and business but I still do not feel whole. I have friends but not one of them truly know me. I am socially awkward around men but I have successfully built a façade that portrays me as an independent and successful woman. I want to enjoy my successes without the pain of childhood hitting at me. I want to be successful for me, not to prove a point to the men in my childhood slum that women can be as good or even better than men. I regret every time I remember how I had to turn Jeff down simply because of the trauma I had experienced with Tunde or the subtle reminder from my slum background that I am not good enough. I hate that my past haunts me every single day, making me feel as though my successes are a fluke. I hate how

one rotten area of my life is negatively affecting the flourishing aspects of me. I hate how intertwined everything seems to be!

Ironically, before Tunde stole my heart, I had known that Jeff had it. There was just something about him I couldn't place; a genuineness about him so uncommon. I guess I just was not wise enough at the time to discern true love from lust. I was just desperate for love, for acceptance, for that feel of wanting to know that my slum didn't define me or my gender didn't make me any less human and I was willing to get it from anyone who would give me something close even if it was phony.

Tunde was more domineering, and he got me to switch focus from Jeff, a decision I have continued to regret. How silly I was. I try to smile as I take one last look at the mirror. As usual, I can't find that joy on my inside but it's a terrain I'm very familiar with. "*It's time for a change!*", I tell myself, as I take my

car keys, “I shall celebrate Valentine’s Day this time with or without a man” ...

JEFF

“*This can’t be true!*” I shouted. While parking my brand-new Lexus RX 350 at The Palms Shopping Mall, Lekki, a Mercedes-Benz A-class hit me. It infuriated my already turbulent heart. As I got down to intercept the rider of the A-class, I stood face-to-face with Jeff. I was speechless. Before me stood the most amazingly sculptured man my eyes had ever seen. His eyes still reflected intelligence about them. We both stood wide-eyed, mouths agape and mystified. It took a lady who also alighted from the A-class to pull us out of that spell. I presume she’s the girlfriend because I noticed that they both did not have rings on their fingers. I truly do not know how I managed to observe that on the spur of the moment.

His face lit up as he caught my stare and I saw that innocent, caring Jeffery I used to know. He gave me a bear hug as he screamed my name. He introduced me to the other

woman as a colleague. Apparently, that didn't go down well with her as her face reflected disgust. But, hey! Who cared? Here was Jeff! Not like I was interested in him anyways [or was I?] so she didn't need to be scared. He was all over me like a school boy. He asked me about life and we talked at length. We both forgot there was another woman until she said she would like to be excused. We apologized and I gave Jeff my number to beep me as soon as he could and I left. I couldn't get him out of my head! This was Jeff! The only one who stood by me when Tunde destroyed every iota of self-worth I had left. This was Jeff, the one who wasn't afraid to be tagged my "hand-bag" because he always wanted to be where I was. This was Jeff who fought off some guys who were trying to harass me when they found out Tunde 'slept with me'. He got beaten for me and I didn't even treat him nice, yet he stood by me. After years of silence, I see him again and, apart from his body

that had become hotter and catchy, he still hadn't lost his innocence and love. There was just something about him.

True to his word, Jeff called me up the following day and we went on a date to catch up; amazingly my second date. He picked me up from my house to a Sushi restaurant at Lekki where we tried out various *sashimi* and *tobiko* recipes. He told me that he hadn't gotten me off his mind. When I asked about the other woman, he laughed and said to me that she had always chased him and he was contemplating giving her a trial seeing I never gave him a chance and he had lost contact with me. I laughed and asked him to go ahead with her. He looked at me piercingly but lovingly and said, *"How can I, when I have found you once again?"* Thoughts of Tunde came haunting me. Would Jeff become that man? I became scared again. I had started my counselling classes and my very first class centered on being spiritually and emotionally receptive to healing from every hurt. I was to learn the art of trust once again. *"This was*

going to be one tough class”, I had thought at the beginning of the class, not knowing that a practical test was imminent.

So here I was, face-to-face with the one my heart yearned for, yet scared to acknowledge this truth. I had a swell time in his company. He made me realize I could trust again and give my heart to another but was I really ready to try that? After hours of talk, gist, fun and a lot of catching up, we had to say our goodbyes. He asked to see me the following day and I lied that I'd be busy but that I would give him a call to let him know when I would be free. He drove me home, gave me a peck and, before leaving me, he stared at me and that look showed me the depth of love he had towards me. I could almost touch it.

It's been a month since I saw Jeff. He calls me every day and I refuse to pick. I sent him a text message asking him to leave me alone, telling him to find another as I was not interested.

Today, exactly a year after, I stand here from afar, at the mall where we bumped into each other, seeing him with yet

another woman. The love, the joy and laughter I saw in his eyes and on his face whenever we were together was missing. He's barely enjoying himself, he seemed distracted; sitting exactly where we sat a year ago. He looked up and sighted me almost immediately. I see his countenance light up, the hope on his face rekindled, I see the question in his eyes, I see the emotions he's struggling to curtail but I just give a curt nod and walk past. I pray for his uplifting. I yearn for his greatness. I desire strongly that he succeeds but here I am in all of this, staring at him in the arms of another with him not knowing the depths of love I have towards him...

*My name is Sasha and I am ready to begin my wellness
journey*

THE FUTURE

... where you can be...

Part Two

THE EIGHT WELLNESS DIMENSIONS AND THEIR INTERACTIONS

THE DIMENSIONS OF WELLNESS



Image source: cpr.bu.edu



We can totally relate to Sasha in many ways. It is interesting to note that quite a number of us have had challenges in some, if not all the eight dimensions of wellness. But even more disturbing is the fact that all these dimensions of wellness work together to affect the three components of the human

entity – *spirit, soul and body*. So, an unbalance in any dimension of wellness, ultimately causes a ripple effect on these tripartite components.

Some of us might not have experienced the neglect that Sasha felt while growing up, some might not have experienced rape or near-rape scenarios. Better still, some had it pretty good all the years of their lives but one event usually happens that puts a dent on the bliss. The earth in itself shows that entropy sets in occasionally. Even Venice, Italy that showcases mother nature as a beauty, experiences natural disasters like flooding. It's all a part of the experiences that must come our way. The question then isn't on how to avoid these challenges but rather how resilient we are in the face of these vicissitudes.

The “*Life is Good*” mantra is not always the case for many people but the ability to stay resilient in the face of these upheaval is what makes our journey to wholeness an absolute

delight. Life might have been good for some but one thing is certain, there comes a time when the balance we set is tilted and equilibrium is threatened. How do we deal with life in such situations?

It is interesting to note that about half the world's population will be exposed to at least one traumatic event in their lifetime.^{vi} What if we tell you that a traumatic event pre- or during adolescence can entirely alter the possibility of attaining wholeness in adulthood especially if one does not heal properly? [Indeed, there is a right and wrong way to heal]. In the United States alone^{vii}, over 60% of adults have as children experienced at least one adverse childhood experience (ACE), and almost a quarter of adults have experienced 3 or more ACEs. Scientists say that a score above 3 makes children 32 times more likely to struggle in school^{viii}. But that's not all. As parents, we want our children to grow into independent adults, flourish in the society and generally

be happy and content with life. But what we do not realize is that people with high ACE scores are more likely to engage in crime, have more broken marriages, more emotional health disasters, more autoimmune diseases and worse still, they are at a risk of their lifespan being shortened by 20 years!^{ix} If these are associated with high ACE scores, should we not pay in-depth attention to parenting? You wonder what parenting has got to do with all of these?

“Hurt people hurt other people”, “broken people break people”, these are popular statements that hold weight and there are scientific theories that back these up. Have you realized that when you are happy, you do your best to make others happy as well? But what happens when you are grumpy? My thoughts exactly! As parents, we are even more at risk to unintentionally break our children or set them up to struggle! A parent who never actually healed from any form of trauma will find it difficult being a wholesome parent. And it’s

impossible to give what you do not have. I'll give a brief example. John watched his dad, a drunk, abuse his mom so bad that she died in one of the assaults. John grew up absolutely hating his dad and ensured that none of his children ever went to visit their grand-dad or worse still participate in any adolescent fun-related activities because he feared his children might encounter alcohol and become a drunk just like his dad. What John however did not realize was that, in a bid to protect his children from the mistakes his father made, he had become somewhat narcissistic and so easily provoked that his children hated him desperately. They would sneak out to join their friends and become alcoholics eventually. When John found out, he became more vindictive towards his children and they in turn became even more rebellious and the cycle continued on and on. Of course, John ended up alone in his old age because his children blamed him for their poor choices and wanted to shield their own children from their

dad. One error can alter the scope of our children’s life-path, not just them but an entire generation.

Children do not automatically grow out of trauma once they turn 18. As parents, we unconsciously believe that becoming legal suddenly plunges our adolescents into independence. While this is so legally, it is far from true psychologically and emotionally. This is one of the major reasons, we deployed our signature products – AWE and TRAIN UP. We greatly recommend you utilize resources on the [website](#).

Several studies have been conducted by different researchers and it keeps getting increasingly clear that people who have survived childhood trauma or any form of trauma are susceptible to varying degrees of disorder in any of the eight wellness dimensions, if they do not heal properly. Contrary to what we believe, time does not heal wounds. Time only reveals. So, what we end up doing while ‘waiting for time

to heal wounds' is to master the art of cohabiting side-by-side with the pain. In other words, we simply acclimatize. The scars are there. The hurts are there. And like a dormant volcano, it lays waiting for a trigger to erupt! What is even more peculiar is the fact that many of these childhood traumatic experiences can be, to a large extent, prevented and when it does occur, can be effectively managed.

In our engagement with adolescents, we have encountered an alarming number of teenagers/adolescents with incredibly high ACE scores. [[You can check ACE scores here](#)]. We consider this very alarming because this affects the adolescent's ability to thrive as measured by the Adolescent Wellness Quotient (AWe-Q) and this is why TSAGE and I will stop at nothing to ensure that we share our knowledge with you as best as we can because we have a dream to bring healing to families, to ensure that no one else goes through [the pain we went](#)

[through](#) as children, and to raise wholesome adults of the future.

All of the eight dimensions of wellness are intertwined and all-round development in all eight of these dimensions is the hallmark of a wholesome adult. If you are a parent reading this book, then we encourage you strongly to take the [AWe-Q Test](#). AWe-Q is an acronym for Adolescent Wellness Quotient. It is the level of an adolescent's holistic health across the dimensions of wellness, often represented by a score in a standardized test. A high AWe-Q score suggests that your adolescent is thriving instead of just surviving and is well on his/her way to becoming a wholesome adult. A low AWe-Q score on the other hand indicates that your adolescent is in urgent need of help, failure to intervene could suggest that they are prone to falling into any of the many vices currently plaguing adolescents globally.

For the adolescents however, we focus on just six of these dimensions because they are largely still on the journey to independence. These six dimensions include spiritual, physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and environmental wellness. An unbalance in one area of wellness many times affects all the other dimensions as you'll later see. Let's discuss the interactions between these wellness areas.

1. Occupational, Environmental and Emotional Wellness

Interaction:

There are subtle feelers in our environment that affect our well-being and wellness without outrightly coming off as such. A toxic environment is as dangerous as ingesting toxic substances. I remember some time ago, while I was working at a management consulting firm. I had a boss who was an authoritarian and an abuser. At the time, I had no idea he was all of that. On my first day at work, there was a feel of gloom

in the air even though the members of staff were very friendly to me.

As months passed, I began to discover that my boss was a narcissist. He would become violent with the staff, physically assaulting them [I was assaulted too on some occasions], he would use demeaning words on us all and even sexually assaulted some. He was a terror. The work place was horror. His words were always laced with poison. I weighed about 60kg before I began working there but, at the time of my resignation, I was 51kg. I had lost a massive 9kg just by being in a toxic environment for less than 8 months. I fell ill too often because I was emotionally unbalanced and I was always making mistakes in my tasks because I was unsettled. My occupational/environmental unwellness had resulted in emotional and physical unwellness.

Prior to this time, I was quite friendly. People gravitated towards me and sought friendship with me because I was

caring. However, at the time I resigned, I was a withdrawn individual with no interest in life. I became a loner which meant I had also become socially unwell.

My role as the Operations Manager while at the company was an interesting one, but my boss as a narcissist made life unbearable. I had always been a very curious and creative person but here, there was no room for creativity, for positive criticism, for fun. He regimented our lives even down to our personal lives. Fast forward months later, I got a job and was working closely with a new boss, but I was always scared and suspicious of him – A symptom of emotional unwellness. All of these started by being in one toxic environment.

We need to realize that occupational and environmental unwellness are as big a problem as any of the other areas. As parents, when work-life balance is skewed or there is career dissonance/dissatisfaction is at play, it leads to all kinds of problems ranging from physical unwellness (ill health) to

transferred aggression especially to our spouses and children (emotional and social unwellness).

2. Environmental, Social and Emotional Wellness

Interaction:

One of the challenges Sasha had, was her environment. She grew up in a community that disregarded females. She had a father who showed her clearly that she did not matter even if it might not have been his intention. This made her emotionally unstable and desperate for love. She found love but she was unable to let herself blossom in it. Her near-rape experience affected her emotionally and she was unable to move past that.

While Sasha might seem to the outside world that she was flourishing especially as her business and career obviously soared, she was damaged on the inside. She was broken. She did not truly have friends as she was too distrustful to bring

anyone into her heart of hearts. She had been withdrawn for so many years. In those ten years of loneliness, she never had a social outing. She went on a date once but broke it off as soon as she realized that they were both in love with each other.

At my previous work place, I experienced bouts of depression. My creativity was dying, and my curiosity was being tamed. It got to me and when I couldn't handle it, I became severely depressed. It took help from TSAGE to bring me out of it.

Emotional unwellness is often the toughest to deal with because it is intangible and requires a lot of patience and sorting out. One formula does not fit all when it comes to tackling emotional burdens but consistent love, the right kind of counselling, guidance and coaching can take a person back to wellness. This was my own case. Sasha is well on her way to

recovery and I do hope she gets her happily ever after with Jeff. Don't you?

3. Physical, Social and Emotional Wellness Interaction:

Again, using Sasha as our case study, she disliked her body image as she wanted to be a boy. While I am not disparaging tom boys, *as I was one myself during my childhood and early teen years*, the reason for the discontent in her body was because she felt that if she became a boy, maybe her father would love her more. Again, we see the import parenting has on children. The effects go well into adulthood.

All the dimensions of wellness typically intersect. All it takes is for a breakdown in one dimension and poof! there is entropy. Like a rotting apple damaging the apple cart, so does damage to one area of wellness affect the others in time.

I had always been slim since I can remember. Maybe even slimmer than normal. During adolescence, I was taller than my age. But in spite of my being slim and tall, I had serious body

image issues. My breasts were a size A, I had hip dips and I had a bulging belly. I felt people cringed at the sight of me. For someone with small breasts, I felt my tommy should be as flat as possible but nature had other plans. It got worse when my friends began to have curvy hips and buttocks while I stayed stagnant. I really struggled to love my body but having to ignore pretty dresses simply because I knew it would not fit my body type really hurt me, made me extremely self-conscious and unable to properly socialize.

What was the resulting effect of my physical unwellness? I became emotionally unwell. I developed inferiority complex. I looked down on myself and ultimately stopped socializing because I felt I was not good enough. When I snapped out of it and began exercises, I began to feel better about myself and a reversal occurred.

Adolescents are very susceptible to developing body image issues and these are things we as parents should look out for

because the resultant effects of that issue are a roller coaster of decisions made in error. I am pretty certain that certain decisions come to mind regarding such decisions you made as an adolescent.

4. Financial, Physical and Emotional Wellness Interaction:

Financial worry is one of the prevalent concerns in our dispensation. The COVID-19 era even made it more pronounced. Financial worry and stress act like a cancer that slowly eats one. It seems like we work so hard with so little to show for it. The funds are low, but the debts keep rising.

I remember a joke a friend of mine once shared. She said, *“sometimes, the sickness will not be cured by taking medications. It will get cured by getting a credit alert from your bank”* Although she was joking, it had a ring of truth to it. Some medical conditions are not primarily caused by an anomaly in our physiology but as a result of financial stress and

worry. Worry triggers stress hormones that weakens the immune system allowing for any kind of illness to find expression in the body.

So, here's the intersection. There's a need but no funds to meet that need. One gets really sad almost to the point of depression. One gets physically and emotionally sick from all of the pressure. Aggression is transferred to the children! A negative cycle is born.

5. Social and Emotional Wellness Interaction:

I remember vividly a period of my life when I was depressed. I refused to go out or meet with anyone. I was just wallowing in self-pity and shame. I could relate to Sasha here. The more you stay at home, cutting off everyone, the more into depression you get. Some of us are introverts. We thrive in solitude; I know I do. But there is a delicate balance. There are occasions when we crave companionship.

As humans, we need a sense of connection, of belonging, a well-developed support system that, if not present, can cause social awkwardness and even family/relationship dysfunction. When that happens, such individual is said to be socially unwell. But it typically doesn't stop there. Social unwellness usually is triggered by other elements, the most common being emotional or physical unwellness.

Occupational unwellness also has a role to play, in that a career dissonance or work-life imbalance can also trigger social unwellness. The wellness dimensions have an interesting yet complicated blend of interaction. Just like an electrical connection in series, when one part burns out, it affects every other part.

One of our value offerings is to show you how to compartmentalize [an electrical parallel connection] so that while we are helping you through the damaged areas of wellness, all other areas are still very intact and healthy.

6. Intellectual, Emotional and Physical Wellness:

Although, I hardly ever attended any social function because of my struggle with body image, I loved to read. I read books beyond my age and my mind was so full of concepts and ideas that were uncommon among my peers. Some termed me as precocious.

A particular incident in my adolescence stands out. My dad forced me to attend a social function with him. It was an elite birthday party and every one of my peers had at the time visited a Western country, some even schooled there and came back to Nigeria only during the holidays. So, imagine my utmost fury when I was forced to go. I already was dealing with a terrible sense of self-worth because of how I felt I looked so I did not want to further compound my issues with an actual comparison with others I actually felt were better than I. Something interesting however, took place.

Because of my vast knowledge from reading books, when I got to the party, I began to put to test some of those etiquettes I had learnt. I was so natural that most of them ended up galvanizing towards me and I became the star of the event. One of the benefits of engaging [our resources](#) is the intellectual strength you'll interact with to improve your parenting skills.

I remember reading Michelle Obama's book, *Becoming* and seeing something striking. She explained that one of the things that helped her become an achiever was her access to good education. This might not sound like a big deal so I am willing to give you a summary of what that was like. She grew up in a community that some people termed, "ghetto." Families were moving out of that environment to give their children a shot at the good things of life. Her family stayed on but her mother ensured that she got the best education even in the 'ghetto'. Michelle would later say that, were it not for

her mother, she would have been set back academically by at least a year and would have had no chance at the Ivy League school she later attended for College.

Even if you stay in an environment that shuts out your creativity like Sasha's or my workplace, it is essential that you have a 'Mitchelle's mom' in your life who would be your eyes and ears, monitoring you and ensuring that you become the best you can be. We can be that to you if you let us.

When creativity is not allowed to flow without interruption, there is an intellectual prowess being shut down. It can be downright frustrating. Frustration is one of the major feelings that leads to emotional unwellness.

7. Spiritual wellness and other dimensions of wellness:

When there is hope beyond the scope of human limitation, man tends to aspire. He tends to keep breaking barriers. Hope is that flame that keeps you going even when all else fails.

Purpose and hope are the two natural elements deeply ingrained in the heart of one who is spiritually well. Purpose is like fire that burns even in the face of opposition. You cannot stop a person who has found purpose, whose daily breath is a reminder that there is a cause to fight for and a territory to take up. I remember clearly the words of a Sage saying, “hope does not disappoint” because truly when there is life, there is hope.

At the beginning of this book, I mentioned that the tripartite nature of man – Spirit, Soul and Body, are actively engaged in all the dimensions of wellness.

Interestingly, all the wellness areas affect two major entities, the emotional (which is the soul seat) and the physical (which is the body). It usually takes strength from our very essence (the Spirit) to fuel the will and desire to snap out of emotional unwellness. Have you seen people in coma who have no resolve to live, how they keep emaciating? But once

hope is fired up in their spirit and they find meaning in life again, the way they recuperate fast is amazing. When the soul is broken, it takes the spirit to cause a resuscitation. What happens when the spirit is broken?

If we were to create an equation that defines how the tripartite nature of man works it would be something like this:



Once hope is kindled in the spirit man, it triggers the will of man [resident in his soul] to strive towards healing and wholeness, then the body recovers. But once the spirit is in despair, there is despondency in the soul and ultimately an unwellness in the body.

The interactions between the dimensions of wellness are unending and could be more complex than what we described in this e-book. But for the purpose of simplicity, we decided to streamline it to these.

Here is an assignment for you: Review your wellness journey as best as you can (*you might need your friends and family to help you out.*) Try to locate your areas of wellness interactions (positive and negative) and see what effect they've had on you. What do you think can be done to bring you to wholeness? You can reach out to us if you need help with this.

Part Three

PRACTICAL STEPS TO THE WWW EXPERIENCE

How to Attain Wellness in All Dimensions

- a) Separate yourself from toxic environments. Whatever does not aid your wellness is slowly damaging you. Cut off from it. If you need to change your location, please do so.
- b) Nature abhors vacuum. Once you have to go through a separation, either from work, places or people, that vacuum would be felt, and the temptation to return to the source of your unwellness becomes inevitable. Ensure you find substitutes for whatever you drop off, pick up healthy substitutes.
- c) Surround yourself with people who can help you and cheer you on. Nothing works faster than having a

support system to cover your back when you are down and to cheer you on when you are advancing.

- d) Like Sasha, seek help. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. Counselling sessions help you find out the “why” it happened, the “why” it’s reoccurring, and shows the “how” to wriggle out of whatever unwellness is ongoing in your life.
- e) Eat healthy. Use the gym. Exercises help brighten the mood. Not to talk of the fitness it brings.
- f) It is essential you find work-life balance. “Is there really such a thing as work-life balance?” I’ve heard people ask. I have also been asked. We have a package (Workplace Emotions) for you that answers this question. If you’ll like us to facilitate a training session with members of staff, kindly reach out to us. We offer you wellness in every area.

g) [Enroll for our parenting courses](#) [TRAIN UP] while you sign up your adolescents to join the waiting list for our adolescent coaching school coming soon.

ON A FINAL NOTE

Thank you for involving us in your personal journey. We hope to hear from you as to how this book has helped you. If you have questions, suggestions, complaints, you can send an email to **tbog@tsageandtbog.com**

Finally, by visiting our website, **www.tsageandtbog.com**, you are sure to find life transforming content that are, at once, entertaining, educative, informative and inspiring. You can also have access to periodic newsletters that help your Wellness, Wholeness and Winning journey. So, don't forget to subscribe!

Love,
TBOG

GLOSSARY

i Makoko is a slum in Lagos, Nigeria. [Here is a link to images showing Makoko](#)

iii Class Monitor. Some call them Class Governor or Class Captain. They are the ones who represent the interest of the teachers in class and ensures the orderliness of the class.

iii Tunde is the shortened version of Babatunde. It is a male name in the Yoruba tribe that literally means, Father Returns. Here is a definition from Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babatunde#:~:text=Babatunde%20\(variant%20forms%3A%20Babatunji%2C,%20C%20grandfather%2C%20or%20great%20grandfather](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Babatunde#:~:text=Babatunde%20(variant%20forms%3A%20Babatunji%2C,%20C%20grandfather%2C%20or%20great%20grandfather)

iv Lekki is a city in Lagos, Nigeria usually occupied by the high class and elites

v Peppersoup is a Nigerian delicacy, primarily liquid, prepared using various meats and usually served hot. [Click here for pictures](#)

vi www.apa.org/advocacy/interpersonal-violence/women-trauma American Psychological Association. Written August 2017. Accessed August 9, 2020. FACTS ABOUT WOMEN AND TRAUMA

vii Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC Washington. Identifying, Preventing, and Treating childhood Trauma. July 11, 2019.

www.cdc.gov/Washington/testimony/2019/t20190711.htm

viii Center For Youth Wellness. Data Report; A Hidden Crises, [Harris, 2017](#)

ix Psychology Today. 7 Ways That Childhood Adversity Can Affect the Brain. August 7, 2015. Donna Jackson Nakazawa, The Last Best Cure. www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-last-best-cure/201508/7/7-ways-childhood-adversity-can-affect-the-brain