

FOREWORD BY REV. GEORGE ADEGBOYE

# RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

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**JOLA-GRACE  
EMMANUEL**

*Practical guide to  
Overcome your past hurts,  
Mistakes and trauma*





# **RISE** **ABOVE YOUR** **PAST**

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**JOLA-GRACE EMMANUEL**

## **RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST:**

A practical guide to overcome your past hurts,  
mistakes and trauma

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To all my mentors, mentees, kin and friends; thank you for your continued support and love.

And to you who has made the decision to rise above your past by reading this book;  
THANK YOU.

## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my **SUSTENANCE**,  
the **KEEPER** of my **SOUL**, **MY EVERYTHING** –**The**  
**ONE WHO MADE ME HIS MASTERPIECE. I'M**  
**GRATEFUL FOR GRACE ABBA FATHER.**





## FOREWORD

**T**here are quite a number of truths about life which every one of us need to be familiar with. One of such is that everybody we see has one or another hidden emotional wound or scar. This is so, regardless of their background, achievements or status in life. This is part of the experience of living in this world, working and relating with other people. Though our scars are different and may be more or less than those of others; we all do have emotional wounds.

Furthermore emotional wounds or hurts takes a whole lot of time to heal than physical wounds. While physical wounds heal pretty quickly, it can at times take years or even decades for emotional wounds to heal. In fact some emotional wounds can linger for a

life time if steps are not taken to bring about one form or another of emotional healing and transformation. It has been said that the average time it takes for a broken bone in our body to heal is between 3 weeks and 24 weeks. In other words, in the maximum of 24 weeks, depending on the age and health of the person, most physical wounds will be healed, but when we talk about emotional wounds, it takes a whole lot of time for them to heal.

Because we live in a broken world, people will always abuse and hurt us, and one thing we need to learn to do is to respond in a helpful way. While some of us are healthy spiritually, vocationally, financially and even physically, we may not be healthy emotionally because of hurts, abuse, ridicule, heartbreaks and people we might have been exposed to. Even if we belong to the best of families,

work with the greatest organization, belong to the best team, a part of a great church or even study in the best of schools; we are still not insulated from being hurt.

The world is not configured in a way to make us supremely happy. It's not every relationship in our life that is going to make us happy. It's not every place where we work that will feed us emotionally by making us glad and contented. It's not every place where we go to serve that will make us happy. It's therefore our responsibility, if we are going to remain emotionally stable to learn how to transform our emotional hurt into strength. We can make smiles out of the limes that life and living throws at us. **Of a truth while we cannot determine what people will do to us but we can determine what to do to be emotionally stable. This is the subject**

**of this book by the author to RISE ABOVE  
YOUR PAST.**

God loves to give second chances to us. When we are given another chance to fulfill our mission in life, my sincere advice is that we should seize it. Don't waste it but rather act as you should by Rising Above Your Past. We can always rise above the past and thus still get to where we were originally destined for in life. This we can, by doing what only we can do to redeem the years and days of our lives that have been wasted or spent less satisfactorily compared to God's original design for us. No matter how badly you may have messed up with your choices and decisions, God hasn't changed your mission on the earth. Maybe it's just that you have started to drift just a little bit. God still hasn't changed your mission. You can get back

on the track that leads to that latter end that was your original dream. This idea is best articulated by the author not just in a theoretical way but in a practical simple easy to understand way. Her writing isn't just from a theoretical understanding of the process of rising above the past but the things she has shared here are the same ones she has put to use that has helped her to get her life back on track after coming out of the rubbish heap of her negative past to the mountain top of her potentials. So get onto it. That is one of the reasons why this book is in your hands. Get started today. When God gives you another chance, don't delay—obey. God's second chances reflect his grace and his love for you.

**George O. Adegbeye**  
**Apostle of God's Word to the Nations**



## INTRODUCTION

**R**ise Above Your Past is a practical guide to help people who have experienced any kind of trauma heal and overcome their negative past.

Life is filled with ups and downs, our experiences have a way of affecting our self-esteem and when the esteem is low, it affects our overall results and outcomes.

Many people go through life being controlled by their past and so they are always in a frustrated state, they feel the world is against them and keep wondering why good things don't happen to them.

A lot of people will experience a traumatic event in their lifetime and trauma steals

our esteem; *World Mental Health Surveys provide estimates that **70.4%** of adults worldwide have experienced a trauma during their lifetime.*

*According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, **61% of men and 51% of women** report at least one traumatic event in their lifetimes.*

Therefore being equipped with the right tools to rise above our negative experiences is crucial.

This book explains why you need to rise above your PAST and how to practically rise above your past. The steps highlighted in this book were steps that I practically took to rise above my negative past. If you don't rise above your past, you'll become stagnated; you may find yourself repeating the same



## INTRODUCTION

mistake over again. Being stuck in your past can also affect your overall health and productivity.

Rising above your past is a journey of reconciling with the past, accepting your mistake, and understanding that your past doesn't define you. It also involves critical analysis of how the negative event happened and if there are any lessons to elicit there from.

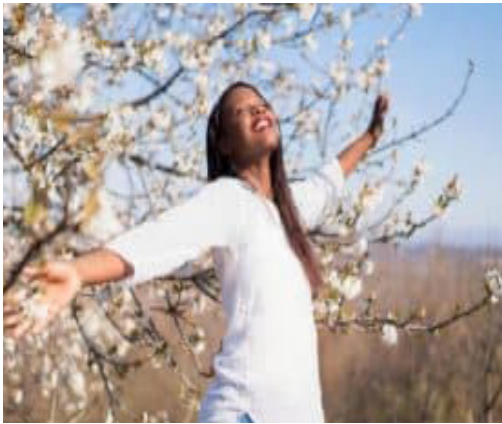
*Rising above your past means  
being present in the present  
because the present is a gift.*

We are also relational beings, we were created for relationships; however, relationships can mar or make us, so we need to carefully evaluate the relationships in our lives in order to rise above our past.



# |CHAPTER 1|

## WHAT IS THE PAST?



*The prosperity of the soul is the foundation to the prosperity of every other area of our being.*



## WHAT IS THE PAST?

The human being is tripartite:

- SPIRIT
- SOUL
- BODY

The prosperity of the soul is the foundation to the prosperity of every other area of our being; if the soul is weak, hurt or distressed, it will affect every other area of our being.

Unfortunately a lot of people focus on their spirit and body but neglect the health of their soul. The soul is the seat of our EMOTIONS, WILL and MIND and when unpleasant circumstances occur and cause us pain, it damages our soul.

The same way our bodies and spirit have needs is the same way our soul has needs. The body needs food, clothing, shelter, water

and air to survive. These are not 'wants' but actual 'needs', in the absence of these elements, the physical body will suffer and will eventually die. Likewise, the spirit has needs, it has been said that the source of every creature preserves it for posterity and stability.

I particularly love fresh flowers and I always have fresh cut flowers in my house all the time, however, no matter how beautiful, expensive or scented the bunch of flower is, it's only but a matter of time before the flower starts fading away and dies. The flower dies after a while because it has been cut away from its root, its source; the soil.

In the same vein, our spirit needs to be continuously connected to God, our source,

## WHAT IS THE PAST?

otherwise just like the flower looks good outside the soil for a while, and then dies, man's spirit can only survive outside of God for a while before it dies, so we must stay connected to our source – GOD.

However, it is important to note that your soul and body can team together to suppress your spirit.

Therefore, we need to pay special attention to the HEALTH of our SOUL; just as our spirit and body has valid needs, our SOUL also has valid needs, not wants, but actual needs, the soul will eventually die if these needs are not met over time.

Some examples of soul needs are attention, affection and appreciation. You will notice

that when you do something as small as giving another car on the road a chance to pass while you wait and the driver doesn't acknowledge or appreciate your kind gesture, you feel bad, like 'he can't even say thank you'. This is because appreciation is a genuine need of the soul.

When the soul is deeply wounded, the **will**, **emotions** and **mind** will cease to function as expected.

So many people have stored up hurts and pain in their soul for years and this has made them stuck and unproductive in life. Emotional wound come in many forms and we react in different ways because we are all wired differently. Emotional wounds can occur from situations such as betrayal from



## WHAT IS THE PAST?

a loved one, accidents, disappointment, loss of a job, contract, business or a loved one. Wounds can also occur from neglect and abuse. Abuse ranging from childhood abuse, sexual abuse, spousal abuse, institutional abuse, religious abuse and so forth.

Some people cope with trauma by dissociating from the unpleasant experience, they internally disconnect from the traumatic event as a coping mechanism; the world around them becomes unreal because they have detached themselves from the event. If care is not taken, this can lead to very serious mental health issues.

Some other people suppress the negative emotions from the trauma they experienced; they try to intentionally or consciously

forget the event as if it never happened, the problem with this is that one day, they will have a major breakdown because of all the negative emotions they have suppressed.

Others repress their negative emotions; they bring themselves to a state where they unconsciously forget the trauma over time, but this doesn't mean they have dealt with it, emotional wound is like physical wound, the fact that you don't remember the wound doesn't mean that if someone touches the spot where the wound is, you won't feel the pain.

It is therefore imperative that you RISE above your past, pain, hurt and trauma. This book will give you step by step practical guide to RISE above your past.

## WHAT IS THE PAST?

WHAT is the Past?

The past simply means time that no longer exists; it's gone, never to be experienced, seen or felt again.

The **P**ain is your PAST

The **A**buse is your PAST

The **S**orrow is your PAST

The **T**rauma is your PAST

The past is a minute ago, the past is an hour ago, the past is 5 hours ago, the past is yesterday, the past is last week, the past is last year, the past is 5 years ago, the past is 38 years ago, it has passed, it can never be regained. So you need to RISE above it.

Sometimes, the past is self-inflicted, you made an error of judgement, you made a

## RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

mistake and it left you with bitter and negative memories, don't beat yourself up; RISE above it, like they say, there is no point crying over split milk. So you made a bad investment and lost money or went late for an appointment and lost a business opportunity or trusted someone too soon and they let you down and now you just can't move past that hurt, you keep rewinding the scenarios and pain over and over in your mind, listen, it is in the past, worrying and stressing over it will not take you back in time.

Other times, the past HAPPENED to you, it was totally no fault of yours, the childhood abuse, the domestic violence and abuse, the sexual assault, the divorce of your parents, the traumatic experience etc, happened due to no fault of yours, however, you still need

## WHAT IS THE PAST?

to RISE above it. Continue reading and I will tell you what to do with your PAST.

The past is not real, the past is not tangible, infact the past is only a memory that is stored in our subconscious mind but is controlling our present negatively. It is important to note that our subconscious mind doesn't need permission to store negative memories, except we make a conscious effort to delete the memories; it stays in there and controls our lives.

According to Freud (1915), the subconscious mind is the primary source of human behavior. Like an iceberg, the most important part of the mind is the part you cannot see. Our feelings, motives and decisions are actually powerfully influenced by our past experiences, and stored in the subconscious.

## RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

Research has shown that our subconscious mind controls up to 95% of our life, that is our emotions, behaviours, actions and decisions are controlled by our subconscious mind. It is therefore important that we are deliberate about what we allow to stay in our mind.

Today is a gift from God, that is why it is called the 'present', we are supposed to daily unravel and enjoy it, unfortunately for many, the memory of the past is stealing the sweetness and joy in today.

Yes, the past happened to you, it did, you can't deny it, your feelings and emotions about the past are VALID, however, you cannot not allow what happened to you to keep happening to you, you must RISE above it and maximise the present.

## | CHAPTER 2 |

### WHY DO I NEED TO RISE ABOVE MY PAST?



*Everything we do has a 'Why', sometimes we understand and acknowledge it, other times, we are oblivious to it.*





## WHY DO I NEED TO RISE ABOVE MY PAST?

Everything we do has a 'Why', sometimes we understand and acknowledge it, other times, we are oblivious to it and that makes it difficult to achieve what we have set out to achieve.

It's very important that we elicit and understand the 'why' of everything we set out to do as this gives us the motivation and push to actually achieve our goals. Many people set out to do things that they eventually don't complete because they never had a full understanding of the 'why' in the first instance. Some others are going through life in default mode because they have not sought to understand the 'WHY' of their existence. Infact, if you understand the 'WHY' of your existence, then you will know that you must RISE ABOVE your PAST. So yes,

it is important that we rise from our past and I don't want you to go along with it; rather I want you to understand the 'WHY'.

The first reason why you need to rise from your past is so that you can **'Overcome Stagnation'**.

*"What is the difference between a living thing and a dead thing? In the medical world, a clinical definition of death is a body that does not change. Change is life. Stagnation is death. If you don't change, you die. It's that simple. It's that scary."*

**— Leonard Sweet**

Stagnant water has an offensive smell,

## WHY DO I NEED TO RISE ABOVE MY PAST?

people will avoid it and treat the container with utmost repulsion, likewise a life that is stagnated will repulse people; we were not designed or created to be stagnant.

We are designed to be in motion, just like when our physical body is not moving regularly it endangers the body, which is why we need physical exercise for good health.

If we don't rise from our past, we will be stagnated in life, stuck in the memory of the pain, abuse, sorrow, and trauma and unable to move forward and achieve newer goals and objectives. We will be constantly stuck in a rut and blinded to new relationships and opportunities that may come our way.

For instance, if you have experienced a break up in your relationship in the past, it can be

difficult to move on from such break up, you will hold on to the pain of the heartbreak and unable to enter into new relationships in the present. The fact is yes, you were hurt, cheated on, abused and rejected and your feelings are VALID, nevertheless, your past experience is not the image of the world in general. There are bad people out there, but there are also good people out there, rising from your past will help you heal, exhale and open up to new relationships. Some people set up unhealthy boundaries after a traumatic experience, they build up a wall and tell themselves that they will never trust anyone again or allow anyone come close to them, the truth is, this action will stagnate you. Yes, you have built a wall, but you are also going to be sad, frustrated and lonely. We were created as human beings to thrive in association.

## WHY DO I NEED TO RISE ABOVE MY PAST?

Nobody thrives in isolation; rather isolation dries your spirit and damages your soul.

The past can be really painful; however, there is life after 'Trauma', the past doesn't have to rob you of your present or the future.

Another reason why you need to rise from your negative past is to **'Stop Negative Vicious Cycle'**, if you don't rise from your past, you will find yourself repeating the same mistakes over and over again. I have worked with people who experienced childhood abuse and didn't heal and went on to experience intimate partner violence and abuse.

If you don't RISE from the past, you will get into a vicious negative cycle, regardless

of whether the past was self-inflicted or it happened to you, there are lessons to glean from each experience, trapping negative emotions on your inside is dangerous to your entire spirit, soul and body. For instance, if you don't RISE above the pain of a bad investment, you will not be able to elicit how you made the mistake so as to avoid such in the future. If you don't rise from the past of a broken relationship, you will not be able to enjoy the benefits of new and great relationships. If you don't rise from the sorrow and pain of an abusive past, you will enter into new relationships in your vulnerable state and will be subjected to being abused all over again.

Albert Einstein said, to keep doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a

## WHY DO I NEED TO RISE ABOVE MY PAST?

different result is the first sign of insanity. Many people find themselves in a negative life circle and think something is wrong with them spiritually, however, they have not taken time to analyse their past and rise above it, so they just keep doing the same things and getting the same negative results.

Another reason why you need to rise from your past is to **‘Overcome Guilt’**. If you don’t rise from the past, you will perpetually live with guilt.

Wikipedia describes the emotions of guilt as *a moral emotion that occurs when a person believes or realizes accurately or not—that they have compromised their own standards of conduct or have violated universal moral standards and bear significant responsibility*

*for that violation. Guilt is closely related to the concept of remorse, regret, as well as shame.*

If you don't RISE above your past, you will carry around the guilt of the pain, abuse, mistake and trauma. Rising above your past will help you **'Overcome Guilt'**. Guilt is a deadly emotion and if carried around for too long causes insomnia, anxiety, depression, low self esteem and other physical diseases such as tension headache. In cases of abuse, the perpetrator often works on the mind of the victim to make them believe that the abuse is their fault. Someone that was raped will be told that it was because of the cloths they wore or the way they looked.

In domestic violence and abuse, the abuser



## WHY DO I NEED TO RISE ABOVE MY PAST?

will tell the victim that it is because of what they did or didn't do, that they were slapped or hit, or spoken to in a derogatory manner. Unfortunately overtime, the victim believes the perpetrator and concludes that everything that goes wrong is their fault. They carry guilt around in their heart and this damages their mental and physical health. Rising above your past will help you get rid of the dangerous negative emotion of guilt.

Making a decision to rise from your past also helps you to **'Regain your Happiness'**. The past has a way of stealing our happiness, we were created to live happy lives and our brain is affected by every emotion we feel. The brain is the engine of the human life, if the engine of a car knocks, the car is as good as useless, likewise if there is a problem with

the brain of the human, it affects every other area of the human life. Anything that steals your happiness is destroying your life, when your body feels happy; it releases hormones such as serotonin, oxytocin and dopamine into your central nervous system and makes your body healthier.

You need to RISE above the past because staying in the past is actually damaging your overall health. Part of the agenda of the devil is to steal, kill and destroy by holding you prisoner to your past.

You also need to rise from your past so you can **‘Regain Control’**. In Neuro linguistic programming, we usually ask the question; who/what is driving your red car? That is who or in this instance ‘what’ is controlling

## WHY DO I NEED TO RISE ABOVE MY PAST?

your actions and behaviour and in essence your life?

For a lot of people, their past is driving their red car, every decision they make is rooted in their painful past, they can't trust anyone again because an individual betrayed them in the past, and this makes them live a frustrated and unfulfilled life. When you rise above your past, you take control of your life back, your decision and choices will be independent of your painful past.

You also need to RISE from your past so you can **'Fulfil PURPOSE'**; you were created intentionally by God. You are not an afterthought; God didn't just say to Himself, I need to create 1 billion people today and then you just happen to be part of that batch.

## RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

No, God saw a need on earth and He knew you were the one to meet that need, so He took His time to carefully and precisely form and shape you for purpose.

**“For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.**

**Psalms 139:13-16 (NIV)**

You were created on PURPOSE for a PURPOSE, so it’s time to RISE...

# |CHAPTER 3|

## RECONCILE WITH THE PAST



*What actually happened?*



## RECONCILE WITH THE PAST

*I am going to use 'RISE' as an acronym to give 4 ways to rise above your past.*

**T**he first step to rising from your PAST is to RECONCILE with what happened. It's very easy to live in delusion when it comes to issues of our past; we tell ourselves 'it didn't happen' because we don't want to feel the pain, shame and guilt of the past, so we pretend it never happened, you need to reconcile with your past if you want to rise above it.

Many people live in 'denial', which is one of the stages of grieving when it comes to the issue of their painful past. Denial is a coping mechanism, which can be okay for a while especially when going through the pain of

the trauma. Someone who is experiencing abuse can tell themselves that the abuse is not real and just in their head just so they don't feel the pain of the trauma they are experiencing. Denial is unhealthy because even though it will help you block the reality of your situation from your subconscious mind to minimise the pain of the present, it can lead you to losing control, you can get used to living a life of denial that facing and dealing with the truth becomes very difficult in the long run. Reconciling with your past can be a difficult task, because it requires you to face the truth of the mistake you made and how negatively it has affected your life, but the truth is that if you want to move past what happened to you, you have to face it and accept that it happened to you.



## RECONCILE WITH THE PAST

You might have made a mistake or an error of judgement, that doesn't mean you cannot start again, mistakes make us human, and staying in the past is dangerous to your future. Oftentimes, emotions of guilt and shame hold us back from reconciling with our past, we feel ashamed of the situation we have found ourselves in, we wonder what people will think about our situation and we fall in love with the idea of denial.

Sometimes we tell ourselves that things will sort of fall back into shape and we will just wake up one day and everything will be perfect again, it's important to note that nothing just happens, life is an accumulation of input and output. The emotions of shame and guilt are dangerous to our mind and body, medical research has shown that 75-90% of

the diseases we have in our physical body is as a result of toxic emotions trapped on our inside, part of which is shame and guilt.

*There was a guy whose youthful exuberance made him ask his billionaire father for his inheritance, the father obliged him and gave him his share, this guy went abroad and wasted his resources on wild lifestyle, designers gears, girls, parties, clubbing etc until all his money was gone and guess what, his girl friend and all his friends left him. You know what they say, 'the rich always has friends' but the poor is all alone. This young guy started struggling to feed himself in a strange land, he became homeless to the extent that he had to go and get a job at a pig farm, not only was he sleeping on the farm, he had to sneak to eat part of the pig's food.*

*Thoughts of him going back to his dad crossed his mind, but he quickly brushed them aside and told himself, the shame is way too much, whattttt?, how can he go back home, after bragging to everyone, especially his elder brother and all his dad's servants, naaah, he decided to stay put and told himself, everything will be ok. He was in denial, he told himself, he will be alright, he assured himself that his friends will come looking for him and will help him, after all, they enjoyed his money together, he kept telling himself that he is still that big boy and he will wake up the next morning and his girlfriend will be back.*

*After several months of working on the farm, he realised one day that his friends were not coming back, he realised that he was broke*

*and will probably spend the rest of his life at this farm and die a wretched, lonely and sad man. Over the next few days, he began to reconcile with his past and the shame thereof, he decided one day to return home and ask his dad for forgiveness; he had to choose to rise above the shame of his past in order not to die a wretched, poor old man.*

The above story depicts a past that was self inflicted, some people have a past that 'happened' to them, such as childhood abuse, spousal abuse, sexual abuse etc; regardless of the kind of past you've had, it is in your best interest to reconcile with what happened to you rather than allow it to keep happening to you. The past is in the past, you cannot go back and change anything; all you can do now is to accept that it happened and

rise above it.

*“Never be ashamed of your past. It’s all part of what made you the amazing person you are today.”*

**– Yehuda Berg**

Rising from a painful past is coming out of grief and grief is not limited to the loss of a loved one alone, anytime, you lose anything, you grieve over it. For instance, losing money in an investment, losing a marriage, a relationship breakup, losing a job, a contract or a position. All these are instances of our past and we need to rise from it.

**RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST**

# | CHAPTER 4 |

## INVESTIGATE THE PAST



*How did it happen?*





**A**fter reconciling with your past, the next step is to INVESTIGATE your past. You need to ask yourself what happened. Why did it happen? How did it happen? Life is a learning curve and if we refuse to learn from our past experiences, we risk the possibility of repeating the same mistake over and over again. Some of the painful past we experienced was as a result of a mistake. A mistake has been defined as an act or judgment that is misguided or wrong.

- Money you wasted. ...
- Time you wasted. ...
- Friends you hurt. ...
- Friends who hurt you...
- Friendships lost. ...

- Love you lost. ...
- Opportunities you missed

Whatever the case, you need to put on your detective cap and begin to objectively look into your past in order to figure out what led to that choice, if you made a wrong financial investment, ask yourself if you didn't do your due diligence or you acted too fast. If you were betrayed by a friend, ask yourself if you trusted this person too quickly, ask yourself if you really knew who this person was before you confided in them. Oftentimes, we are quick to call people 'friend' and become vulnerable with them, vulnerability is a gift that should be given to those who have gone through the test of true friendship. Friendship is not the same as acquaintanceship; the fact that someone seems nice when you

met them doesn't mean they are nice. You can be acquainted with someone without being vulnerable with them; you also need to understand that everybody will not be a good fit for you. One of the greatest causes of conflict in relationships is misalignment of values. Before you call someone a friend, you need to have checked that their values align with your value and this takes time, it cannot be done over night.

Walter Winchell said and I quote, *"A real friend is one who walks in when the rest of the world walks out."*

Oftentimes, we are drawn to people based on their personality, but personality is not character, character needs to be proven over time, never commit until character is proven.

No one can consistently behave in a way that is inconsistent with who they are on a consistent basis.

*"A friend is someone who understands your past, believes in your future, and accepts you just the way you are."*

— **Unknown**

A few years ago I had a major life changing situation and while I was investigating that painful past I realised, I made the mistake that brought about that past because I did not take time to know 'who' the person I was relating with, I only knew 'what' the person represented. There's a huge difference between 'who' someone is and 'what' someone is. 'What' is temporal; 'what' has to do with external characteristics,

achievements, charisma, profession, positions, office etc, while on the other hand 'who' has to do with the being of an individual, the character, the identity, the personality. 'What' is related to 'doings', whereas, 'who' has to do with 'being'. It is very easy to get carried away with 'doings' and not remember to pay attention to the 'being'.

Most often than not, the 'Who' doesn't change, a lot of people who have been in abusive relationships will say they saw red flags, but sort of explained it away because of 'what' the person represented. The red flags represents the 'who' of the person, the excessive anger, bitterness, unhealthy jealousy, wickedness, selfishness etc.

Love is a being; it has an identity, it is patient, kind, gentle, forgiving, humble, protects,

hopes and delights in truth (1 Cor 13).

Sometimes in investigating your past, you also need to check if you had people in your life who were interested in you because of your 'what', so maybe you are a CEO, MD, celebrity, HOD etc, these people don't necessarily care about your who, your person, your being, but perhaps because you enjoyed the attention, you trusted these people and they betrayed you.

In some other cases, you may realise that you were in the wrong place at the right time or you were weak and vulnerable and had no one to guide and counsel you or they did and you did not take the counsel.

**“...But in the multitude of**

**counselors there is safety”**

**- Proverbs 11:14b**

In your investigation, you may also realise that you made some relationship mistake that caused the wound in your soul. Let me quickly take you through some common relationship mistakes that cause deep hurts.

**1. Irrational expectations:** Irrational expectations become unmet expectations, and unmet expectations have a way of causing friction, hurts and misunderstanding. For instance, expecting that your uncle or aunty somewhere should fund your life and they tell you they can't, you then become bitter and bad mouth them to the whole family. First of all, you don't know the commitment that person has, so you cannot be calculating

their income and assuming they owe you, that is sheer entitlement mentality. I have also seen parents who insist that their children take up the family business and the child doesn't want to because they have other interests and passion in life. This can cause deep wound in the soul of the child and the parent may have also held hurt in their heart against the child.

**2. Poor communication:** Lack of communication hinders the growth of relationships and has the potential to cause friction, frustration and hurt. Communication is the blood of every relationship. Sometimes, we can avoid pain and hurt if we pay attention to our communication skills. In Neuro linguistic Programming, we usually say that, **'The meaning of your communication**



**is the response you get’.** Your intention may be clear to you but it is the other person’s interpretation and response to what you communicated that reflects that validity and effectiveness of your communication skills.

Assuming that people know how you are feeling because you are afraid of what the response will be if you communicate your true feelings is a magnet to hurt and pain. Assumptions lead people wrongly, it destroys relationships and causes pain.

When we assume, we spiral into a train of thoughts that negatively affects our mood and eventually our actions.

**3. Displaced Vulnerability:** even though vulnerability is important, you need to

protect it, you can't be vulnerable with everyone. We make mistakes in relationships when we become vulnerable too quickly or vulnerable to the wrong person. A lot of people have been hurt deeply because they were vulnerable to the wrong person and this has left them stagnated in life. You need to RISE above your past.

**4. Lack of capacity Assessment:** we all have different capacities, he gave one 10, 5, 1 each according to their capacity. We ruin relationships and get hurt because we demand 10 from the person that has capacity for 2.

Romans 12:3-8 says, *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but*

*rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance **with the faith God has distributed to each of you.** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your[a] faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead,[b] do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.*

**5. Personal imperfection:** we often forget that we are not perfect and we tend to easily

jump at other people's imperfections and react at the first instance of problems. Some people have taken offence and kept toxic emotions on their inside because they refuse to give people leeway, they expect people to be perfect to their own detriment.

**6. Lack of Boundaries** is another common relationship mistake. When you don't have healthy boundaries, people will walk all over you and hurt you over and over again. Lack of boundary can mean inability to say NO, imagine living in a house that doesn't have windows and doors, even though the space to install the windows and doors have been carved out. The house will be porous, exposed and unsafe, anybody can just walk into the house, birds and other reptiles will come in at will, rain will fall and

drench the house ruining everything inside. This is the same way your life is if you don't have healthy boundaries in place. Healthy Boundaries is both physical and emotional. Physical boundaries involve what you are comfortable with regarding personal space, touch, and privacy, emotional boundaries, on the other hand, involves how close you allow people to get to you to the extent that they affect your feelings negatively. Allowing people to invalidate your feeling is lack of emotional boundary.

Whatever you discovered in your investigation is not to condemn you but to help you RISE above that painful past. Once you investigated and elicited the how, why, what, you then need to forgive. You need to forgive yourself for trusting the person you

shouldn't have trusted, you need to forgive yourself for enlarging that person's 'what' over their 'who', you need to forgive yourself for ignoring the red flags, you need to forgive yourself and accept that you made a mistake. It was a mistake and it is in your past, you can RISE above it. Mistakes make us human, your mistake doesn't define you, you are not your mistake, you are who God says you are,

You are phenomenal

You are special

You are valuable

You are intelligent

You are beautiful

You are wise

You are charming

You are lovely

You are a MASTERPIECE.

Forgive yourself.

Take a deep breathe in and exhale through your mouth, do this three times and call your name, '.....I forgive you'. Remember, you are not perfect, so you are prone to mistakes; what you need to do with the mistake is to RISE above it.

You also need to forgive those who contributed to that painful past, carrying the toxic emotion of unforgiveness is dangerous to your physical, mental and spiritual health. Every time you think about your past and the parties that contributed to the emotional wound, you feel the pain all over again, you get irritated, angry and bitter, you cannot RISE above the past going through this

motion over and over.

*“Unforgiveness is a poison that shrivels the heart. It means a person cannot truly live in the present as they’re always thinking about the past.”*

— **Carolyn Miller**

Forgiveness is not about the person that wounded you, it’s actually a gift you give to yourself, otherwise you will be stagnated for the rest of your life and miss new opportunities and relationships that will come your way. Life is meant to be progressive; new opportunities will always flow in our direction, but if we carry unforgiveness in our hearts, we will not see the opportunities. The fact that there are fake people means



there are original and genuine people as well, but if you don't forgive, you will believe that everyone is bad and you won't be able to trust anyone again, therefore you will constantly self-sabotage.

It is important to note that forgiveness doesn't mean you give access to the person that wounded you to come back into your life. I can forgive you and still block you from my life. Forgiveness also doesn't mean you totally forget the past, the wound can heal but it leaves a scar, the scar doesn't hurt, but it is a reminder of where you are coming from and not to make the same mistake again. Forgiveness means when you think about the person and event, you don't feel the hurt, it means you don't feel angry and bitter towards them, it means you don't wish

them bad and you can genuinely pray for their wellbeing. Forgiving people who have caused us deep wound in our hearts can be tough, but it is possible, start by making a decision for forgive and then asking God to help you forgive.

Now ask yourself if I were to go back in time, what will I do differently? Write down 5 lessons from the mistake of your past.

# | CHAPTER 5 |

## STRENGTHEN THE PRESENT



*The present is a gift that needs  
to be unwrapped*



*No matter, what happens, or  
how bad it seems today, life  
does go on, and it will be a  
better tomorrow.*

**— Maya Angelou**

**T**he present is a GIFT that is why it is called the 'PRESENT', however a lot of people do not unravel the gift of today because they are consumed with their painful past. Yes, the past happened and it was painful, I am not disputing that fact, and your feelings about the past are VALID. Nevertheless, you need to understand that the past is in the past and the present is here and carries fresh opportunities. Strengthening the present means taking a stock of what you have left internally and externally and focusing on them.

## RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

You might have lost a lot, physically and psychologically, but you have not lost EVERYTHING, so what do you have left? What is worthy of gratitude in your life right now.

Take a break and write down 10 things that you still have and are grateful for?

-

-

You might have lost a marriage, but you still have a loving extended family, you still have your children, siblings, friends and other support groups.

You might have lost a business opportunity or investment, but you still have your mind, your intellect is intact.

You might have had a traumatic childhood, but you are now a parent yourself and have

achieved a lot despite the pain of your past.

You might have been betrayed and disappointed by a trusted person, but you still have your sanity and other reliable people in your life.

The trauma did not take your life, you are still breathing, you still have a roof over your head, you are still healthy, you can see to read this book, you can comprehend what you are reading and take action. You still have hope, you still have faith in God; that's more than enough to be grateful for.

*"We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope."*

**– Martin Luther King, Jr**

Hope provides the motivation and courage needed to rise above your past.

*It's been said that a person can live forty days without food, four days without water, four minutes without air, but only four seconds without hope.*

You also strengthen the present by rediscovering yourself; oftentimes our painful past steals our true identity. So many people numb the pain of their trauma by taking up another identity, for instance someone who is naturally jovial and outgoing can become very introverted, timid and quiet because of abuse. Such an individual on exiting the abusive relationship needs to rediscover who they really are.



## STRENGTHEN THE PAST

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines trauma as *“a delayed or protracted response to a stressful event or situation (either short or long-lasting) of an exceptionally threatening or long-lasting nature, which is likely to cause pervasive distress in almost anyone”*.

Trauma affects your ability to cope and reduces your self-worth, it makes you feel less than you really are and causes you to doubt your abilities and capabilities. You are not your PAST, you are not your mistakes, you are not your failures. The investment might have failed, you did not fail. Your marriage might have failed, you are not a failure. Strengthening the present involves you shutting up the voice in your head that keeps telling you that you are a failure because some things in your life failed. YOU ARE NOT

## YOUR PAST.

You need to embark on the journey of healing and self-discovery, most often than not, you will need the help of a good therapist/coach to rediscover your true identity.

When your identity is distorted, you become oblivious of the potentials that you carry and inevitably live below the standard God expects of you.

Remember that you were created on purpose with a purpose. That purpose will never be fulfilled if you don't embark on the journey of rediscovering your true identity.

There is gold on your inside, you have hidden treasure that must be dug out; refuse to

## STRENGTHEN THE PAST

allow your past to hinder the world from benefitting from the treasure on your inside. Strengthen the present and rediscover yourself.

To strengthen your present, you need to adjust your focus.

**“but I FOCUS on this one thing:  
Forgetting the past and looking  
forward to what lies ahead,”**

**- Phil 3:13 (NLT)**

What you focus on multiplies, what you focus on increases, what you focus on expands.

You need to focus on the positivity around you. You need to focus on the gift of the present. Wake up every day and look around

## RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

you for positivity, write them down and meditate on them. There is good in each day, because every day is a gift from God and there is good in God.

Your thoughts determine your emotions and your emotions determine your behaviour, so if you want to RISE from your painful past, you need to begin to consciously focus on the positives around you. Make your life a zero tolerance negativity zone.

# | CHAPTER 6 |

## EVALUATE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS



*You are a product of your environment;  
your physical, mental and spiritual  
environment will inevitably shape your life.*



## EVALUATE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

**T**he fourth step in RISING from your PAST is to Evaluate your Relationships. Relationships are vehicles that take us to our destination. If you want to get to the destination of health and healing in your soul, then it is critical that you evaluate the relationships in your life. Like you've heard so many times, some relationships in our lives are seasonal, some are for a specific reason and others are for life. The ability to carefully evaluate and assess each relationship in your life is key to rising above your past. Some people get stuck in their past because they have expired relationships in their lives, others are stagnated in their past because they have not connected to or nurturing the right destiny relationships.

You need to evaluate your relationships to

ascertain that the people in your life are going in the same direction as you. Two cannot work together except they agree. Do you share similar values and beliefs with people who are in your close circle?

You need to evaluate your relationships to ascertain that you are comfortable in those environments.

Every human being was created to be in relationships where they can be themselves and not walk on egg shells. We are meant to be in environments where we can trust and be trusted and where we can be vulnerable without being judged.

As human beings we are wired to be in relationships where we are loved and cared



## EVALUATE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

for genuinely. So you need to ask yourself if the people around you right now truly care for you as a person and not just what you represent.

We are all products of our environment; our physical, mental and spiritual environment shape our lives. A lot of what you had to deal with in the past was as a result of the environment you found yourself in, therefore if you want to RISE above your past; you need to critically assess your environment.

Charlie Jones said, You will be the same person in five years as you are today except for the people you meet and the books you read.

One of the first things you need to do if you

want to RISE above your painful past is to set boundaries in your relationships. You heal faster when your circle is reduced. Someone that has just gone through a surgical operation will not be allowed to go home straightaway after coming out of the theatre; the doctors will first of all put such a person in a recovery room when no one can see him except medical practitioners who need to be there. Afterwards the person will be moved to a ward in the hospital where only a limited number of people will be given access and for a limited time, until the person is well enough to be discharged and sent home. The reason why this person won't be sent home straightaway is because there will be too many people in that person's environment and this will slow down the healing and recovery period. Likewise, when your soul is wounded

## EVALUATE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

and you are in the process of healing, you need to set boundaries and understand that you don't need everybody in your life, you cannot be in the good books of everyone and only some people are meant to be in your life at this crucial period. Some people find it difficult to set such boundaries, because they want everyone to like them, they thrive on the energy of other people, they feel so low about their worth and will do anything to make people like them. News flash! EVERYBODY WILL NOT LIKE YOU. Setting healthy boundaries will release you from being addicted to other people's opinion.

You also need to set healthy boundaries in your life if you want to RISE above your past because some people in your life right now will stop you from rising, they will keep reminding you of that painful past and rub it in your face.

Setting healthy boundaries can be challenging, but it is necessary if you truly want to rise above your past. In some instances you might have to change your geographical location in order to RISE above that painful past, we are all wired differently, so assess and choose what's best for you.

Assessing your mental environment involves checking the information you consume, your eyes and your ears are the gateway to your soul. The things that you hear and see has a way of registering in your subconscious, it is important to note that your subconscious doesn't take permission from you before it stores information in its memory, that is why you can be in a store and hear a certain song even if it's one you don't like and then get home and start humming the same song. No

## EVALUATE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

wonder Solomon in Proverbs 4:23 challenged us to guard our hearts with all diligence for out of it comes the issues of life.

The fact that a particular content is good doesn't mean that it is what you need at certain crucial periods of your life. If you want to RISE above your past, you need to check the content that you are consuming and assess if it is truly helping you to rise above your past or is making you stagnant.

Also, it might be ok for you to consume some content as you begin to grow out of your pain, but it comes a point when you need to change your diet and start consuming other content that will help you go to your next level of healing.

## RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

**“When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.”**

**1 Cor 13:11 (NIV)**

Spiritual environment is very critical to the health of your soul. Remember, man is tripartite; spirit, soul and body. Man is a spirit and when the source of a thing is disconnected from its source, it dies. Man's source is God, therefore it is imperative that you assess your spiritual environment and reconnect to your source. Cultivating a personal walk with God doesn't have anything to do with religion, infact I am not religious because religion is toxic, in my personal journey of RISING above my past, I sought God and reignited my walk with Him.

## EVALUATE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

He showed me Himself as a LOVING and GOOD GOD.

If you are not in a spiritual environment that will help you know God for yourself, then you need to assess and make adjustments because you cannot RISE above your past without a deep intimate relationship with GOD.

**RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST**



## CONCLUSION

**‘.....but I focus on this one thing:  
Forgetting the past and looking  
forward to what lies ahead”**

**- Philippians 3:13**

**F**ocus is a powerful tool, what you focus on expands; you give strength and power to what you focus on. Everyone is focusing on something at every single point in time because it is impossible for the mind to be empty at any given point in time. What you focus on sets your heart and mind on fire and the flames spread all through your being.

## RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

We all have a PAST,

- some are dark
- some are painful
- some are traumatic
- some are good

Regardless of the kind of past you have had, if you want to move forward in life, you must RISE from the past.

You must change your focus from the hurt, pain, regret, shame, guilt, resentment, anger and start focusing on TODAY.

*'Be PRESENT in the PRESENT,  
because the PRESENT is a gift  
from God'*

**-Jola- Grace Emmanuel**

## CONCLUSION

‘There is life after TRAUMA, begin to live intentionally, be vulnerable with the right people, get professional help, refuse to stay stagnated.

You may not have had control over what happened in the past, but darling, you have control over what happens in the present and how your future will turn out.

Your past happened to you, but it doesn't have to keep happening to you. You might not have control over what happened to you, but you have control over how you respond to it in the present.

Make up your mind to move forward, you have stayed stagnated for too long; your best days are ahead of you, but you need to

make the decision to RISE above your past. You need to accept the past regardless of whether it was within your control or out of your control.

*“You cannot change what you don’t accept”*

**– Jola-Grace Emmanuel**

Accepting what happened doesn’t mean defeat; it is actually the first step to making positive progress. When you accept the past, your eyes will be opened to elicit the lessons from the past. Living in denial about your past keeps you in a rot and negative cycle. The lessons we learn from our past will help us make better decisions in our present and future. These lessons will also empower us to help others around us. Living in the past also

## CONCLUSION

robs us of the joys of the present. Knowing that the past cannot be changed helps us focus on what we have in the present. There's always something to be grateful for in the present, and focusing on the past leaves the gift of the present unwrapped.

Relationships are vital to our rising, so it is also very important that we evaluate the relationships in our lives if we want to rise from our past and make progress as some relationships will make it impossible for us to rise and soar.

There is a workbook that comes with this book, I'll advise you get, it will take you through practical steps on a week by week basis to rise above your past and soar.

## RISE ABOVE YOUR PAST

Your best days are definitely not behind you, they are ahead of you.

**I am the Soul Doctor, my name is Jola-Grace Emmanuel and I am passionate about the health and healing of your soul.**

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Jola-Grace Emmanuel is the SOUL DOCTOR. She helps trauma victims, the broken, emotionally wounded, and abused to heal and reinvent themselves for an excellent life.

Even though she had her first degree in Accountancy and her second degree in Financial Decision Analysis, Jola-Grace is passionate about the HEALTH and HEALING of the SOUL.

She is a Mental Health Advocate; a certified Life and Trauma Recovery Coach, a Cognitive Behavioural Therapist, an associate member of the European Mentoring and coaching Council, a Counsellor, a Neuro Linguistic Programming Therapist, an Emotional

Freedom Technique & Matrix Reimprinting  
Therapist with over 15 years experience in  
public speaking.

She launched the Belle Initiative and Belle Magazine in 2015 and also produced and hosted a weekly talk show on DSTV that was aimed at helping women harness their inner and outer beauty. Jola-Grace went through many years of domestic violence and abuse and has now reinvented herself from a place of pain, low self-esteem, depression and suicide ideation to a place of confidence, wholeness, fearlessness and PURPOSE.

She has helped many to heal and recover from traumatic experiences, understand interpersonal relationship dynamics, feel good about themselves, develop a healthy



self esteem, regain their self-confidence and self-worth and REINVENT themselves for an excellent life after Trauma through one on one therapy and coaching sessions, group therapy sessions, group training, masterclasses, bootcamps and public speaking.



**T**ime is split into the Past, the Present, and the Future. The life we have lived is called the Past. The life we will live is called the Future. And in between these two lives, is the life we are currently living, called the Present.

Your history is just as important as your future. But if you keep looking back, you will lose sight of what is ahead. There is far more ahead for you, than anything you left behind you.

In this powerful book Jola-Grace reiterates this fact succinctly. There is nothing that can be changed about the past; it has passed. What we can change, are the Present, and the Future. Stop reliving your mistakes and failures of the past. God is about to do something new.

With utmost sense of responsibility, I recommend this book. Face front! Face your future!

**FUNKE FELIX-ADEJUMO**

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