

CARE CONTINUITY CHALLENGE INITIATIVE

DISCUSSIONS ON THE CHILD – PART TWO



THE CHILD WITHIN

Today, I'd like to celebrate the child within. That's the inner child that's in every one of us. We can truly relate to children, when we are able to tap into our inner child. We cannot empathise with something we have no understanding of...and fortunately for us, we have all been there. Apart from that, there are still wonderful traits of the child that is nurtured in each one of us.

No matter how old a man gets, he likes to be taken care of, looked after. Ever seen a man down with the cold?? You might never guess that the same man is able to cope with the demanding work schedule of a business man. In the same way, women also never grow out of the need to feel loved and protected - to be special! It is the reason we go to such great lengths to be beautiful, because we like being noticed and appreciated. Children are naturally self-centred. I remember as a child, it used to blow my mind just imagining what went on in a room I'd just left when I was no longer there! Children are also short-sighted. They don't understand delayed gratification. They want what they want and they want it NOW! In many ways, adults still have these challenges. You can see it on the streets of Lagos in traffic, with the 'me-first' mentality, and you can see it in the pursuit of happiness, as people go broke buying what they don't need to impress others!

So, my question is, if we can all relate to the child so much, why is there so little understanding given to the child? Why do we expect them to do things we couldn't do at their age, and still struggle with? There are parents who shout insults at their children for small mistakes that they make. Then there are those who don't know how to talk and only beat! Some might say they are only doing what they think is right from their own experience. But really, put yourself in that child's shoes. The real question is how DID you feel? This is not to promote pampering of children, but developing an understanding of the psyche of the child, and choosing to reason with them, and discipline in a manner that shows love and your respect for their dignity.

Now, here's the really good part. The child is hopeful and optimistic. The child is also resilient, and can thrive in the midst of hardship, with only a little love. The child can be thoughtful, is simple, and easy to teach. These are traits that the hard knocks of life often kick out of many of us as we attain maturity. We become pessimistic and critical, and we think that we are wise. But the good book tells us to retain these positive traits of the child like gold, and that we cannot receive the ultimate blessing if we do not have the heart of a child! So, today, remember the child in you. Look at the world through the eyes of that child. What you hoped to become, what you envisioned for your immediate world (society), and ask yourself - am I being true to that child? Now look at the child on the street. He too has a hope, and a dream. He is counting on you, his elder brother or sister to prepare a way for him, so that his world, when he attains maturity will not be one of darkness, but the one that we all as children dreamt about.

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