

Life's Most Elusive Yet Destructive Decades



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When growing minds are in their life's first decade, they are at the peak of protection. As toddlers, they enjoy every look and gaze that the caregiver gives. I agree that there are some whose caregivers, relatives, or even neighbours turn into predators. What a sad reality! Yet in general, societies remain very protective of persons in this age. It is also at this stage when young ones join playgroups, pre-primary classes, and eventually primary. In all these stages, they are comparable to a crush, from which one can hardly find an escape valve. Within the crush, the crowd of growing minds is guided towards the desired end. Sad it is that some, fail to enjoy this very angelic life phase for whatever reasons.

In the second decade, the crush continues leading to yet another crush. As they enter adolescence, they are often at the end of their primary school. The pathway leads to secondary school where hours and even minutes, if not seconds are spent under close surveillance. Parents, guardians, educators, and even security agents, have their eyes on members of this decade. Having the energies, the truancies as well as the immense hunger to search for identity, persons in this age, cannot be let loose. Thanks to educational institutions. Thanks too to the Free Primary Education programs as well as the subsidized Secondary School Education programs that allow large percentages of these minds to be in enclosed quarters. Again, it is sad that there are adults that seek to take undue advantage of these young ones and lay traps that culminate in life-long wounds. Some fall prey to teenage pregnancies, drugs, and even crime. May we all of good will work towards retaining as many as possible in the crush.

The focus of this writeup is, however, on the next two decades: 20-29 and 30 -39. These are what we refer to as the most elusive yet destructive decades. For the first time the guardians of a twenty-year-old, have started lowering their guards since the young one, is too big to be contained. Not only has the individual received a National Identity Card denoting adulthood and expected maturity, but is also out of the crush of primary and secondary education. With the newfound freedom, life hawks are fully aware of the unsuspecting loose chicks, that are in turn fighting for space and could also end up hurting each other.

For those that come from poverty-stricken backgrounds, their ignorant parents change their discourse into, "Now you are big enough to fend for yourself". To a young man, this could mean getting into any engagement that could earn money. In a country where joblessness is at its peak and underpayments are the norm, dangers are all over for these young adults. With little direction and with the hawks ready for such fresh blood, recruitment into terror gangs and drug traffickers could easily be a welcome path. For the young ladies, fresh as they appear and attractive to anyone whose main focus is on sex conquest, here lie untouched virgins. These could easily find themselves heartbroken, time and again, oblivious that these repeats easily pave the way to prostitution, early marriages, or single motherhood. What about the large numbers that end up being trafficked to unknown lands where they

fall prey to all sorts of mal-treatment including death! The paragraph is not only for those that come from poor backgrounds but is often case also for those who have little strength to say “NO” to floods of age and group conformity.

It is in this decade that individuals are meant to cement their professionalism. This is achieved by culminating in the first degree and having initial engagements in the world of remunerations. It is at this age that intimate relationships (not necessarily ending up in sex) get planted and are steadily allowed to grow without interfering with the trends of professionalism. This means that one is meant to identify true birds of a feather that one is going to flock together with, majorly for the better part of their life. The direction in which the flock is headed shall certainly contribute largely to who the individual becomes. Each bird in the flock of engagement is to be critically scrutinized to see the value it brings. Blind flocking has undesired consequences. More than in the first two decades, parental check, mentorship, and accompaniment have never been more necessary.

Woe unto they that focus so much on monetary activities at the expense of the integral growth of the individual. Parents, guardians, as well as educational systems often have little to offer to persons of this decade, other than what is deemed marketable courses. It is even more sad to find institutions focussing on money-making endeavours in the name of courses, taking advantage of unsuspecting parents and guardians. A society that sees its generations in these first three decades as sources of income, seeks its destruction.

The next decade of 31-40 is another elusive yet destructive decade. Those that started making their tunnel in the previous decade, can start attempting to see light at the end of it. Those that made a mess of themselves in the previous decade, still have a chance to redeem themselves. This time society has very discrete opportunities and less patience for they that are yet to realize that they are on the wrong path. Contrary to those in the last two decades when the society is continuously shouting warning them of wrong paths, in this decade, the noises are less. It hence calls for a closer look and a more attentive ear to hearken to the call to come back on to the right path. Failure to listen, allows the advisors to swiftly curl away leaving one to dance to their music. Constant blames that one's failures are due to those around, or continued denial that one is on the wrong path is immense blindness that can be cured by none other than the individual. The invite is to swallow the humble pie and accept that one needs immense help for indeed they are in a life High Dependency Unit if not in the Intensive Care Unit. Inability to realize the wrong path that one has taken, sinks one into deeper trenches whose culmination is in despair, addictions, and subsequent depression.

Oh, that each would hearken to the call to take charge of one's most elusive yet destructive decades!