

## **A Financial Rejuvenation I would never forget**

Her warmth, kindness and intelligence caught my attention. Her strong personality resonated through the phone during our first meeting. I was in Aarhus, Denmark. She was in Abuja, Nigeria. I knew instinctively that I would love to meet her in person with any opportunity I get.

Realising my visit to Nigeria would come to fruition, I arranged to visit my mentor. She was excited, I was over-excited. I arrived Lagos to my family and booked my flight to Abuja. Getting to the airport, her driver picked me up to her house.

“She must be living with her parents or her older filial family”, I thought to myself when I got to her palatial duplex in one of the expensive estates in Abuja. The cultural and societal standards of financial and career “modesty” for an unmarried woman informed my thoughts. I assumed that this impressive building could not be owned solely by my mentor.

Alas! I was wrong. This outstandingly beautiful house was built by her and for her. I looked around and saw her car, my dream car. At that moment, I realized that impossibilities only existed in the mind. Limitations imposed either by oneself or society can be broken by sheer determination conceived by thought.

“Your mind is your greatest asset”, she said as she showed me around her house, “Affording something is a function of your mind. See dreams, own them and complete them first in your mind”.

“Your house is so beautiful. Seeing how much you have worked hard to build this has reinforced my beliefs in the financial success of a woman”, I replied. I surveyed her rooms, library, work area, kitchen, garden, immediately wondering how I could follow her steps and be this successful.

Sensing my thoughts, she organized a joint session the next day with her foundation, Florence Ozor Foundation and other young ladies who she mentors. It was themed “Financial Literacy” focused on exposing us to tips and tricks of saving, investing and multiplying our incomes.

“What is your financial goal?”, she asked. I had thought about this question and had a vague idea of mine but never clearly defined them until now. On and on, my mentor spoke, explaining the qualities and strategies of good financial management, recommending books and telling her personal story on how much she saved and invested to build her house, as well as dealing with investment failures. “Own your financial competency, no one can do it for you”, she said.

This session was an eye-opener for me. Culturally, financial issues in Nigeria are left to the care of the man and even topics on economic empowerment for women targets their role as supporters of men. I found it empowering listening to advice on owning my financial space, actions and goals. I also interacted with other participants, sharing and exchanging ideas on personal branding and etiquette and learning from their experiences.

That night, we had a relaxed chat in her library and work room on politics, health, society and sundry issues. For the first time, I felt this connection, a personal bond with a highly successful woman.

Visiting her that weekend was all I needed to be inspired and determined to reach the highest point of my career and financial goals. Leaving her house for the airport the next day, I felt a sense of freedom I have never experienced before: Financial Liberation.