

A-CHOICES

The African Lifestyle Magazine

Oct, 2020

A Special Tribute to
Chadwick Boseman

Domestic Violence:
Why Is Society So Quick
To Blame The Victim?

Art4Diplomacy

Interview with American award winning
film director, producer and writer

-Chris Roland

Interview with California based
Nollywood Actor

-Bigvai Jokotoye

Stefany
Obadiaru



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ABOUT US

A-CHOICES -The African Lifestyle Magazine

A-CHOICES magazine is an online African lifestyle magazine for ordinary-educated reader in English. It is not entirely about entertainment but covers other broad topics including business and economy(market) arts & culture fashions, personality stories, sports, etc. It is a channel through which we celebrate African achievers at home and in the diaspora. A-CHOICES hopes to entertain, empower and inspire Africans around the world.

Write for Us

We're accepting submissions from writers, thinkers, makers, scholars, and readers of online publishing and editorial work. We re currently accepting submissions for our next Issues . We accept submissions on a rolling basis, and generally don't close submissions until halfway through a given issue, so there are no set closing dates.

We do not accept work that has been previously published o blogged.

Please send submissions to achoices@a-choicesmazine.com

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EDITOR'S LETTER



WELCOME- to the second edition of our magazine A-CHOICES!

I'm pleased to say that our first edition was a roaring success, but even then, we noticed we needed to do a few corrections and improvements. However, all in all, we're pretty satisfied with the result-let's hope this second one lives up to the first!

In this edition we delved into the burning question of-Domestic Violence: Why Is Society So Quick To Blame The Victim? I think it is about time we must stop to always point victim for being the perpetrator. Victim-blaming and misconceptions that violence is a family matter are rife in Africa. The victim needs our attention, sympathy and support. Nobody needs to be beaten or abused or insulted by their spouse/boyfriend. And nobody wants to be torn apart by the public, everyone seeking for the one mistake that made things everyone right for their partner to attack them with a knife. Violence against women is both a consequence of and a cause of inequality between men and women. As well as being a health problem of epidemic proportions. We must eliminate violence against women and girls now! A big thank you to the following people for taking the time out of their very tight schedule to speak to A-CHOICES. The cover model-Stefan Obadiaru, thanks for the wonderful photo-shoot session it was really amazing and a huge thank you for sharing your story with us! Chris Roland-the award-winning American film producer, director, and writer living and working in Cape Town, South Africa- speaks about his latest movie Santana is a high action film about law and order, motivated by revenge and the determination for justice... Bigvai Jokotoye the handsome Fresno, California based Nollywood actor also talks about his career and lots more...

Watch out for our November edition packed with juicy stories including an exclusive interview with one of our own-Hollywood action hero Hakeem-Kae-Kazim. The Pirates of the Caribbean and Hotel Rwanda actor talks about his career, Santana movie, and other interesting subjects. If you would like to know more about advertising in the next issue, Want to promote your products, coverage of your wedding, birthday, graduation ceremony as well as other related events, please send us an email: achoices@a-choicesmagazine.com for prices and quotes.

Finally, The Nigerian Independence Day is celebrated every year on October 1st. It's a very special and important event in the history of Nigeria as it marks the independence from our former colonial master. The country was once a colony of Great Britain until it became an independent and free state on October 1st, 1960.

Happy Birthday Nigeria! The country is 60 today and here is wishing every Nigerian out there a happy and fulfilling Nigeria Independence Day celebration.

Cheers...

Gbega Teejay Okunlola

Editor-in-Chief



**" I'm now comfortable in
my own skin"**



What it means to be a mixed race Model in Bulgaria- "I'm now comfortable in my own skin"... Stefany Obadiaru

By: Gbenga Teejay Okunlola
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Our interview with Bulgarian born model and dancer Stefany Obadiaru. For 21- year-old Stefany, Sofia is home. But growing up as a mixed-race child in Bulgaria wasn't always easy. With a Nigerian - father and a Bulgarian mother, Obadiaru was one of a growing number of biracial individuals who has made a name for herself and also as one of the first models to achieve prominence as both a runway and print model. Stefany and I spoke over facetime one evening, she tenderly guided me around her studio and home, showing me her diverse art collection and some of her own work. Stefany is bubbly, endearing and possesses a unique childlike combination of naivete and excitability. Obadiaru has said that she now feels more confident, comfortable with her skin-color than any other point in her life.

The former Miss Teen-Bulgaria told **A-CHOICES** that she's begun to possess a greater knowledge of her own strengths and weakness as she's grown older. "It's really about being comfortable in your skin at every age," she said. Stefany added: "I feel better now than I ever have before. I feel stronger, I feel more confident, I feel healthier. I feel like I know my body better."

ACHOICES: Can you tell us a bit about yourself ?

STEFANY: First I would like to thank you for interviewing me for this amazing magazine. As you already know I have been modeling and dancing for 15 years. I do these two things with such pleasure. I think that when you do something willingly, it happens no matter what the circumstances are. When I was little, most of the people, especially my peers often told me that I would not succeed with modeling and dancing and that is difficult to be a big name in Bulgaria if you are with different skin color. But the truth is that I have never give up to follow my dreams and to achieve my goals.

And everything I have achieved so far in my life is due to my father. Unfortunately I lost him 7 years ago and my whole life turned upside down. He was the most amazing person I have ever know, always so kind and so inspiring. Was teaching me and giving me the best he could. But this is the life and that is why we have to appreciate everything we have because when we loose it is already too late.

ACHOICES: Describe yourself in 3 words?

STEFANY: I am understanding, kind and self-disciplined.

ACHOICES: How did you get started in modelling?

STEFANY: Six years ago I went to a casting for one german tv commercial and I was so shy and not confident enough and I was convinced that they might not choose me because I didn't have much experience in front of camera, but three days after the casting they called me and they told me that of all the 160 girls, they liked me the most and the next day I was on the set. It was very exciting for me and it went great. After this commercial, different agencies started to calling me for photoshoots, music videos, tv commercials and etc.

ACHOICES: What inspired you to compete for Little Miss Bulgaria at age 12?

STEFANY: I was inspired to explore and challenge myself, to put myself out there. It has been a great self discovery journey for me as I realised my strength and weaknesses.



ACHOICES: Do share with us your experience in representing Bulgaria in the International Contest?

STEFANY: I am really honoured to have this opportunity to represent Bulgaria in International contest. I learnt a lot from other contestants, the organisers, photographers and TV production team. Getting to meet and work with so many people from all over the world is amazing. Everyone was friendly and helpful and we have been keeping in contact since.

ACHOICES: Your father was from Nigeria, tell us a little bit about him?

STEFANY: Sometimes it is hard for me to talk about my father because he passed away 7 years ago. Without him is really difficult and I feel an empty space in my heart. I dull the pain I feel with actions from which I derive positive energy and from which I make him proud. I always feel his presence and that means that he is with me. I will always remember my daddy with a big smile and loving heart. He made me the person I am now and that is why I have to be strong and giving the best I can.

ACHOICES: What was your first reaction when you saw that video of George Floyd's killing?

STEFANY: I could not believe how it is possible to exist such evil people.. I am heartbroken that anybody can be killed because of their race and I am also heartbroken over the hatred that is spilling out of the people. And the worst thing is that in the midst of an already difficult pandemic period, this violence is further hurting people. All people must be equal !



ACHOICES: Were you teased during your elementary and junior high school because you looked foreign?

STEFANY: Many times I have been teased but mostly because of my hair. That was making me really sad and my dad was the one that always telling me that my skin is like a pearl and that I have to love and respect myself.

ACHOICES: Would you say being mixed is cool?

STEFANY: To be mixed is a big advantage, especially for modeling.

ACHOICES: How have you been coping with the on-going situation Covid19 pandemic?

STEFANY: I wash my hands often, wear mask and keep distance.

ACHOICES: As a model, what would you advise a young girl that wants to become a model?

STEFANY: The best advice I can give is to take good care of yourself and to upgrade yourself.

ACHOICES: Who are some of your favourite models and designers?

STEFANY: One of my favourite models of all time is Naomi Campbell, she inspires me the most. My second favorite model is Joan Smalls.

ACHOICES: Now tell us about your experience as a Dancer?

STEFANY: Dancing is one of my biggest passions. When I dance, it's like everything clears from my mind and I'm in a totally different world. I can express my feelings out lively. My love of dance comes from a love of music - I have a very broad taste in music and I enjoy it when I am able to partner a favourite style of dance with a favourite song.

ACHOICES: Say something wonderful in your language?

STEFANY: "Красотата е банално качество в много жени. Същинското очарование идва от вътрешния пламък на личността." ("Beauty is a commonplace quality in many women. The real charm comes from the inner flame of the personality").

ACHOICES: Who is your favourite Nigerian music artiste?

STEFANY: My favourite music artists are Mr Eazi and Davido. I adore their music.

ACHOICES: Tell us, what are you working on currently?

STEFANY: Because of the pandemic I don't have many dance performances and photo shoots but the good thing is that I work in the Consulate of Kenya in Sofia and I really like it there because I meet with interesting people and I learn a lot about the beautiful country - Kenya.

ACHOICES: What does it mean to you to be a model ?

STEFANY: Well, it means more than anything else I just feel better and confident.. I can think better, I have more energy in my day-to-day life.

It's a constant commitment and challenge to eat healthy and stay consistent with exercise and drink enough water. These basic things that everybody knows they should do, but for whatever reason we get distracted and busy and it becomes a hassle. But the thing is when you really feel the difference from taking care of yourself that keeps you motivated. I feel strong and lean and energised by eating good food that will fuel me and when I sleep well. Energy and wellness relates so closely to beauty - and happiness in everyday life. To be a model, it means to be responsible of yourself, taking care of yourself from the head to toe to be in the best shape and condition.

ACHOICES: *Would you say skincare is self-care, not 'anti-ageing'?*

STEFANY: "The term 'anti-ageing' is something that has never spoken to me as a consumer. True, I'm not thinking about wrinkles, but I don't think skincare or investing in your own wellness should be to do with ageing, or anti-ageing, it should be more about nourishing your skin and your body. I have nothing against the term, but I don't think it's descriptive of what you're doing. To me it's more about self-care."

ACHOICES: *Did you as a young child want to be a model? Was that a dream?*

STEFANY: When I was little I have always dreaming to become a dance choreographer and to have my own dance school. But later, as I grew older, I became more and more interested in fashion and modeling.

ACHOICES: *Thank you so much for being such an amazing role model. You are truly beautiful inside and out.*

STEFANY: *Thank you so much for having me*



Stefany Obadiaru

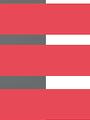


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Nigeria

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE

celebration



Domestic Violence: Why Is Society So Quick To Blame The Victim?

By: Linda R. Jones
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We must stop right now to always point victim for being the perpetrator; the victim needs our attention, sympathy and support.



"There is never an excuse for domestic violence"

How often times have you come across a newspaper article about a woman who suspects someone of abusing/raping her only to skip down and read the public remarks in the comments section? Quite certainly, nestled amid a few well-meaning messages in encouragement, you noticed a multitude in judgments and humiliation aimed at the victim. And they come from both males and females.

How does Victim Blaming Looks Like

Terribly, she was attacked on social media, and several feminists branded her as an "attention seeking slut".

"If she really was being abused, why didn't she attempt to escape?"

"Now she will pretend to be innocent like every girl"

"That is a normal thing, she should be strong enough to handle it"

"Why it was not reported to Police by her? She's just fabricating the story."

"She's must be seeking attention/retribution/money/fame"

Is it quite easier for you to assume that you are protected from violence; when wanting to identify anything wrong about the victim- and therefore seeking a justification behind the abuser's conduct?



Abuse should never be blamed on Survivor

Nobody needs to be beaten or abused or insulted by their spouse/boyfriend. And nobody wants to be torn apart by the public, everyone seeking for the one mistake that made things everyone right for their partner to attack them with a knife.

Why do some people jump directly to blame the victim?

According to Sherry Humby, a Psychology Professor at Sewanee University "There's also this very common tendency for people to continue to believe positive things that occurred to good people, and where the misunderstanding falls in, there's this explicit reverse: if anything terrible occurred to you, you should have done something wrong to 'justify the bad thing'".

Elise Lopez, a specialist of sexual and domestic abuse prevention and response at the University of Arizona, while comparing the responses to how certain people respond to watching a picture of an obese human, Lopez says. "People imagine, 'If I was overweight, I will go to work out each day and drop the weight.' They don't worry about how challenging it would be.

The same mentality also falls into play as people hear about domestic abuse. "A number of people are getting an intestinal response to abuse. It's emotionally charged guy. They believe that if anyone is victimised, they actually have done something to facilitate it. "Basically, if people can see a justification that violence is the victim's fault, then harassment is something that cannot only be managed but stopped. And it's not going to happen to them, in exchange.

Survivors Get Afraid of Victim-Blaming

Abuse and sexual harassment victims are questioned what they were carrying and if they fight back. Poor persons who operate multiple jobs and yet cannot afford a family are criticised for "laziness" and disappointment, while confronting a system that is skewed against them. Through # Me Too and growing backlash to record injustice, victim-denial maintains a persistent undercurrent. Study shows that this is simply a curious side-effect of a human need for equity. Understanding that this could lead to different approaches to strike back.



Responses People Can Give Watching Victim-Blaming

If the comments come from an acquaintance or close relative you know, or a total outsider who feels the need to voice his or her thoughts about the circumstance, hearing victim-blaming as a survivor may be surprising and demoralising.

Here are several proposed answers to three typical victim-blaming statements:

1. If she really was being abused, why didn't she attempt to escape?

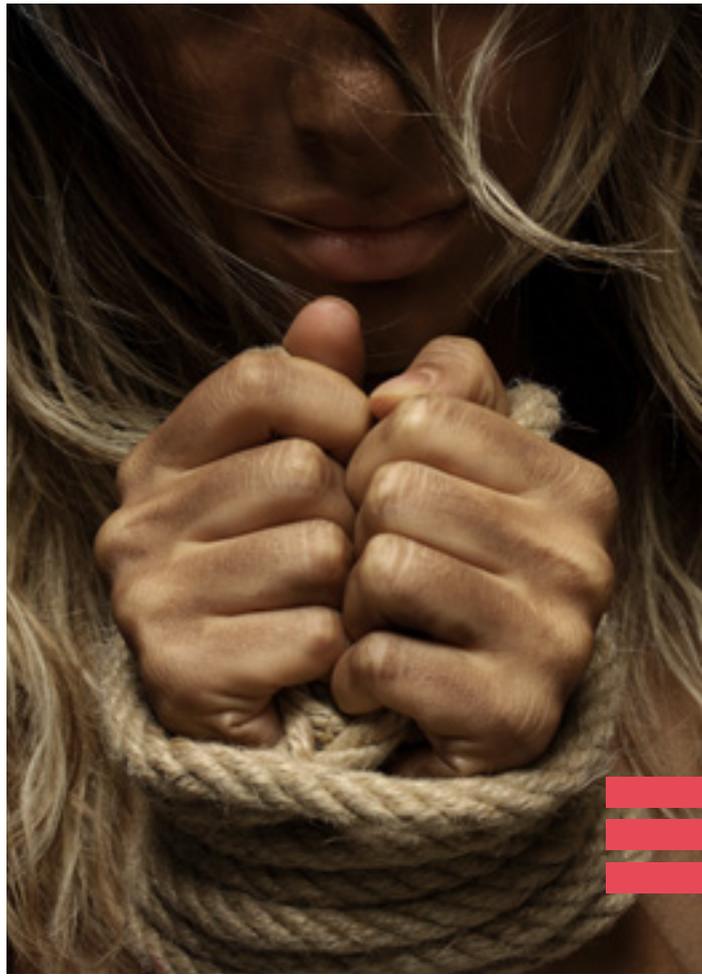
"Yeah, that's really sort of challenging for the abusers to quit, it may be challenging for the perpetrator to escape if they don't have financial means, whether the offender is the main breadwinner. Many offenders are often liable to damage children or pets until the survivor exits. Victims also require patience and help from family and friends to create a protective strategy to escape."

2. Why it was not reported to Police by her? She's just fabricating the story.

Most victims may not disclose violence to the authorities because they risk retaliation from the attacker. They may even feel ashamed, humiliated, or unwilling to let people realise what's going on. Often, several times, violence is not physical – it's social, psychological, financial or mental.

3. She's must be seeking attention/retribution/money/fame

Survivors and activists also accept that it is not convenient to disclose violence or attack, and few people will like to attract some sort of publicity to themselves for a legitimate reason. As shown by the aforementioned cases of victim-blaming, perpetrators also feel that no one may support them as or when they experience violence. Instead of dwelling on victim actions, we need to raise more questions regarding whether criminals choose to conduct acts of abuse, and why others are able to gain much more than their reasonable share of the life that most of us would like to see as mere.



A Special Tribute to

Chadwick Boseman

By: Gbenga Teejay Okunlola

teejayok@gmail.com

Leaving fans shocked, at the young age of 43, The Black Panther actor left the world after a long battle with cancer that was hidden from his fans.



The impressive actor Chadwick Boseman, who was the central character of the pioneering superhero film “Black Panther” and who represent a great dream of the African-American filmgoers, died Fridays at his house. He reached to just 43 years of age. His death was announced by his publicist; and said that Mr. Boseman’s wife, Taylor Simone Ledward, and his relatives were at his place on final moments. A tweet on Mr. Boseman’s Instagram profile stated that in 2016, he was certain of Stage 3 of colon cancer and had advanced to Stage 4.

Early Life

The youngest among his three brothers; Chadwick Aaron Boseman born on 29 November, 1976 in the tiny town of Anderson, S.C. His mother, Carolyn was a professional nurse, and Leroy, his dad, employed at an agricultural corporation. Mr Boseman barely released reports of his personal life as a private figure focused on Hollywood norms. He found success comparatively late as an actor – he was 35 years old when he starred as Jackie Robinson in his initial leading role, “42” – but missed popularity in

big biopics in a number of star winning results.

Academic Qualifications

In 1995, Boseman successfully completed his graduation from T.L. High School. In his younger years he wrote “Crossroads” as his initial play and staged that at school after shooting and killing his classmate. In 2000, Boseman studied at the Howard University, where in fine arts he earned a bachelor degree and became a mentor. To work in theater, he went to New York after graduation. . He produced and directed several scripts, several of which had the language of Pan-African theology and hip hop, among others “Hieroglyphic Graffiti” and “Deep Azure”. He then lived in Brooklyn and raised money by acting to students at the “Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture” in Harlem,

Acting Career

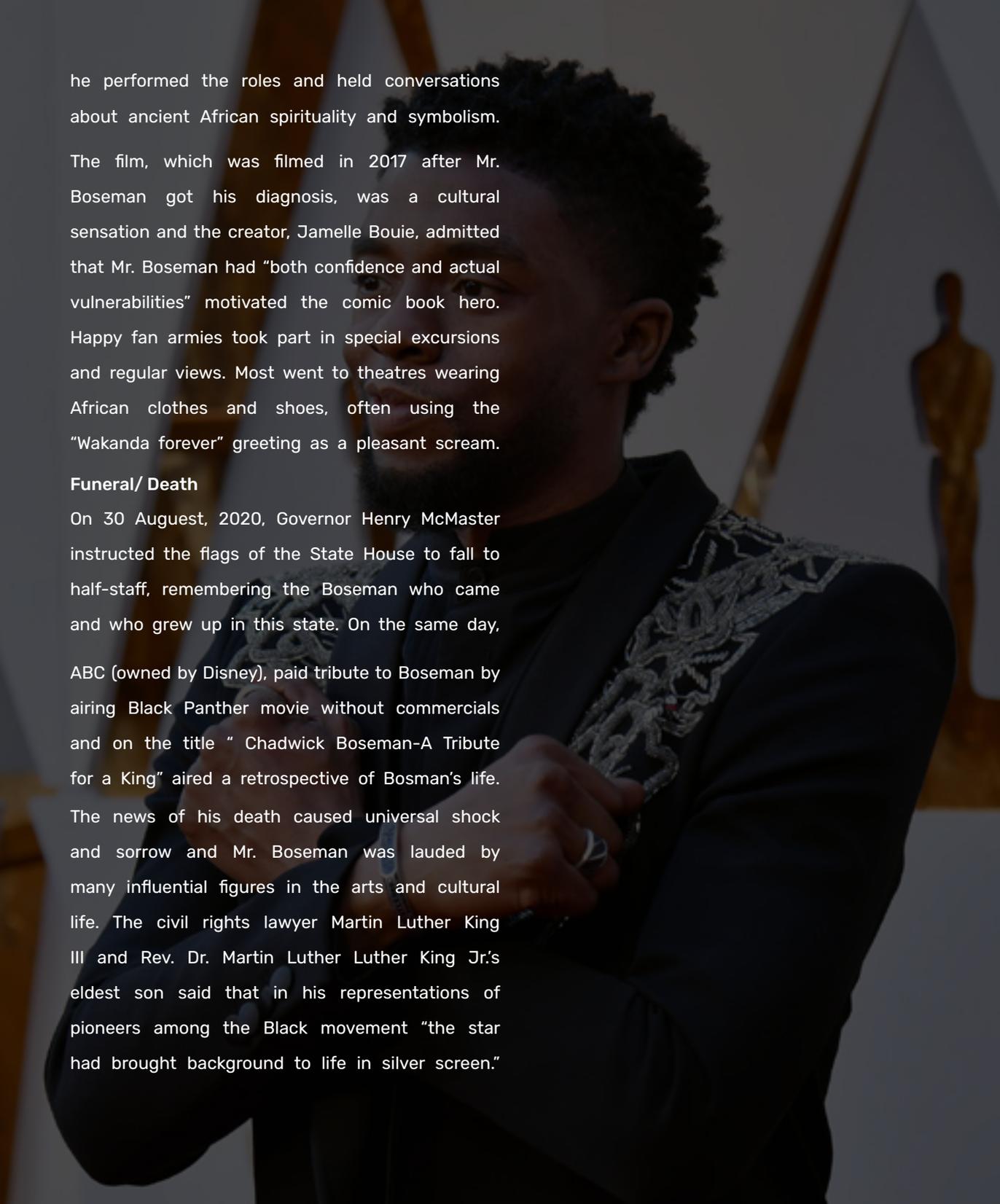
Mr. Boseman was a serious basketball player in high school, but he went into the storytelling after shooting and killing a rival and a teammate. His colleagues were admitted to the “British American Drama Academy” at Oxford, England after an acting workshop with the Tony Award-winning actress and producer Phylicia Rashad. The students could not fund the journey however, with the sponsorship of Mr. Boseman’s future and friend colleague Denzel Washington, Ms. Rashad assisted with funds in the journey.



Despite his deteriorating health, he never let it stop him from working, especially on the much physically and mentally demanding “Marvel Cinematic Universe”. Black Panther transformed Chadwick Boseman into a family name and was the first superhero film to have earned a Best Picture Oscar nomination. From this film, Boseman motivated a younger generation to strive to their wildest imaginings, particularly Black girls and boys. Black Panther is a fictitious character, but it’s not less motivating than the heroes of real life played by Boseman in 42, Jackie Robinson in Get Up and Thurgood Marshall in Marshall. In any case, Black Panther could convert the young generation from Chadwick Boseman’s career into this dramatic role.

Wakanda

Boseman accepted with pride and enthusiasm the cultural importance of the part for the Black community as it was a chance to introduce the character—and its fictitious African nation Wakanda—to the big screen. In realistic South African languages,



he performed the roles and held conversations about ancient African spirituality and symbolism.

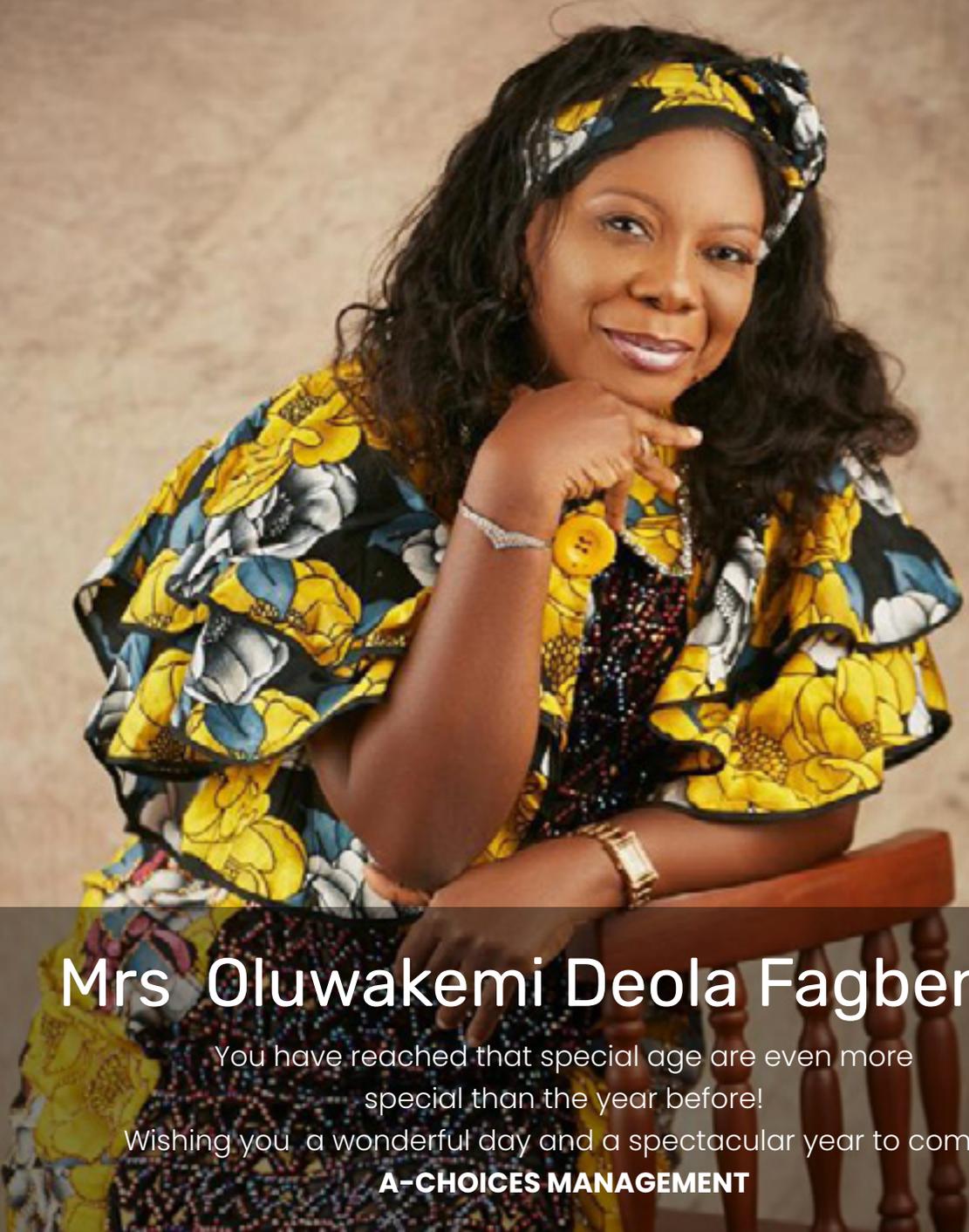
The film, which was filmed in 2017 after Mr. Boseman got his diagnosis, was a cultural sensation and the creator, Jamelle Bouie, admitted that Mr. Boseman had “both confidence and actual vulnerabilities” motivated the comic book hero. Happy fan armies took part in special excursions and regular views. Most went to theatres wearing African clothes and shoes, often using the “Wakanda forever” greeting as a pleasant scream.

Funeral/ Death

On 30 August, 2020, Governor Henry McMaster instructed the flags of the State House to fall to half-staff, remembering the Boseman who came and who grew up in this state. On the same day, ABC (owned by Disney), paid tribute to Boseman by airing Black Panther movie without commercials and on the title “ Chadwick Boseman–A Tribute for a King” aired a retrospective of Bosman’s life. The news of his death caused universal shock and sorrow and Mr. Boseman was lauded by many influential figures in the arts and cultural life. The civil rights lawyer Martin Luther King III and Rev. Dr. Martin Luther Luther King Jr.’s eldest son said that in his representations of pioneers among the Black movement “the star had brought background to life in silver screen.”

Happy 50th birthday

To an astute businesswoman...



Mrs Oluwakemi Deola Fagbenro

You have reached that special age are even more special than the year before!

Wishing you a wonderful day and a spectacular year to come...

A-CHOICES MANAGEMENT

Interview with film Director, Writer and Producer- Chris Roland

By: Gbenga Teejay Okunlola
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Chris Roland is an award-winning American producer, director, and writer living and working in Cape Town, South Africa. Chris owns My Movies, a sales and distribution company, and previously owned Zen HQ Films and The Imaginarium, both leading production companies, and the South Africa Film Finance Corporation (production financing), and Basecamp Logistics (unit equipment rentals). As a consultant, Chris provides a wealth of experience that helps turn challenges into opportunities and ideas and dreams into realities. I recently caught up with Roland to talk about his latest movie—Santana. The film tells the story of two estranged brothers who discover the identity of the drug lord who killed their parents decades before. Scenes from the movie were filmed in around Cape Town at locations including Gugulethu and Constantia.

A-CHOICES: *Santana* was released onto the video streaming service on Friday 28 August and by Sunday 30 August had shot to the number one spot globally. How delighted are you by its success so far?

CR: We hoped to get into the top 10 in South Africa. That *Santana* shot to #1 in the world for six straight days was completely unexpected. Netflix did an amazing job with the marketing.

A-CHOICES: Tell me about writing the screenplay for *SANTANA*, how did you get to craft the story?

CR: Maradona Dias Dos Santos' uncle was a policeman in Angola, which inspired the idea for a crime story. I had never been to Angola and knew nothing about

the police there. Before completing the story I visited Angola to get a sense of the country.

A-CHOICES: What do you think makes it such a powerful story?

CR: Without giving away the story, there's a discovery that is made about an event that took place thirty-five years earlier. This has had a lifelong impact on Dias, the lead character. When the discovery is made, he becomes overwhelmed with revenge.

A-CHOICES: How do you relate to the story personally?

CR: The story revolves around two brothers – one is pragmatic and by the book, the other is reactionary and spontaneous. We all have those two tendencies to some degree.

A-CHOICES: *Is there any plan in the pipeline for a sequel?*

CR: If there is demand for sequel, we will cross that bridge when we come to it.

A-CHOICES: *As a Co-director of the movie what would you say the success of the movie means for the local film industry in South Africa?*

CR: *The South African film industry has already had a long history of incredible successes. Santana is a result of that not the reason for it.*

A-CHOICES: *You recently shifted away from producing and has turned your attention to writing (10 current screenplays available), directing, consulting, and inspiring others, Have you always wanted to be a movie director, writer and producer? Where did it start for you.?*

CR: I started out as a creative, first acting, then writing and directing. Actually, I started out as a radio DJ – the best job ever; they paid me to talk and play my favorite music! I ended up taking on the role as a producer and running a production company more out necessity to get projects into production and put bread on the table. Unfortunately, I was a good producer. Before I knew it, the years flew by and I was missing just being a creative. It took some will power, but I hung up my producing hat and now focus only on writing and directing.

A-CHOICES: *In 1992 you sold all your belongings, slipped on a comfortable pair of shoes, and backpacked around the world, leaving behind Los-Angeles. Why did you choose Cape Town home?*

CR: I think Cape Town chose me. While I was backpacking around the world, I followed a woman I had met on the road who was coming down here for studies. She eventually left and I stayed. At that time the money had run out and I needed to work. It was the very beginning of the film industry and I am proud to have been a part of growing Cape Town into one of the top production destinations in the world.

A-CHOICES: *You have been involved in over eighty productions, which one would you say was most challenging?*

CR: They each have their own unique set of challenges. That's what makes the film industry so interesting to work in. Every project is different, almost like starting a new career with each film.

A-CHOICES: *You have enjoyed a successful career in South Africa. What inspires and motivates you?*

CR: *Movies, and the arts in general, have always inspired me. I had a tough time as a kid, no real parenting. I learned a lot about life from stories I saw in films. My singular motivation these days is to help people better their lives. Film has that power, even if it's just a moment of entertainment that stirs the imagination.*



SANTANA

A-CHOICES: Any advice you would like to give aspirant writers?

CR: Write, Like any craft, you have to be doing it daily to get better at it. You can't wait for that writing opportunity to come along. I write every day, starting a new script or book, or polishing an existing story.

A-CHOICES: What do you think makes a screenplay marketable? A screenplay producers want to invest in?

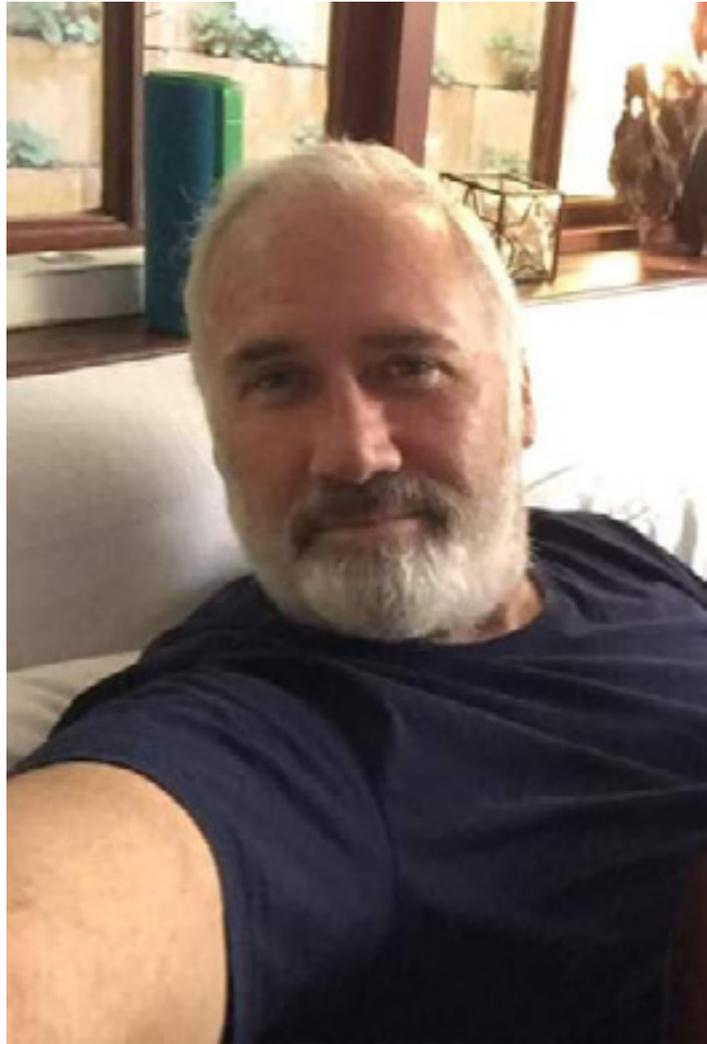
CR: No matter the genre, a good screenplay has characters that are relatable and are facing a human challenge. There is no story without a conflict that is overcome.

A-CHOICES: Why do you think most writers are afraid to go the distance with their story and give up?

CR: Success at anything has one core at its center – passion. Passion is an internal commitment. Passion and commitment create an energy that cannot be ignored.

A-CHOICES: How do you see the future for screenwriters in South Africa, particularly after the corona pandemic?

CR: For the past seven months no new films or series have been made. Exhibitors such as cinemas and TV, need fresh content to stay alive. I spent the lockdown writing like a madman. I now have ten screenplays and series, either created new or polished. There is going to be a huge need for content when the industry fully reopens.



A-CHOICES: What do you think audiences will get from watching Santana?

CR: Entertainment. And Africans can be proud that it's homegrown.

A-CHOICES: Any final words you would like to share with your fans, followers and the readers?

CR: *If you want to change the world, make your focus in life to give selflessly for the benefit of others.*

Interview with Nollywood Actor

Bigvai Oreoluwa Jokotoye

By: Seyi Awoloye

Los-Angeles, California

Bigvai Jokotoye is one of Nollywood's finest actors. The popular Nigerian actor is currently based in the United States of America..Bigvai has been around in the industry for a while. He has starred in numerous successful Yoruba films. In this interview with A-CHOICES, the actor speaks about his career, the untimely death of his father, among other issues.

A-CHOICES: Pls, give us an insight into your background?

Bigvai: I was born in the early 80s at Ajaawa via ogbomosho, oyo state, Nigeria. My father is late pastor J.A Jokotoye from Ajaawa while mummy is from Sakete in Rep. Du Benin. I have 3 sisters and 2 brothers. Started my primary school at St. Mathias, Erin-Ile in kwara state, my father being a C.A.C pastor was always transferred after 5 years pastoring any church. So, we moved to Bacita in 1988 where I continued my primary education before moving to Ilofa also in kwara state in 1993 where I had my secondary education and then Akure in Ondo state in 1997 where I finished my secondary school in 1999. I was a diploma student in then University of Ado Ekiti before I dropped out after my father's death in 2001 and ventured into acting in 2002.

A-CHOICES: What inspired you to become an actor?

Bigvai: I picked interest since I started acting in the church as a kid but I decided to do it full-time when I dropped out of school and I didn't want to be useless to the society. The Bible says your talent will speak for you and that inspired me.

A-CHOICES: You've not been so active in movies since moving to America?

Bigvai: I have been very active here as we are building a new Nollywood in America with the help of the likes of Bayo Alawiye, Doris Simon, Raymond, Mistura Asuramu, Gbenga Afolabi, Ajibola Ajibise, Gbemi, Ayokosh and so many other great actors. We have alot we working on right now.





A-CHOICES: How many movies have you produced to your credit?

Bigvai: Two, Epe Ana and Mr Roland

A-CHOICES: You have been in the industry since 2001 now, can you remember how many movies you have featured in?

Bigvai: 2002 but I can't remember to be honest.

A-CHOICES: Which one was your favourite?

Bigvai: Ikudoro by Toyin Aimakhu, Kurukuru by Yewande Adekoya Abiodun and Mr Bigvai:

A-CHOICES: You lost your father at a very young age which affected furthering your education?

Bigvai: Yes, it affected my family as a whole as we lost everything to his death. I will still talk about it one day by God's grace on how C.A.C leaders then conspired to lie against my father which led to his death in 2001.

A-CHOICES: Have you been featured yet in any Hollywood productions?

Bigvai: Yes, infact I'm granting this interview at one of the locations.

A-CHOICES: Describe creative choice you made on set of a production?

Bigvai: Suggesting a certain shot for a Director which later became the selling point.

A-CHOICES: I have seen your new movie-MR ROLAND. Tell us more about your character?

Bigvai: A very good bad man(lol). He loves his wife but because of the way Nigerians hustle abroad, the woman has no time and this is the Roland is sleeping with his wife's niece, a 15 year old girl.

A-CHOICES: Away from acting, which other job do you now do?

Bigvai: I'm in school and I work as a pharmacy

A-CHOICES: Which movie was your breakthrough?

Bigvai: Ikudoro by Toyin Aimakhu Ajeyemi.

A-CHOICES: Can you please tell us some of your numerous achievements as an actor?

Bigvai: I have won few awards in Nigeria and here in America, everything I have today has been achieved directly or indirectly through acting.



A-CHOICES: What projects are you currently working on?

Bigvai: The girl on the mountain, Red Blood, Flip side, Out of her mind, Oosha, Gunmi, The fight, Elizabeth and many more. More of these projects are already going through post-production.

A-CHOICES: The issue of veteran actors falling ill and having to crow-fund to pay their bills is quite worrisome. What is your take?

Bigvai: Until the industry is reformed it won't change. Marketers should have more marketing strategies to make more more money, then invest in good producers alone who produce standard jobs. If Marketers made good money, movies would be well funded, actors would be well paid. By this way, actors can have health insurance and

Bigvai:

A-CHOICES: Some actors say they don't watch their movies. Does this hold true for

BIGVAI: No, I'm always eager to watch my movies just to correct myself and learn more. And, more times, I go for well written scripts and I'm always happy being part of it by watching the end product.

A-CHOICES: When you're offered a role, what do you do next?

Bigvai: If I fit in into that character, I will go ahead to negotiate, get my script and start preparing for the job. I reject any role I don't see myself fit in

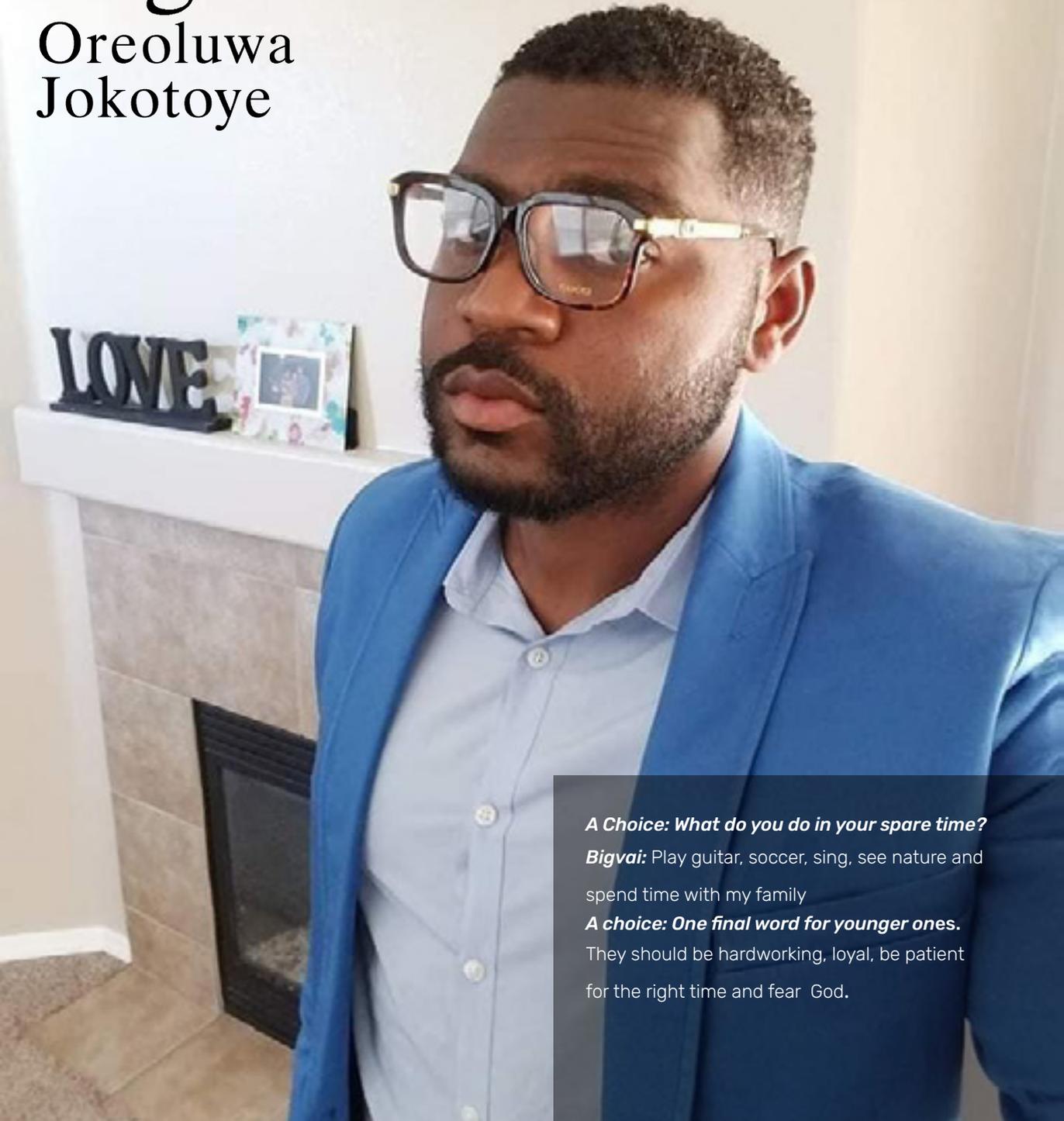
A choice: How do you feel being a father?

I feel great.



Bigvai

Oreoluwa
Jokotoye



A Choice: What do you do in your spare time?

Bigvai: Play guitar, soccer, sing, see nature and spend time with my family

A choice: One final word for younger ones.

They should be hardworking, loyal, be patient for the right time and fear God.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Pastor Oluwafemi Awolaye

We thank God for giving you knowledge and wisdom of understanding. Sir, as you mark your 53rd birthday, we wish you good health, happiness, and lots of beautiful things in this world and hereafter. You are an exemplary and visionary Church leader.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!!

A-CHOICES MANAGEMENT

THE CASE OF FEMINITY

By: Akosua Darko



On social media platforms there are a range of videos and articles teaching women to be more feminine to gain the high value woman lifestyle by following a manual. However, being feminine is natural to women. Femininity is not about being a tom boy or girly girl. Femininity is about exuding who you are as a female. In this age people don't want to be complex but subscribe to an ideal. There is a manual to be something to gain the ideal life for everything. For example formulas to become a high value man, woman, solid liberal or traditionalist. Anyone who breaks the formulaic rules is subject to condemnation from the opinions that be. People confuse education with dogmatic thinking.

Education was meant to give individuals the opportunity to critique opinions because that's what theories are.

Now, it seems people pick up academic theories or even worse social opinions and make them seem factual and a necessity to follow, otherwise the person who doesn't subscribe will miss out in this cowardly new world. We've repressed our complex selves to be socially acceptable. Many women have repressed their femininity because they feel it is a hindrance to their empowerment. Femininity is simply just a woman owning who she is and being content with being a woman.

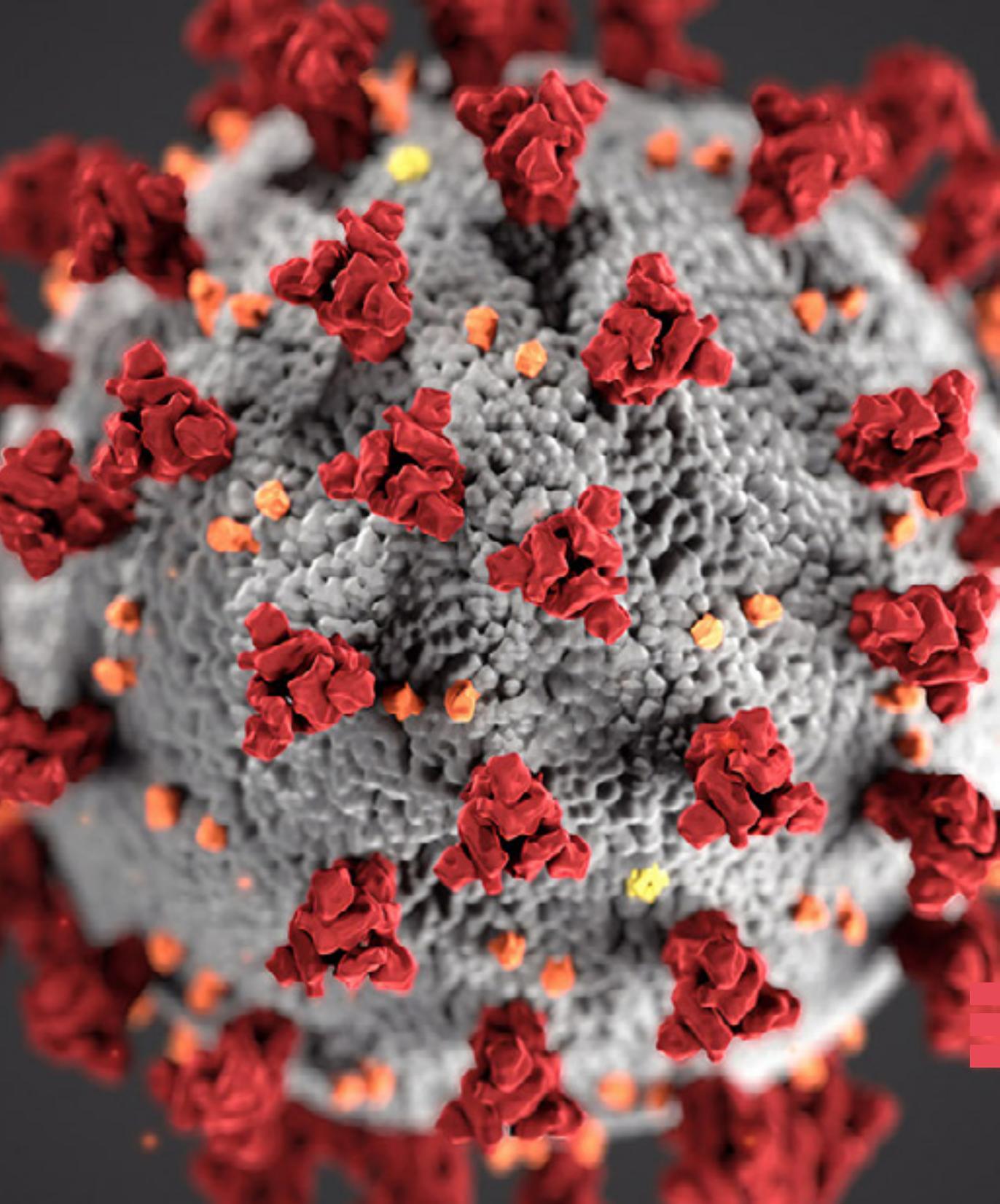
It's not bowing to societal or social pressures or living by a feminine handbook manual. Many think to be an 'empowered woman' you must get rid of your femininity or be masculine to compete with men. What's the point of being empowered and seeking approval from others. I agree women should have equal opportunities to men but biologically women are different from men. The power of femininity is one of influence, connection, empathising and relation. Many women are successful, intelligent, full of useful opinions yet still exude feminine energy.



Some women are into dressing up and supposedly girly. However, they are gossips, shallow, petty, mean, bullies, two faced hypocrites, judgemental, jealous, always in competition with others, look down on others, have disgusting attitudes, are slaves to public opinion and step on others to reach goals or to feel good about themselves. There's nothing feminine or empowering about those traits. There is also nothing empowering about deciding not to dress up and trying to be a woman who doesn't care about beauty. If you're not a simple woman by nature. There a tom boys who are exude an aura of grace, womanhood and femininity because they have beautiful souls.

For example Maya Angelou. It was her power to connect people through words and emotion while empathising with them non judgementally that made her so powerful. She was a child rape victim, prostitute and pimp before she became a lecturer, civil rights activist and author. This woman phenomenally exuded grace, delicateness, softness, vulnerability and steel strength. She wasn't a dresser. This was a woman who told the truth about who she was and what she thought eloquently and elegantly with sophistication. She was a woman phenomenally. She did not subject herself to rules or the court of public opinion. She was just Maya Angelou. Truly her own kind.

The same way some women who love to dress up have beautiful intelligent feminine souls. Some self acclaimed empowered women who hate the beauty industry and the patriarchy love to wear make up. Women who don't care for looks can equally have the same nasty traits as horrible dolled up women. Womanhood is a beautifulhood. Women are diverse complex creatures. Women should see womanhood as the joy of being able to be female and feminine and not eternal victimhood.



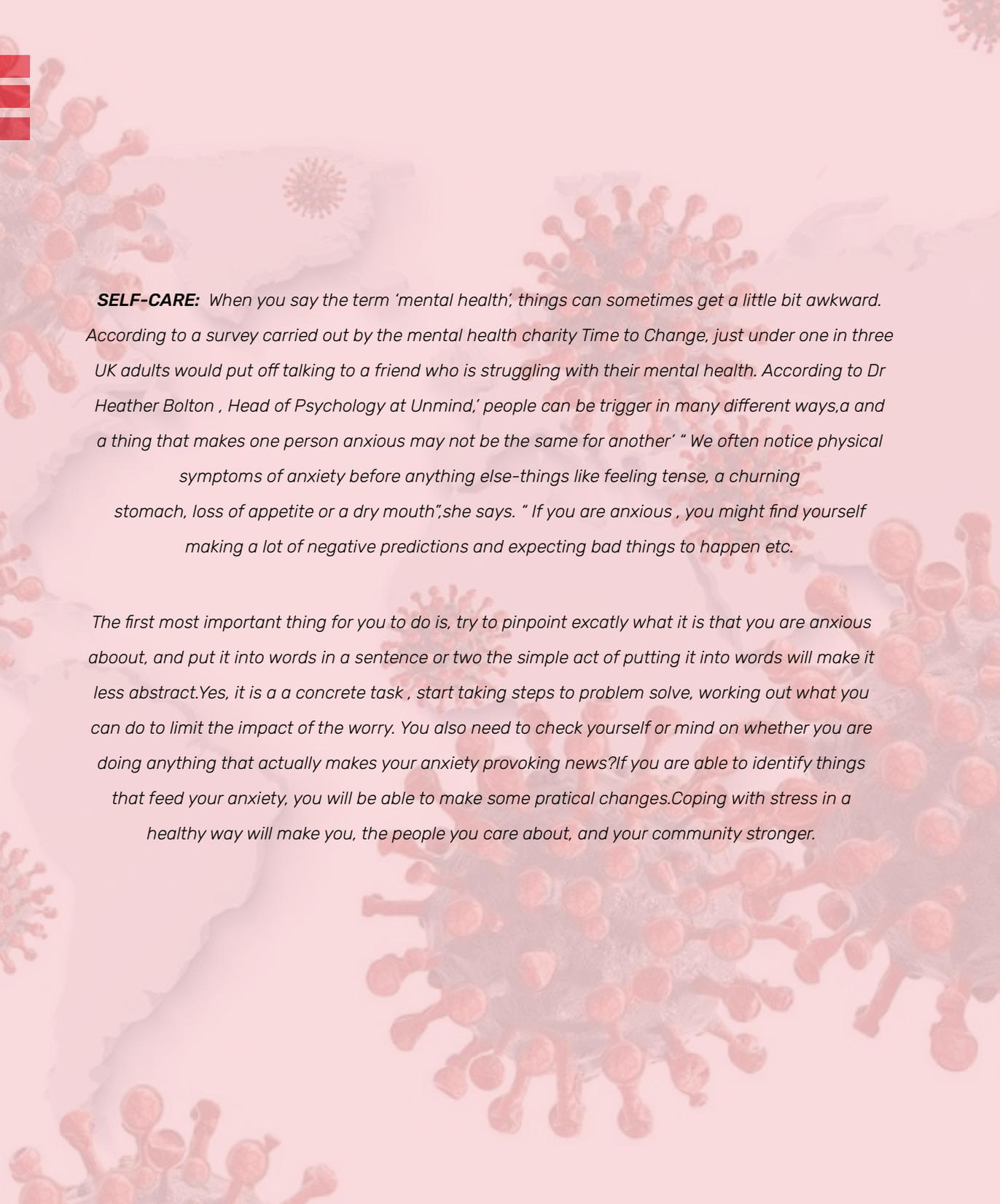
How to ease Coronavirus pandemic Anxiety

By: Andrew Collins
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In these days of the pandemic, without any doubt life can feel more fraught than ever and many people around the world may be feeling anxious about the new normal. The most important thing that we want you to remember, is that it is normal to feel a whole range of emotions during these extraordinary times. Feeling stressed and anxious is not a sign of you not coping. It is as important that you look after your and your children's emotional well-being as it is your physical health.

Let's be honest: there is no right way to face an unprecedented global health crisis and everyone has been dealing with the situation since almost half of this year in their own way. The scale of change in the way we live, work and socialise has changed dramatically and adapting to those changes has not been an easy task, to say the least. The Open University of Catalonia, has said that 41% of the United Kingdom population is at risk of mental health issues during the pandemic. The study highlighted that the majority of those surveyed in the UK had reported feeling down, depressed, or hopeless about the future at some point during this on going pandemic .

Anxiety is an emotion we perceive any kind of threat-it is a feeling of apprehension about what will happen. In some cases, it can be a helpful emotion as it can spur us to take action, but when we experience anxiety for long periods, it can be emotionally draining and physically challenged or uncomfortable. Majority of people have said that the imposed lockdown has been particularly triggering for anxiety because we have been bombarded with threatening news stories about the dangers of coronavirus, and we have had to deal with a lot of uncertainties. I hope that these resources help you to talk about what we are going through together, find healthy ways of coping and ideas for managing the isolation that we are experiencing from our usual support networks.



SELF-CARE: *When you say the term 'mental health', things can sometimes get a little bit awkward. According to a survey carried out by the mental health charity Time to Change, just under one in three UK adults would put off talking to a friend who is struggling with their mental health. According to Dr Heather Bolton , Head of Psychology at Unmind,' people can be trigger in many different ways,a and a thing that makes one person anxious may not be the same for another' " We often notice physical symptoms of anxiety before anything else-things like feeling tense, a churning stomach, loss of appetite or a dry mouth",she says. " If you are anxious , you might find yourself making a lot of negative predictions and expecting bad things to happen etc.*

The first most important thing for you to do is, try to pinpoint exactly what it is that you are anxious about, and put it into words in a sentence or two the simple act of putting it into words will make it less abstract.Yes, it is a a concrete task , start taking steps to problem solve, working out what you can do to limit the impact of the worry. You also need to check yourself or mind on whether you are doing anything that actually makes your anxiety provoking news?If you are able to identify things that feed your anxiety, you will be able to make some pratical changes.Coping with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Abiola Ronke Okunlola-Anjorin

Happy 38th birthday to a beautiful and wonderful Sister...I celebrate you my darling Sister, many happy returns to you. I love you scatter

Gbega Teejay Okunlola, Editor-in-Chief

Happy birthday

Mr. Seyi Awoleye

Managing Editor, A-CHOICES magazine

A-CHOICES MANAGEMENT



Art4Diplomacy

By: Albena A. Jones

Associate Editor: albenajones@yahoo.co.uk

Art4Diplomacy is a project showcasing traditional costumes from different countries, organized by H.E. Dr. Ahmed Al Madbouh, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the State of Palestine in Bulgaria and the Artist Dr. Petia Ilieva, the event was held under the auspices of H.M.Tsar Simeon II, on the 25th of September hosted in the beautiful grounds of Vrana Palace in Sofia.



The Bulgarian and international audience enjoyed a colourful display of men's and women's traditional clothing from Palestine, Brazil, Indonesia, Japan, Morocco, India, Azerbaijan, Mexico, a Pakistan, Iran, Cuba, South Sudan, Rwanda and Cameroon. The gathering united the tradition and folklore of the represented Nations; it showed the similarities between the people highlighted through the beauty and diversity of their national outfits. All proceed raised from the event will be donated to hospitals in the fight against Covid-19. The costumes were provided by the participants - the Diplomatic Missions in Bulgaria and were modelled by students from the National Theatre and Film Academy.

PHOTOS BY DESISLAV CHERVENKOV

I was delighted to be invited to participate, providing vibrant outfits from my father's country South Sudan and representing the beauty of the African heritage. The event was made extraordinary, as our kind host H.M. Tsar Simeon II, showcased for the first time part of the personal collection of costumes belonging to his mother Queen Joanna. The Royal Collection of costumes that were more than 100 years old represented all folklore regions of Bulgaria.



All the displays were amazing, my favourite were the Indonesian traditional costumes with their unique Hinduism characteristics and distinctive features, complemented by heavy jewellery and striking head accessories, which represent status in the social-cultural structure of the Indonesians. My other personal favourite were the Palestinian folk costumes, beside the beautiful array of colours, Ms. Sylvia Mihaylova the Cultural Attaché of the Palestinian Embassy explained that every

PHOTOS BY DESISLAV CHERVENKOV





PHOTOS BY DESISLAV CHERVENKOV





outfit has a distinctive traditional embroidery pattern which is associated with the particular geographical area that the clothes come from. Naturally the exotic African clothes brought a tropical feel to the event with their flair and eye-catching colourfully printed fabrics, the models were swaying and twirling to the sounds of African music, the display was met with delightful applause by the Royal family, distinguished guests and the entire audience. Because of the pandemic restrictions, the event could not be public as originally planned; however, the event organizers plan to distribute the message of the event through photos videos, and articles such as this. I hope you enjoyed it!



PHOTOS BY DESISLAV CHERVENKOV



PHOTOS BY DESISLAV CHERVENKOV



Naomi Campbell: "The next Oscars has to be black"

Super Model-Naomi Campbell says the next Oscars has to "be black". The Academy Awards has long faced backlash for not representing people of color. Following years of criticism for a lack of diversity, the 50-year-old model-and-actress says that following the Black Lives Matter protests across the globe this summer, there will be many educational movies made to highlight racism as a result, which must not be ignored during the 2021 awards season.

During the latest episode of her YouTube series, 'No Filter with Naomi', Naomi – who was joined by special guest Mary J. Blige – said: "The next Oscars and award season is going to be totally educational and I'm sorry but it's going to be black! ... I'm not saying it in any way or form to be biased ... but what we're going through in the world today, all these wonderful historical people are going to come up [in film] and there's no way you can deny their stories and not give them the credits they deserve." Meanwhile, Oscars chiefs are tackling the issue with a new set of inclusion standards for best picture, commencing in 2024.

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