THE BATTLES

NOBODY WARNS YOU ABOUT

What Stands Between You and the Future You Deserve

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Chapter 1

Nobody Warns You About the Battles Ahead

The shift. You may believe that your hardest battle is the one you cannot talk about. That is the battle this book was written for. It is real, it has a name, and you are not the first to fight it.

No one warns you. You grow up expecting the hard part to be school, or maybe money. Nobody sits you down and tells you about the quieter battles. They are fought alone, in your own head, with no referee and no easy end.

By the time you recognise you're in one, you're usually already in the middle of it. That is the real problem with these battles. They are not unbeatable. Most people simply fight them without ever being told what they are up against. You cannot prepare for an enemy no one names.

This book names those battles plainly, not to frighten you, but because a fight you can name is a fight you can actually win. Each one is real, each one is survivable, and each one gets easier the moment you stop fighting it in the dark.

Picture this. Picture a young person who smiles in class, scores well in tests and says nothing at home. Nobody in the room knows that the day is a struggle from the first hour to the last.

This book is for every reader, whatever your age or stage of life. It is for the young person at school, the adult at work or at home, the parent, the mentor and the retired. The author cared most about young people, but the battles he names do not end when youth does. Parents, teachers, pastors and leaders will find sections addressed to them.

The years of youth are the years many of us look back on, and the years in which many battles begin. Young people are a special group in every country, and their concerns are topical on every continent. This is less because of their make-up than because of their special needs and the many challenges they must contend with. A companion book, "Nobody Grows Alone," has already examined those needs and who should help to meet them. This book looks in depth at the challenges themselves.

Many countries have added avoidable challenges of their own: incompetent and corrupt leadership, bad governance, insecurity, decaying infrastructure and seriously inadequate social services. These deepen the problems young people face today. That is the world you are stepping into, and it is better to know it before you meet it.

Importance of Young People All Over the World

Young people matter to every country. They make up the bulk of its population and of its productive workforce. They are in their prime child-bearing years and will produce the next generation. Above all, they are the group most countries depend on to take over the leadership in the years ahead. In many countries they also carry the hope of

change. They stand for an enlightened citizenry, well educated, articulate, responsible and reliable, and for countries that rise to greater heights. Above all, they represent the hope of achieving, at last, the dreams and aspirations of those who founded their countries.

Importance of the Challenges Facing These Young People

Sadly, these hopes are threatened by the challenges young people face today.

Why devote an entire book to these challenges? Their sheer number and magnitude show how deep the problem runs, and how much remains to be done. Left unchecked, they can stop young people from realising their dreams and becoming self-fulfilled citizens. Some young people are sent to an untimely death, an irreparable loss to their families; others to prison, bringing lasting stigma on themselves and their families. Families lose the achievers they hoped for, and countries lose the productivity these young people would have contributed. In the end, such challenges can snowball until a country becomes difficult for everyone.

Categories of Challenges Facing Our Young People

The chapters that follow examine these challenges in detail. For convenience, they are grouped into broad categories, though many could just as easily belong to another. Unwanted pregnancy, for instance, appears

among the Individual Challenges, but it is equally at home among the Societal, Health-related Social and Religious Challenges. Sex addiction, alcohol misuse and genetic diseases likewise cross categories.

The categories are Individual, Family, Societal, Academic, Health-related Social, Other Social, Religious, Disease and Health Challenges. Chapters 2 to 10 take them one at a time.

Your turn. Which battle in this book do you already know by name? Which one are you afraid to name? This week, write down the one you most need to understand.

END OF THE FREE SAMPLE

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