

Africa Youth Leadership Forum - Kenya

# Newsletter

Quarter 4 - 2021



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AYLF is a collaborative initiative that brings together University Students, Students' leaders and alumni from both public and private Universities, for mentorship, training, networking, capacity building. We seek to advance values and principles that promote transformation and servant leadership.

AYLF – Kenya was formed in 2007 and is registered as a Trust.

### ***Mission***

Our aim is to be a movement of friends to nurture a new breed of leaders in Africa, based on the leadership qualities, values, and principles of Jesus of Nazareth as exemplified by some of history's greatest statesmen and women.

### ***Vision***

At the heart of AYLF is the dream that emerging leaders in Africa would know how to speak the truth without being sectarian or religiously divisive, see people without labels or stereotypes, loving each other and those they lead while serving with integrity.

### ***Philosophy***

The work is done simply in the name of Jesus under the auspices of a national leadership drawn from business, industry, politics, academia, and religion. It's not done under the name of any particular organization or religious group.

### ***Core Values***

**Friendship/Relationship** - To raise a generation of leaders who will demonstrate high levels of integrity and honesty in everything they engage in.

**Reconciliation** - To rise beyond the issues that so easily divide us. Seek to be reconciled with self, each other, and our Creator.

**Community of compassion** - Build a community of leaders who care for the people around them and are willing to reach out to the least of these in our society.

**Faithfulness/Loyalty** - Commitment to walk a journey together in every circumstance irrespective of what happens. Stand with each other through every circumstance.

**Integrity/Honesty** - To raise a generation of leaders who will demonstrate high levels of integrity and honesty in everything they engage in.

# The AYLF Story

Africa Youth Leadership forum started in 2007 in Kenya, now in 27 universities and a coordination office

We train, mentor and build capacity for young leaders in Universities through the following interventions:

## Number 1

University small group Outreach



## Number 2

Leadership Development program



## Number 3

Advanced Leadership Initiative (Targets AYLF Alumni).



## IT'S ALL ABOUT THE AYLF SMALL GROUPS

AYLF-KENYA has small groups on Campuses across Kenya. Here is some information about them. Take a look!

### 1. NUMBER OF SMALL GROUPS:

**28**

There are 27 small groups in the Northern, Southern, Western, Eastern and Coastal Regions of Kenya



### 2. TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

**360**

With about 13 members in each small group, we have a total of 360 small group members across the country

### 3. TOPICS COVERED

These are some of the areas that the small group members discuss in their weekly meetings



### 4. SUCCESSFUL HANDOVERS

These Coordinators were able to successfully pass on the baton to their successors

Coordinator	University
Judy Misati	Kisii University
Philip Kimeu	UON
Sharon Chepkemol	QUEA
Sharon Odero	MKU
Dominic Nyaga	Strathmore
Marion Kariuki	JKUAT
Dawn Chemolwa	TUK

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.

**-Margaret Mead**

### 5. PROJECTS DONE

- Mashujaa Chapati Edition with Street Families
- Tree Planting
- Visitation to Childrens' Homes
- Fun Activities such as Swimming, Hikes, sleepovers, Games and Picnics

**Newest Small Group in town!**  
Egerton university



Nurturing a new breed of leaders



# Newest Small Group

## Egerton University Chapter

By: Emmanuel Mutua, Co-ordinator



Different people have been endorsed with different charismas. The heart of a person's satisfaction is embedded in different points of focus through different aspects of life, social service, political preferences and endeavors, leadership roles, and diverse development forums. I was inspired by the Africa Youth Leadership Forum, a noble platform to nurture leadership skills amongst African youth and to be more specific, the superb leadership potential in Kenyan youth.

The first time I heard about AYLF was in 2019 during the National Prayer Breakfast where my "campus dad", David Omondi was awarded the most Exemplary Students Leader in Kenya. Lol, I still have the portrait of the trophy in my room; funny, isn't it? Later on, I came to realize that Egerton University did not have an AYLF Chapter yet the same University produced the best Student Leader

Nationwide! This was a trigger for me to start organizing for the latter. I felt that it would be a great platform for the whole Egerton University fraternity to nature the great leadership potential among the students

Through the interaction with the AYLF Kabarak University Chapter, I felt motivated by the leadership strategies, friendship, goodness, devotion to service, well just like the works of Jesus Christ and felt the urge to bring the same values to Egerton University by preaching the three pillars of Africa Youth Leadership Forum: Leadership, Friendship, and Jesus, as the best way to bake the future leaders of Africa like the likes of Nelson Mandela and Mwalimu Julius Nyerere.

With the idea well laid to different leaders of different clubs and students associations in the university, I received members with so much ease. I organized

for an online interview after a competitive selection. The small group is made up of members from different tribal ethnicities, ages, faculties, years of study and not to forget fair gender balance. We endorse discipline amongst ourselves and rarely do we miss our weekly meetings.

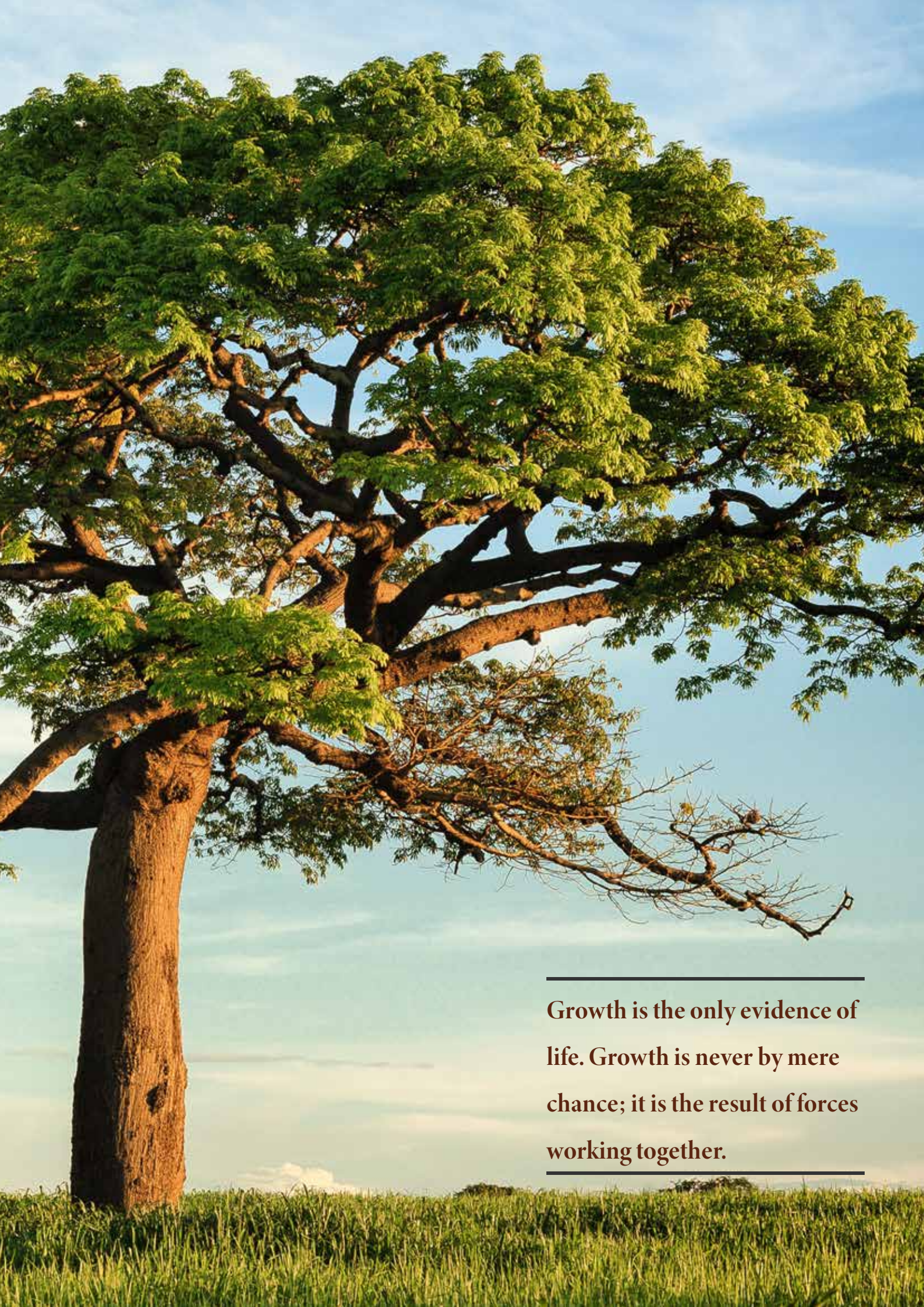
The chapter has received bounty support from the University, through The Dean of Students Office and this has made us take part in activities hosted by our administration, for instance, The Mid-Rift Counter Terrorism training that was organized by the County Government of Nakuru. We have also been assigned a 100 seat auditorium where we normally hold our weekly meetings and open forums.

Ms. Marylene Sada, our Patron, is our guiding light and whose efforts have propelled the small group to greater heights, a gem every other club is always talking about, aren't we lucky?

In conclusion, I would like to thank Muca Kamuca, The Programs Officer, and Jesse Njuguna, the Country Small Groups Coordinator whom we have been working with closely to see to it that the Chapter sets off perfectly.

This serves as a call to other coordinators and student leaders to register their Small groups and start AYLF Chapters respectively, for this set forth an engine to propel our slogan and vision.





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Growth is the only evidence of life. Growth is never by mere chance; it is the result of forces working together.

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# Student Leadership Development Program



Africa Youth Leadership Forum seeks to develop young University students in Kenya. The Trust runs leadership programs which include and are not limited to The Debates program, The University Elections debate and induction program, Student Leaders Development Program, The May Gathering, and The Awards Program among others. These programs are geared towards empowering different levels of students to grow their skills, leadership, knowledge pool, and build lifelong meaningful relationships. The ideals stemmed from the vision and the mission of AYLFF.

The student leadership development program has seen 7 cohorts graduate since its inception. It targets students from universities and students' leaders. In 2021, as we recovered from the hit of the Covid-19 pandemic, we restructured the execution of the SLDP program to keep the fellows and the trainers safe. Fellows were trained virtually for the first three months with weekly engagements. When Covid-19 restrictions were lifted, physical meetings were included in the program.

The Cohort 7 fellows were taken through training on personal development like branding, visioning, and strategic planning, financial management, business writing, and interviews; they were also taken through leadership development through the Trust Edge leadership tool, the Seven Habit of highly effective people, opinion development and writing, and character development; they pursued mentorship engagements too where each fellow was assigned a senior mentor and a peer mentor; and lastly, all fellows were engaged in a community development project where they were trained on project structuring, proposal drafting, fundraising and partnership management, project implementation, reporting and project evaluation, and project sustainability. Check the list below;

No	Name	University	Project Title
1.	Dawn Chemoiwa	TUK	Hold my Hand
2.	Brian Mureithi	Kenyatta University	Power Patrol
3.	Mercy Ngonyo	Machakos University	The Green Drive Edition
4.	Mundia Waithaka	JKUAT	Being Human
5.	Lionel Lemarian	JKUAT	Tujuane
6.	Mwenda Moronge	MKU Law School	Linked in Justice
7.	Valentine Wanjiru	Kenyatta University	Mentorship
8.	Valeria Nyambura	Kenyatta University	Project Power
9.	Euphemia Okioga	MMU	Boxer Drive
10.	Fabian Boera	MKU	Wachoraji Show
11.	Sadam Adow	TUK	Safe and Safety Project
12.	Rose Lavina	KU	Genital Health Education
13.	Wallace Wanyoro	PAC University	M-Power
14.	Maureen Wanjiku	UON	My Resilience My Pride

The Cohort graduated on the 4th of December during the AYLF annual dinner. The Link for Cohort 8 registration is <https://bit.ly/3EWtCXb>. The program is cost-shared between AYLF and the fellows. Make sure to register a student you know, or yourself. Wishing you blessed festivities.

*“During the SLDP Bootcamp, my biggest takeaway was that Maturity meant Courage and consistency, and the best way to approach challenges was with the mentality that they were opportunities to learn and grow. During the SLDP Bootcamp, my biggest takeaway was that Maturity meant Courage and consistency, and the best way to approach challenges was with the mentality that they were opportunities to learn and grow.”* - Mercy Gakaria, 7th SLDP Cohort

*“What has resonated with me is that the change we want in society begins with us. It begins with people we relate to, especially those in our inner circles.”* - Solomon Mwenda, 7th SLDP Cohort





# Something is Cooking!

**ALI** stands for Advanced Leadership Initiative.

This is a program targeting AYLF's network of young professionals to engage them meaningfully in their areas of expertise to enhance positive impact in our communities. The program was launched (soft launch) on the **9th of October 2021** at one of our friend's residence in Karen.

*Watch out for more engagements in 2021!*





# Events Recap



AYLF members posing in their African wear at the AYLF end year 2021



An AYLF Alumni showing off her Raffle ticket at the AYLF Fundraiser Dinner



CUEA small group after a meeting





The coast region city Forum 2021



Cutting of the ribbon at the launch of the AYLF office



Our Senior friends, Mugo Kibati and David Gatende



All smiles at the new office

# ATOMIC HABITS



Mark Manson gave a stellar review to the book “Atomic Habits” by saying that it was “A supremely practical and useful book. James Clear distills the most fundamental information about habit formation, so you can accomplish more by focusing on less.”. I couldn’t agree more.

As we get into the new year, we are going to be piled with messages on self-improvement, we might write down a few resolutions, put up a vision board and maybe post something on cutting off friends. All this is well and good, but how do you truly show up as your best version all year?

Here is an approach that might be worth considering. We overestimate the importance of one defining moment and underestimate the value of small and consistent improvements. Building minor habits every day gives you a sense of control over your life giving you the confidence to move on to the next thing.

***“Changes that seem small and unimportant at first will compound into remarkable results if you’re willing to stick***

***with for years”*** — James Clear

We quickly dismiss and give up on these small changes because we feel like they don’t matter very much and the results don’t come fast enough for our liking. We fall back into our old routines and this makes it easier for the bad habits to creep back in. A slight change in your everyday habits such as making your bed first thing in the morning, reading two pages of a book every day or saving a little bit every month determines the difference between who you are and who you could be. Create habits that put you on the path to success. Observe what your current micro patterns are and it is a good prediction on where you will end up in life.

We have always been told that the way to achieve anything in life is by setting smart goals. To ensure that they stick, it is all about the systems you put in place and follow.

***“You do not rise to the level of your goals. You fall to the level of your systems”***

Jason Nyugen describes goals as the results you want to achieve, systems are about the processes that lead to those results. Goals are good for setting you in the right direction but having good systems in place is what makes you progress.

Everyone has a goal, both winners and losers have the same goals but winners get there by the implementation of their system of continuous small improvements.

The other problem with goal setting is it’s only a momentary change.

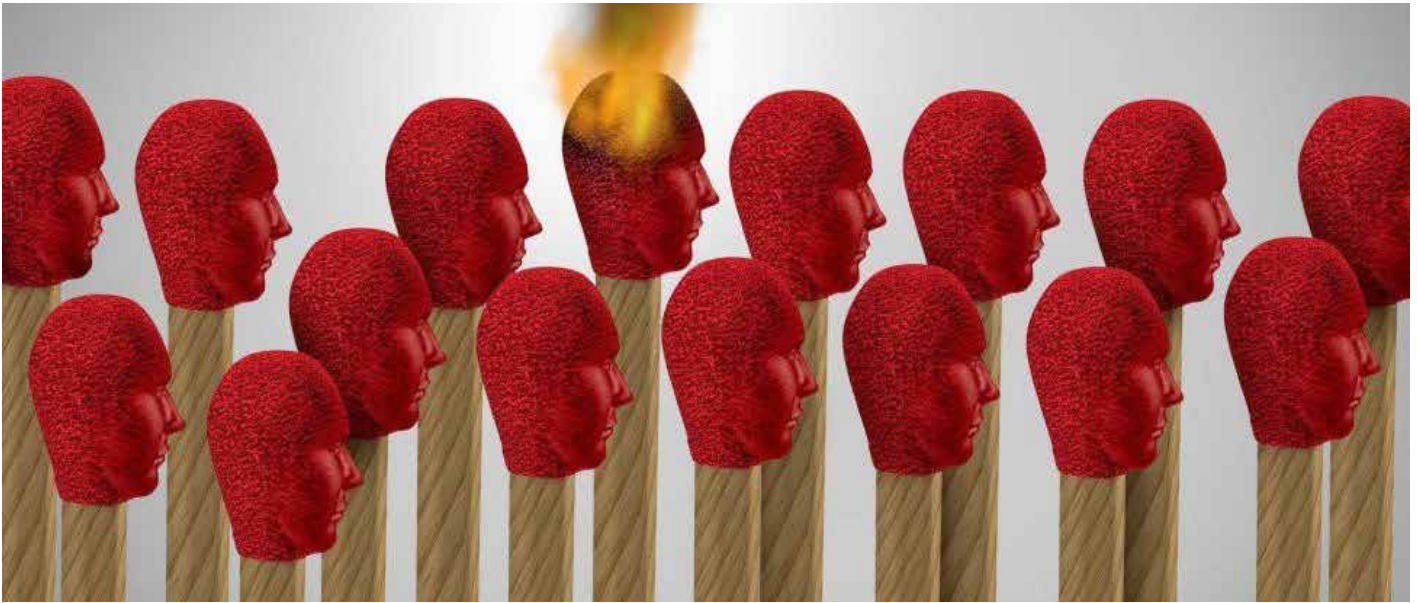
Let’s say you have a messy room that has built up because you have maintained a sloppy habit that led to this build-up of mess and your goal is to clean your room. You finally muster up the energy to overcome your laziness and the room is now finally tidy, if you maintain the same sloppy habits you’ll quickly accumulate mess up in your room again resulting in you looking for a new burst of motivation to go clean it again. You have a crappy system. Achieving a goal only changes your life for the moment.

Setting a goal restricts your happiness and also sets you up for failure. Have you ever said to yourself “once I reach X goal I will be happy”? The problem with this mentality is that you’re in continuous pursuit of happiness. Why is happiness always for your future self to enjoy?

Having a systems mentality is the solution to your happiness. When you fall in love with the process, you don’t have to keep chasing after happiness.

Trying to set goals is like trying to win the game but having a system is continuously playing the game. This long-term thinking is what will help you truly improve yourself.





# Stress, Fatigue, Burnout, Depression

## *The Loud Silence In Youth Leadership*

By: Jude Thaddeus

Behind the limelight, travels, conferences, awards, public figure photo ops, media appearances, and huge social media followings, lies a demon that is eating into the energies of today's youth leaders. A demon, which by all means, must be confronted. Lest we lose our most energetic, courageous, creative, forward-thinking change agents along the way.

\*\*\*\*\*

In the year 2017, I decided to venture into the creative economy. A sector that I was already immersed in by default. Only that time round, I wanted to set up a business. Setting up a business in a sector that is already familiar, where your talent, passion, and creativity seem to align so effortlessly was a perfect deal. But although I had been in the creative sector before then, I had taken a break from it to focus on what seemed to have been my prime at

the youth leadership spaces.

That year, I was still doing a project with the Commonwealth Youth Council. I was part of a working group under the Office of Inclusion and Engagement that was championing for awareness on matters of youth living with disabilities. That very same year, I had done a few projects on matters of elections with a few NGOs focusing on Kenya's 2017 general elections. A year before, I had had a short stint serving as the Secretary of State of a Youth Cabinet model—The World Youth Government, Kenya chapter. A cabinet that had to be dissolved shortly afterward due to reasons beyond our control. A year before that, I had just retired as the Chair of the Arts Students Association at the University of Nairobi where I was an elected representative—while doubling up as a board member in the faculty management board representing

students' interests.

All along, projects that one could engage in were numerous. Some short-term, others long-term. And if I recollect well, I actually had started engaging in Youth-focused projects as early as my second year at the University—where we (being part of a project) were working with talented but underprivileged youth from some of the informal settlements in Nairobi. Connecting them to mentors while linking them to mainstream industries.

\*\*\*\*\*

But why did I decide in 2017, that I wanted to venture back into the creative sector, to set up a business?

Well, the youth leadership road is bumpy. And sometimes, there is no clear visibility ahead. All foggy and blurry. But in order to graduate into mainstream leadership,

that foggy youth leadership road remains almost the only route.

\*\*\*\*\*

My first reason for going back to the creative economy was financial security.

More often than not, Youth leadership does not come with a paycheck. Probably only per diems and allowances during project execution. And for you to have accomplished, let's say, ten (10) projects, you probably had tried out a hundred (100) of them. Or tried out various formulas to achieve that one (1) project. This takes a lot of time and energy. With behind-the-scenes fears, tears, and sweat—Huge financial burden, while pushing forth trying to make that one project work. And as if that is not enough, personal bills that await you.

It's almost a replica of a life of an entrepreneur. Where you need capital to set up a product, but at the same time, you need the product, plus proof of demand and sales, to attract the capital.

\*\*\*\*\*

The world today is experiencing stagnation when it comes to upward mobility. (Or probably what exists is a downward one). That, whereas in the past, hard work and merit, plus a little privilege could usher you into the world of limitless possibilities, today, it has become like a fight. A life and death fight. Where sometimes one feels that they are fighting to no particular end.

\*\*\*\*\*

And just like entrepreneurship again, Youth leadership requires 100% dedication and commitment.

There are no in-betweens. If you don't give your 100% plus, then definitely you won't have any results. And that is another dilemma. How do you give 100% to a cause that doesn't guarantee your bills will be catered to at the end of the day?

### **Social Enterprise**

This dilemma prompted the rise in social entrepreneurship. Where individuals are seeking to positively impact society through running their personal businesses. The point of sale is social change, but the end result includes a profit for oneself.

Fair enough. But most social enterprises, Africa and beyond, either still have to pitch for funding or engage in competitions that attract the needed support. Going back to the cycle of capital for product— and product plus impact, for capital.

### **Mental Health**

We therefore can argue, rightfully so, that the wave of mental health problems that has swept the current Millennial/ youth generation globally, has not spared that so-called youth leader. However much they might appear to be ahead of the pack— seems to have everything figured out.

And therefore we should be alive to the fact that as we see our youth leaders travel the world, appear on media, engage on social media, engage in our communities—they are young and are equally facing the very same challenges that young people are facing across board. They are just simply seeking to change the world, as they change their own worlds too—in the process.

Therefore, as general members of society, we shouldn't add to their pressures. As much as we have placed them on a higher pedestal. And probably we expect them to deliver on our behalf, we should remember that they are only human—and they too experience the same burnout any other human experiences.

### **Support Systems**

Having observed reduced upward mobility in a number of sectors. Various leadership sectors included— There is a need for those sectors to model their structures in such a manner where talented and gifted youth are able to, not only climb up the ladder but have sustainable incomes. Take Political parties for instance. Youth should not just be limited to youth representatives, campaign mobilizers, and bloggers. They should equally be mentored to run affairs of party secretariats among other roles that will prepare them for top leadership. It doesn't make any sense for youth to mobilize, blog, vote, only for them to be tossed into oblivion immediately after elections. Where are they supposed to go?

'Help us help you, I guess that is the request from youth leaders today. Individuals who are dedicating most of their youth to change society. And are facing the very same roughness of youth. They just need the society in which they are also a part, to ease the pressures, and, extend the support their way too.

### **About the author**

*Jude Thaddeus is an Entrepreneur, a Sociopolitical Commentator / Strategist, Author, and Team Lead @ Brave Politics*



## *In loving Memory of* **Hadassah Muthoki Mutava**



Heaven acquired a happy, bubbly soul - our active member from the University of Nairobi main campus Small Group. She was a mobilizer. Her infectious hearty laughter and warm smile remains our fondest memory of her.

Thank you AYLF fraternity and senior friends for the prayers and support to the family and the UON main campus small group members.

***May Hadassah's soul keep resting in perfect peace.***

# POEM

By: Muca Kamuca

*AYLF Programs Coordinator*

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Did I say,  
That I am addicted,  
To good leadership,  
But I have failed my vote with  
Indecision?

Have I not told you?  
That I am addicted  
To a serene safe environment  
But I have wagged myself in the mire of pollution  
And little littering.

Have I not told you?  
That I am addicted  
To good values so spotless than snow,  
But I have failed to risk myself carefully into good character and  
Conscience.

Did I say,  
That I am addicted,  
To compassion and give out to the needy,  
But my mind has been compromised with greed and sadism,  
I enjoy their little tears.

Have I not told you?  
That I am addicted  
To change and be better,  
But I am bent to my old culture,  
And I haven't changed yet.

Have I not told you?  
I am addicted!



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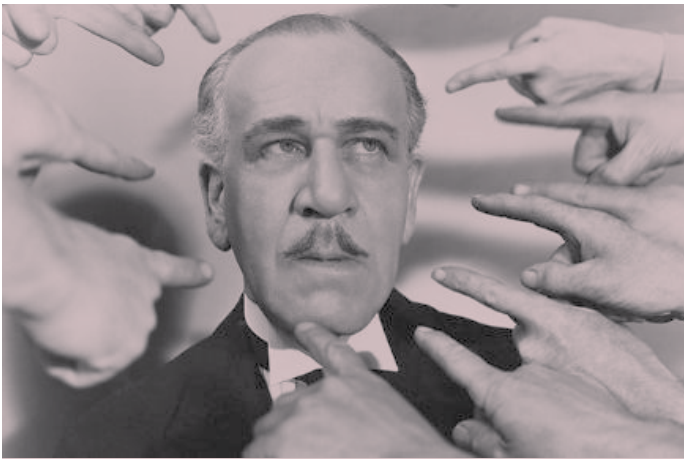
# Leading with Courage and Optimism

By: *Gabriel Odhiambo Achayo*

*Country Coordinator - AYLF Kenya & Senior Consultant, GiANT Worldwide - [www.giantworldwide.com](http://www.giantworldwide.com)*

I believe you can't escape criticism if you choose to lead.

Leadership is about choosing to influence others. It's about people's lives. Sometimes to do what others don't prefer. If you advocate a position and advance an agenda, there will be detractors and those who will disagree and disapprove of you. Others will disapprove of you just because it's you. Others may be because of your faults or mistakes or their perception of either. This might seek to pull you back or hinder progress. But I would like to say this; criticism is part of leadership. Anyone who has worked with those who are different from them or see things differently has at any point experienced any form of disagreement or disapproval; either in their personality, ability, merit, character, etc.



While I am willing to acknowledge this reality as my learning opportunity, I must confess that criticism is never easy for me. This is both in giving and receiving. I am an ISFP, and my F affects me a lot as what I do, and I am all one and the same. The Nurturer tendency that makes me fear conflict makes me equate criticism with conflict. If you criticize my work, it always looks like you are shooting me down. I have come a long way, and I'm learning to accept this, I have to be disagreed with, disapproved, and sometimes dismissed. This is the one tendency I am dealing with so that I can be a

leader who can take in criticism. Of course, I hope they will be positive and not negative meant to hurt me just for the sake of it. I know these two will be present. But as a leader, I have to learn to deal with them when they come. As I continue to advance ideas, causes, and issues that I believe in, I am very aware that they will put me in the crosshairs of the strictest opponents.

"Leadership" and "Leadership Styles" are often confused. You can lead with a servant's heart or mindset. Looking for solutions as you build on participation and inclusiveness. People often need to feel they are part of the conversation and to be acknowledged for their contribution. This kind of leadership style can reduce the sting of criticism. We are often criticized less for what we say than for how we say it. A leader needs to pay attention to both sides of the equation; "Leadership" and "Leadership Style." What you say and how you say it. This might vary from one scenario to another. It's in striking a balance that will make you a leader worth following.

I could be right and know more than the people I am leading, but if all I load on you is what I know without care on how this affects you as the led, then I might end up walking in the park. The three questions most people ask if you are leading them are:

1. Do you know what you are talking about?
2. Do you care about me; the led?
3. Can you help me get out of my problem?

These three questions speak into "Leadership" and "Leadership Style." The "What" and the "How." We may get the "What" right, but until we are clearly on the "How," we are bound to have a rough ride as a leader. I believe a leader who is consciously aware of the "How," is likely to have minimum criticism. But the how alone is not enough because you have to be clear on the "What" as a leader.





It's clear we can't avoid criticism at all as a leader. But it helps to know you can reduce them to a minimum if you know how to balance "Leadership" and "Leadership Style." If you know how to calibrate "Challenge and Support." There is no precise balance here, but it's you to know in your situation when to "Support" and when to "Challenge." When to "Push" and when to "Pull."

As a leader, do you know when to "Give your opinions and views" Vs. when to "Actively Listen?" When to "State your Needs and Wants"

Vs. when to "Draw them from the people you are leading?" Do you have a sense of when to use "Incentives and Pressure" Vs. when to "Build a Common Ground?"

If this resonates with you, how are your "Push/Pull Behaviours." Look for a small community of friends with who you can learn to do this together. Being accountable to a few and practicing with a few. It's about building a community of friends to share each other's journey of genuine leaders who want to succeed as leaders. You have to be deeply committed

to each other and desire to see each other grow in this journey. You have to create a support, encouragement, and accountability platform for each other. The community has to be as small as possible so that there is active engagement by all involved.

Find a community around you and see if these conversations make sense to you.

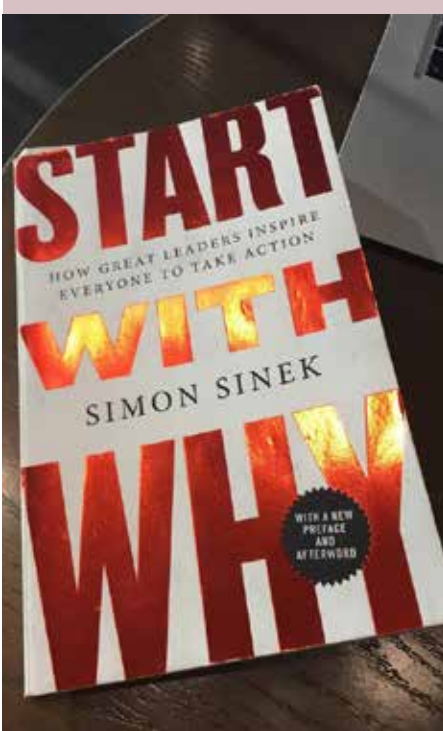
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# Reviews

By: Beryl Maritim

## Book



The inspirational bestseller that ignited a movement and asked us to find our WHY

Discover the book that is captivating millions on TikTok and that served as the basis for one of the most popular TED Talks of all time—with more than 56 million views and counting. Over a decade ago, Simon Sinek started a movement that inspired millions to demand purpose at work, to ask what was the WHY of their organization. Since then, millions have been touched by the power of his ideas, and these ideas remain as relevant and timely as ever.

START WITH WHY asks (and answers) the questions: why are some people and organizations more innovative, more influential, and more profitable than others? Why do some command greater loyalty from customers and employees

alike? Even among the successful, why are so few able to repeat their success over and over?

People like Martin Luther King Jr., Steve Jobs, and the Wright Brothers had little in common, but they all started with WHY. They realized that people won't truly buy into a product, service, movement, or idea until they understand the WHY behind it.

START WITH WHY shows that the leaders who have had the greatest influence in the world all think, act and communicate the same way—and it's the opposite of what everyone else does. Sinek calls this powerful idea The Golden Circle, and it provides a framework upon which organizations can be built, movements can be led, and people can be inspired. And it all starts with WHY.

## Podcast



How do I quit feeling so jealous of successful friends? Can I befriend my ex? Should I ask my coworker why she unfollowed me on Twitter? Every week Jenn & Trin answer your questions about friendship! We try to advise on the tricky stuff that's making you feel weird.

Friendshipping-fadca2ff.simp.

## Movie



Former Apple marketing whiz Guy Kawasaki, now keynote speaker and author of *The Art of the Start 2.0*, chooses the frozen epic that delivered Leonardo DiCaprio his first Oscar. Kawasaki says there are lessons about resilience and overcoming adversity that are important to leaders. "No matter what people tell you—or your inner voice tells you—you can beat the 800-pound gorilla. Or, in this case, grizzly bear," he says, even when it comes at great cost.

He says entrepreneurship is more like the brutal challenges of this movie than it is the fairy-tale of meeting cofounders and venture capitalists, getting funding, shipping product, collecting revenue, and going public.





# What to Expect - Q1 & Q2

- SLDP Cohort 8
- University Small groups weekly meetings
- Annual Small Group Coordinators Retreat workshop in January 2021
- Student Leaders Gathering in May 2021
- Advanced Leadership Initiative workshops
- Live Monthly Leadership Conversations



# Our Partners





Merry  
Christmas

AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR



From Us  
To You

To join any of our programs, or support our work, reach out to us through the contacts given below:

**Africa Youth Leadership Forum**

**Ufungamano House, Mamlaka Road - Nairobi**

**Contact Number: +254 796 93 4974**

**Postcode: 18068-00100, Nairobi**



**[www.aylfkenya.org](http://www.aylfkenya.org)**

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