

Yemi Asekun Audio Transcripts

Oral History Project (1 min 25)

I think it's quite a good idea, you know, to have this. And I know life itself is all about history, and I see that that's what the Western culture has got. You know, they've got that history which is documented, which can be related to later on.

I know, and I think my story, some way, somehow, along the line will probably inspire someone else. And it would also probably be down for generations to come. So I think this is a pretty good idea to be able to tell our story and, you know, it's a story of success, which is good. And I know that would have an impact on someone else, you know, in terms of moving to a new place, settling in, integrating, and being able to contribute as well. And after all that, then being able to be like a role model to younger people who are coming up and making a change and an impact in the society.

So the society may not change at once, but at least this little story will probably go a long way in getting others encouraged so we can all kind of like contribute our own little token to society.

National Youth Service (1 min 9)

So the National Youth Service is kind of like not... I wouldn't say it's a practical, it's a good experience because it gives you the experience to go and see other parts of the country for example where you're not from and you then learn the different culture and different areas of that society. But when we were going then, I mean 20, 30 years ago, it was a good experience because for me, most especially, I got to leave Lagos and I got to go to the northern part of the country, you know, it was myself and two other friends and the friend that I worked with actually drives, so we actually drove to the youth service camp.

But I was an engineer and then you would find out that after all that, you don't get a placement, which is relevant to the course you studied sometimes, so most people end up being given a teaching role, which is not bad as well because what you've learned, you might be able to impact others.

My Son is an Engineer (56 secs)

And I'm not sure if this has been part of what you've collected from other people as well. But what was common then was the parents would want you to do what they loved. So my father wanted me to be an engineer. And so I had no other choice but to go in that direction. And every parent then wanted to have one of the top four professions in the family. So they want their children to either be an engineer, a doctor, an accountant, or a lawyer. So nobody wanted their

children to be a teacher because they didn't consider that. Because the parents would sit and talk and say, oh, my son is a doctor. Oh, my son is an engineer.

So it was their pride to actually do that. But engineering was what was chosen for me. So I ended up going to university to study engineering.

Living in Essex (31 secs)

Well, I mean, Chelmsford is good. In those days, it's quite a lot of green land, lots of good people, lots of great people that you see around. And most especially, you don't hear all the news or disturbance that you hear in London every time, and people had respect for one another.

And we've loved it, even though I don't live in Chelmsford anymore now, but we still live in Essex, so we're in Maldon now.

Father Inspired (1 min 50)

Oh, my father was very influential in my life. So, my father was an auto technician with the Nigerian army and he was kind of like very good, what you call the handyman these days. So, he was very good with his hands and I was kind of like his assistant.

So, I was always with him anytime he was doing anything and he would get me to bring tools and bring all sorts of things for him whilst he was doing his work and he would be explaining to me exactly what he was doing.

But there's one thing that, well two things that he told me which is quite unforgettable. One of them is you can always get anything that you want depending on the way you approach people. And the second thing which he told me which I'm still working on and funny enough I crack a joke about this is he said since he wasn't able to kind of make his own name go global he wanted me to be the one that will carry the name just myself and my siblings to make the name global all over the world and I'm like how can I do that? How is that possible? But then the joke about it is well I've travelled to so many countries and at least they know my name in those countries so at least that's a journey to actualising the dream.

And when Obama became president in the US and the Dreams From My Father came out and that was a very real big highlight for me because sometimes you know you don't have those dreams someone else has to dream and then you have to live the dream because they didn't have time to actualise it they pass it on to you and you carry on the journey so which means life is a continuous journey. So that was the kind of influence that it kind of like had in my life.