

Gone to Ghana: Comfort, the enemy of success

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For three weeks, as some people saw it, I became comfortable in Ghana. I managed to land a job with the United States government overseas, and, of course, for most people, this was the determining factor in my success story. However, in my opinion, it was more like a nail in a coffin.

I remember when I first came across the job; I didn't even want to apply. My stint in Washington, DC, taught me more than enough about working for the government, and, I can readily admit, it's not for me. But yet, the practical side in me said it would provide me some stability in a new land, not to mention, give me more prestige amongst the local population. So, when I got an email inviting me in for an interview, I started not to respond. I looked at the screen for hours and then finally hit reply near the end of the day, accepting the interview. Then they started checking my references, and I became anxious. And although, I was hesitant about accepting the position, everyone else was so convinced it was a blessing.

So that is how I ended up, for three weeks, working 50 hours a week amongst people who were from where else, but Washington, DC. It was the first time that I was unhappy in Africa. I couldn't figure out how I had allowed myself to get trapped, sucked back into the exact same thing I just left. I wondered if I was in work purgatory, and I was destined to relive my same horrible experience over and over again. Yet, for some reason, I felt I could not quit. In fact, one day, I even said a desperate prayer to God, "Please, let them fire me." This is probably a point and prayer many people can relate to. After all, it is easier to be pushed from the ledge than to jump.

I mean, regardless of how outgoing, or flexible a person is, I believe, no one likes to be uncertain about life. Naturally, it makes us all uncomfortable. That is why we seek comfortable things that make us feel secure, like jobs we hate. We know it takes a toll on our mental, physical and emotional health, yet we feel that we cannot lose the security, or rather the financial security, of a job. It is understandable though, money may be the root of all evil, but it is also the answer to all things.

Fortunately, for me, God answers prayers, and I was terminated when the agency was alerted I was still obtaining my resident permit. Technically, without a resident permit, I am an illegal immigrant and don't have the right to work- so it worked out, after all. I must admit to a little disappointment, but it didn't last long. Finally, after three weeks I have my life back and I can continue to build my empire. Most importantly, I have learned the lesson that comfort truly is the enemy of success.

My grandmother passed last month and, before I left, she said she was so proud because I got to do things and go places she never even thought of as a kid. Most of the feats my grandmother admired probably came from moments of discomfort like this. However, if the track record speaks for itself, these moments also always provide the momentum needed to push forward full steam ahead.