

Diligence over fear: the core of success

BY Andrew Nyirenda



In the quest to victory, a constructive mindset is the heart of the journey while absolute fear is nothing but a poisonous element purposed to hold someone back from attaining their desired goal.

According to psychology scholars, the fear that kindles self-doubt can push people into a stagnant state where success would only be an imagination in their mind.

Meet McDonald Nyirenda, a 31-year-old who has battled and triumphed against fear to realistically achieve what most people can only dream of.

Determination, persistence and absolute hard work are some of the key facets that have enabled him to become one of the strong forces for promoting the rights and welfare of people with disabilities in the country. He went to Ngele and Kaporo primary schools respectively in Karonga but against all odds, in 2005 he was the only student from his class to be selected into a government secondary school.

However, the chance to attain secondary education became an additive thorn in Nyirenda's life 'cause he had to do a lot of piece

works so as to supplement the little his parents had for school fees.

"While at Kaporo Community Day Secondary School (CDSS) I was doing some photography using the skill I cultured from my brother so as to help top up my school fees and living closer to the lake did not spare me from selling fish in neighboring villages," he says.

After a long spell of relentlessly exploring productive opportunities including being a barber, in 2016 he founded Focus on Ability Society (FOAS), a registered trustee and a solid voice for people with disabilities in the country.

He indicates that finding FOAS could have been impossible without the inspiration of external players in the field of activism.

Since 2017 he has managed to secure partnerships between Malawi and Australia through FOAS and NOVA Employment respectively to organize the focus on ability film festival in Malawi.

The Focus on Ability Short Film festival was created by the Australian NOVA Employment company to encourage filmmakers across the

globe to tell stories about the abilities and achievements of people with disabilities.

Through this initiative, Nyirenda has managed to promote the abilities and achievements of 32 people with disabilities and filmmaking skills of 27 young people in a space of three years.

He also founded and registered a social training enterprise called computer literacy Training for Teachers, Women and Youths (CLT4TWY).

Nyirenda is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism at The Polytechnic but he is also the Executive Director of FOAS. At the same time, Nyirenda is a certified African union trainer in prevention of violence extremism under Interfaith Dialogue on Violent Extremism (IDOVE), a youth movement between Africa and Europe.

To this effect, some would think that luck has played a big role all the way but a flawless view of his life evidently pinpoints that absolute diligence is at the center of his accomplishments.