YOUTHS' VOICE AT SUCH A TIME AS THIS

Why your Generation Must Rise, Speak, and Take Responsibility

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We are living in a defining moment in history. A time when the decisions we make today will shape the kind of society we inherit tomorrow. Across our communities, young people are grappling with unemployment, financial pressure, social media influence, peer pressure, moral challenges, and uncertainty about the future. Yet, in the midst of these realities, one important question demands an answer: Where is the voice of the youth at such a time as this? The youth are often described as the leaders of tomorrow, but tomorrow is being shaped by what you do today. You cannot continue to postpone responsibility while waiting for the future to arrive. Your generation must understand that you are not too young to contribute, too inexperienced to learn, or too ordinary to make a difference. The real question is not whether young people have a voice. It is whether that voice is being used to create meaningful change. A Generation with a Voice but What Message Are You Sending? Technology and social media have given young people unprecedented opportunities to express themselves. With a smartphone and an internet connection, a young person can share ideas, educate thousands, build a business, influence public opinion, and create opportunities that once seemed impossible. Unfortunately, the same platforms are sometimes used to promote unhealthy competition, spread misinformation, celebrate indecent behavior, encourage cyberbullying, and measure personal worth by the number of likes, followers, and comments received. You must pause and ask yourselves: What message is my generation communicating to the world? Are you using your voices to encourage, educate, and inspire, or are you contributing to the noise that makes society more confused? Are you challenging harmful practices or simply following trends because you are afraid of being different? Having a voice is a privilege, but using it responsibly is a duty. A generation that speaks loudly but acts carelessly may attract attention without making an impact. Your generation does not merely need louder voices; it needs wiser voices, courageous voices, and voices backed by character.

The Courage to Speak When Silence Is Easier. In Esther 4:14, Mordecai challenged Esther to recognize the significance of her position at a critical moment in history. His words remind us that opportunities to make a difference often come with responsibility. Today, young people face situations that require similar courage. We see dishonesty celebrated, drug abuse normalized, corruption excused, and harmful peer pressure presented as a sign of maturity. Some young people recognize these problems but remain silent because they fear rejection or ridicule. Others compromise their values simply to belong. But how can we expect society to change if those who recognize what is wrong are unwilling to speak up? How can we build a better future if we continue to celebrate the very behaviors that threaten it? Speaking up does not mean being disrespectful, aggressive, or unnecessarily confrontational. It means having the courage to stand for what is right, express our convictions respectfully, and refuse to participate in practices that destroy lives and communities. Sometimes, the most courageous thing a young person can do is say no when everyone else is saying yes. Sometimes, leadership begins with refusing to laugh at another person's humiliation, declining to participate in dishonest activities, or speaking up when someone is being mistreated. Your voices matter most when we use them to defend truth, promote peace, and protect human dignity.

Potential Is Not Enough. One of the greatest challenges facing young people today is the gap between potential and performance. We have intelligent young people, creative thinkers, talented entrepreneurs, gifted communicators, and innovative problem-solvers. Yet, many remain trapped in the cycle of dreaming without doing. We talk about success but struggle with discipline. We desire financial independence but sometimes neglect the skills and habits required to achieve it. We complain about unemployment but do not always invest in learning, creativity, or personal development. The truth is that potential, by itself, does not guarantee progress. A brilliant idea that is never developed remains an idea. A talent that is never improved may never reach its full potential. A desire for change without practical action often produces frustration rather than transformation. Young people must move beyond the comfort of talking about what they can become and begin doing the work required to get there. Learn a skill. Read widely. Develop emotional intelligence. Improve your communication. Learn how money works. Build healthy relationships. Seek mentorship. Take responsibility for your mistakes and learn from them. Do not wait until every opportunity is available before preparing yourself. Preparation often determines whether you can recognize and maximize an opportunity when it comes. The future will not be shaped by potential alone, but by the decisions, discipline, and actions of those willing to put their potential to work.

Your Character Must Support Your Voice. There is little value in speaking against corruption while practicing dishonesty. We cannot demand accountability from leaders while refusing to take responsibility for our own actions. We cannot preach tolerance while bullying people whose opinions differ from ours. Your voices become credible when your lives support your words. Character matters. Integrity matters. Respect matters. Discipline matters. Young people must understand that influence is not simply about being popular or having a large following. True influence is the ability to make a positive difference in the lives of others. You may not have thousands of followers, but you can influence your friends to make better choices. You may not hold a political position, but you can help solve a problem in your community. You may not have substantial financial resources, but you can volunteer your time, share useful knowledge, or support someone who needs encouragement. Never underestimate the impact of a young person who is committed to doing what is right. The world does not need perfect young people. It needs young people who are willing to learn, grow, take responsibility, and live with integrity.

Beyond Complaints: Becoming Part of the Solution. It is easy to criticize the government, parents, educational institutions, religious organizations, or society. While constructive criticism is important, it must lead us towards solutions. If we are concerned about unemployment, what skills are you developing to improve your employability or create opportunities? If we are worried about drug abuse among young people, what conversations are we initiating, and how are we supporting prevention and recovery? If we are concerned about violence and intolerance, how are we promoting respectful communication and peaceful coexistence? If we believe young people are not being heard, are we developing the knowledge, confidence, and competence required to participate meaningfully in decision-making? Youths must stop seeing themselves only as victims of circumstances and begin recognizing the areas where they can exercise responsibility and influence. This does not mean ignoring the structural challenges young people face. Unemployment, poverty, inadequate opportunities, and poor leadership are real concerns that require serious attention from governments, institutions, communities, and families. However, acknowledging these challenges should not prevent us from taking the steps available to us. We can demand better systems while preparing ourselves to contribute to them. We can question poor leadership while developing the character required for responsible leadership. We can advocate for opportunities while equipping ourselves to make the most of them. A generation becomes powerful when it combines the courage to question the status quo with the competence to offer better alternatives. At TGWAC Youth Forum, we believe that young people deserve more than motivational speeches. They need practical guidance, opportunities to express themselves, exposure to new ideas, and an environment that encourages personal growth and responsible decision-making. Your commitment is to help young people discover the giants within them, recognize their potential, develop their abilities, and understand that meaningful change begins with personal responsibility. We want young people who can think critically, communicate respectfully, make informed decisions, manage pressure, and pursue their goals with determination. We want young people who understand that success without character is dangerous, ambition without discipline is unreliable, and influence without responsibility can be destructive. Most importantly, we want young people who will not wait for someone else to build the future they desire. The question is not simply what TGWAC can do for young people, but what young people can become and contribute when they are given the right guidance, encouragement, and opportunities. Your generation needs a platform for honest conversations, difficult questions, practical learning, and meaningful action. It needs young people who are willing to challenge themselves before challenging the world.

The Questions We Must Answer. At such a time as this, every young person must be willing to examine their life honestly. Who am I becoming? What values guide my decisions when nobody is watching? Am I developing the skills I need for the future I desire? Do my words encourage progress or contribute to division? Am I using social media intentionally, or is it using my time and attention? What am I doing to improve my immediate environment? If I continue with my present habits for the next five years, will I be proud of the person I have become? These are not questions to answer merely for the sake of an article or a youth programme. They are questions that demand personal reflection and, where necessary, a change of direction. We cannot afford to keep postponing the work of becoming responsible, competent, and compassionate adults. The Time to Arise Is Now Young people, this is your moment to move from spectators to participants, from complaints to constructive action, and from empty promises to measurable progress. You must arise with courage to speak the truth, discipline to develop our abilities, wisdom to make sound decisions, and compassion to recognize the humanity of others. We must learn to disagree without hatred, compete without destroying others, pursue success without compromising your values, and use your influence without exploiting those who trust us. You must refuse to allow your circumstances to become the final definition of your possibilities. The future is not built in a single day, and meaningful change rarely happens through one dramatic action. It grows through consistent decisions, responsible leadership, collective effort, and the willingness to keep moving forward even when progress seems slow. Esther's story reminds us that our position in a particular moment can carry a responsibility greater than our personal comfort. As young people, we must therefore ask yourselves not only what we hope to gain from this generation, but also what we are prepared to contribute to it. Years from now, may your generation be remembered not merely for the challenges it faced, but for the courage it demonstrated, the solutions it created, the lives it touched, and the positive changes it helped to bring about. Your voices must carry truth. Your actions must demonstrate courage. Your character must establish credibility. And your contributions must make a difference. At such a time as this, the world does not need young people who are content to watch events unfold. It needs young people who are