

My Mentor, My Chairman, My Number One Supporter

It is with a very heavy heart and with so much pain that I pen this tribute to my beloved father, I still can't believe you are no longer here. It is hard to write this tribute without it bringing tears to my eyes.

Daddy Daddy as I fondly called him was my father, my friend, my mentor, my adviser, my Chairman and my number one supporter.

Watching Daddy growing up taught me the values of hardwork, sacrifice and focus. I am so grateful that I had such a great example and role model in my father, one that helped shaped my career and professional life. We always used to joke – “No work, No chop”.

Thank you for your unwavering support of my dreams and making me believe that I could do anything I set my mind to do, you always made me believe I could fly. Your support and belief in me made me what I am today and I will be forever grateful. You always used to say I was a special child and you were always there for me whenever I needed you and I will do everything in my power to ensure that your legacy lives on.

I told you some years ago when I left salaried employment and ventured into the world of entrepreneurship, that your name was more valuable than your money at this stage in my life. This was the reason I took permission from my husband, Nick, to be “Adesuwa Okunbo Rhodes” for professional meetings. Your name has helped open numerous doors and I am so proud that after more than 40 years of doing business in Nigeria, your name remains intact. You were a man of conviction and passion but most importantly, integrity and I am so proud to be your daughter.

Following the diagnosis last year, I am so happy about the time we spent together as a family with my siblings in London. I saw you nearly everyday for 8 months, praying together, eating together and laughing together. I proudly took on the role of your personal assistant during this period and we became even closer in these last moments. It is hard to believe that I won't be getting any calls from you first thing in the morning with instructions for the day ahead. I am so happy that during this period, I was able to be of some value to you after everything you have done for me, thank you for telling me this.

Daddy was one of a kind, he was the epitome of kindness, generosity, passion and care. You touched so many lives whilst you were here with us, your impact was felt across Nigeria and the world. I have had so many messages of the kind acts that you did for people, a lot of which you did in secret. That was just who you were, you were a man of principles.

Your principles were hardwork, generosity, integrity, patience and forgiveness, I will carry these with me and with your grandchildren. I will make sure your memory lives on in them.

You have left us far too soon but I know that you had fulfilled God's purpose here on earth and I take comfort in the fact that you reconciled with Jesus Christ before your death and are now resting with Him in peace and in heaven.

Daddy Daddy, I miss you so much, you are forever in my heart.

Love you always,

Dey Dey (Your loyal PA)