

# What is your 'If I die, I die' project for 2026?

The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, is nothing, and becomes nothing. He may avoid suffering and sorrow, but he simply cannot learn, feel, change, grow, or love.

BY JANET NAPIO

The annual January fast is done. You can tell by the higher noise level in the workplace. A few weeks back, there were only barely audible monosyllabic responses from the faithful. Now, it is a Sino truck of words when all you need is a yes or no. It was headphones with gospel music all day long, with the occasional raising of a hand off the keyboard in agreement with the lyrics of a worship song; now it is TikTok videos on the loudspeaker. That is how you know that the year is now in session. People are done with fasting, and now it is back to business as usual.

Let me explain. Every beginning of the year, many churches usually make a call to their faithful to engage in a period of fasting and prayer. It usually ranges anywhere between 20 and 40 days. During this time, the fasting faithful skip meals and can be seen acting demurely, spirit-filled. And because fasting can be difficult, there is usually not enough energy or strength to engage in unnecessary arguments, talk loudly, walk up and down the workplace showing off new clothes, among others. It is a high-level energy conservation project. So, the fasting lot sit tight, wait, and pray.

The praying is usually in preparation for the New Year. Ask for God's guidance, direction, favour, protection, and general welfare for the year ahead. For some, it was that they or their relatives would make it in the just-concluded polls. And for other people, it is that even this year, the employer will not notice that they are not really qualified for the job they have been doing for the past three years.

It is good practice. And to everyone who

made it through that, we, the council of elders who do not quite know how to mind their own business, congratulate you. We hope that you keep up the practice throughout the year by having at least one fast and prayer day every week. If not for spiritual reasons, at least for dietary benefits. But also, how can you eat every single day of the year? What are you? A breastfeeding baby or an air fryer?

Anyway, now that the year's spiritual preamble is out of the way, what is the plan for 2026? What risks are you taking this year? Or did last year do you in so much that you are planning to spend the better part of this year licking your wounds?

The other day, a friend took me to show me a new property she wants to rent for her business. It is much bigger, much fancier, and more attractive to clients than what she has

at the moment. It is also five times more expensive. She wrestles with staying at the old, cheaper, basic place of almost no growth or risking it all by going for the new location. Question is to risk or not risk? What if it fails, but again, what if it does not fail?

At this juncture, allow me to share some famous quotes on risk.

"The person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, is nothing, and becomes nothing. He may avoid suffering and sorrow, but he simply cannot learn, feel, change, grow, or love. Chained by his certitude, he is a slave; he has forfeited his freedom. Only the person who risks is truly free." - Leo Buscaglia

"So we shall let the reader answer this question for himself: who is the happier man, he who has braved the storm of life and lived or he who has stayed securely on shore and merely existed?" Hunter S. Thompson

"You cannot swim for new horizons until you dare to lose sight of the shore." William Faulkner

And finally, "Did I die?" Unknown  
I hope that this year, you will be inspired to risk something. Have an 'If I die, I die' project, no matter how small in significance. Live a little. (Nalumansi, I am not talking about your drinking and spending sprees.)

Note to self: There is a thin line between risk and foolishness. As you spread your wings, be wary of the boundaries, some call them values. They are there for a reason. To paraphrase a certain verse in the Bible book of Ecclesiastes. Do not ignore ancient boundary lines; a snake might bite you.

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Just  
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