

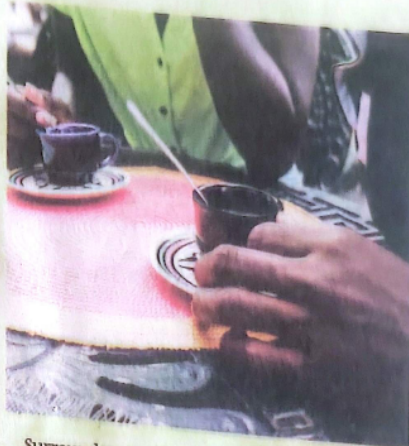
From the Editor

Staying strong during the bamboo years

So how do you stay strong when nothing seems to be happening on the surface? When your inbox is full of rejections, your business has more opinions than customers, and your mother keeps asking when you're going to do something "real"?

Here is the thing about progress; it lies. It shows up when it feels like it, usually after you have stopped checking. The bamboo farmer does not dig up the roots to see if anything is happening. They just water the ground and wait. Every rejection you survive? That is a root. Every morning you get up and do the work even though no one is watching is also a root. You are growing even if you just cannot see it yet.

Find meaning in the boring parts. The bamboo years are unglamorous. You will write things no one reads. You will make calls no one returns. This is not punishment. This is practice. Mastery lives in the mundane.



Surround yourself with people who get it. Nothing kills underground growth faster than friends who only celebrate visible wins. Find the ones who have been where you are. They will not panic when you have nothing to show. They will hand you a cup of coffee and say "keep going."

Keep a record. When doubt creeps in and it will you will forget how far you have come. Write it down. The rejections. The small wins. The days you showed up anyway. Read it back. You will see roots everywhere.

And finally, accept the timeline. You do not decide when the bamboo shoots up. You just prepare the soil and wait. That waiting is not passive. It is the most active work you will ever do.

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