

Volume 10, Issue 32: We don't "Have to", We "Get to"

One of the chores I do most Sunday mornings before making breakfast is scrub my kitchen counters and polish cabinets. Most Saturday afternoons I do a quick grocery shopping for the following week. I listened to a podcast by a life coach named Valorie Burton the other day that reminded me of how we can take for granted, or worse still allow ourselves to be burdened by the things we do.

Do you find yourself often making statements like, "I have to go to work", or "I have to drop my kids to school" (before COVID), or "I have to go to the market", or "I have to take my car to the car wash," or "I have to call my aunt", or "I have to clean my seats".

The words "have to" carry with them a sense obligation and even stress. If we really think about it, doing the things I listed above and others like them is truly of a privilege, not an obligation. Switching the words "have to" with "get to" helps us regard the things we need to do positively. It brings a sense of energy and enthusiasm to our to do lists.

Last weekend my daughter's class teacher called me to inform me that my daughter didn't attend one of her online classes the day before. I was surprised because she wasn't seated that far from me during the lesson, so I assumed she was in class. During the call, I lamented to the teacher how fed up I am with supervising my kids' online learning. I am tired of constantly having to ask them if they are in class and not watching something on YouTube or playing a game. I am tired of reminding them to go back to class for the next lesson. The teacher reminded me that what I am facing is part of the hustles of parenting in the digital age, and that I don't have the luxury to throw in the towel.

My lesson is that I don't have to supervise kids, I get to supervise kids because I am blessed with children and the opportunity to work from home this season. There is a woman somewhere who would give anything to have this kind of problem but she hasn't been successful in having children. There are also parents who wish their kids had access to online learning to keep them engaged but don't. Others still wish they could work from home during this season in order to supervise their kids' online learning but they are needed at the office. Therefore I change my disposition from "I have to", to "I get to" supervise my kids' online learning.

We don't "Have to", We "Get to"

Written by Lillian Chebosi

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I don't have to go to work, I get to go work because I am blessed to have a job. I don't have to do difficult projects at work, I get to do difficult projects because I have grown in my career. I don't have to go to the market, I get to go to the market because I am blessed with the resources to stock my fridge and pantry with supplies for my family. I don't have to go to the grocery store for milk and bread every weekend, I get to go to the grocery store because I am blessed with healthy pre-teens who can't get enough of milk and toasted bread. I don't have to call my relatives, I am blessed with family who I get to catch up with every now and then.

So, what are your "get to,s" that you have been wrongly referring to as your "have to's?" It's time to make the switch and remove the sense of obligation and stress from your privileges. It's time to think of why you are grateful every time you get to go to the market, pick up your kids from school (post COVID), take your car to the garage or car wash, clean your house, or organize your laundry. We don't have to do these stuff, we get to do them because we have been blessed with reasons to do them.

For His Glory,

Lillian Chebosi