

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Albert is frequently asked questions from the audience in the course of his public programs.

Q. How do you keep your dreams alive in the face of adversity?

A. I never lose sight of my dreams. They're always ahead of me, never behind. Persistence is the most important thing.

Q. When do you know your dreams have come true?

A. The amazing thing is that you never know completely, because you should always be chasing another dream, a better dream.

Q. How do you deal with negative people?

A. You can't let their doubts infect you. You cannot let THEIR reality become YOUR reality.

Q. What things did you do to make a dream come true?

A. My biggest dream was to someday attend college and to live in America. So I worked hard and took steps to achieve my dream. I practically lived at the library, reading as much as I could about America. Once I was accepted into the prestigious St. John's School in my native Ghana, I wrote letters to 235 American colleges and universities. All but one turned me down or did not even reply. When Western Maryland College offered me a full four-year scholarship, I knew that my perseverance had paid off.

Q. If you had to do it all over again, what would you do different?

A. Nothing, because the experiences I've had have made me who I am. If I had done anything differently, I'd be someone else. I accept who I am, so should you. We can learn from the past, but we can never change it.

Q. Who are your heroes?

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A. I was fortunate to have a wonderful family. I learned from them every day. They gave me courage.

My boyhood friend Kwame truly inspired me. Kwame means boy born on Saturday, and an American saying says that “Saturday’s child is full of woe.” Kwame should have been. As a small boy, he reached for what he thought was a stick. Instead it was a deadly puff adder, one of Ghana’s most poisonous snakes. Kwame’s right hand was bitten. To save his life, surgeons had to amputate most of his right hand. But he persevered, doing everything the other boys did with one hand instead of two. I began to admire Kwame and we became best friends. He never let his handicap get the best of him. He fed me courage by example, and became my hero.

Other heroes are people I’ve met since who remind me in some way of Kwame.

Q. How do you deal with peer pressure?

A. Ask yourself, ‘Who are your peers?’ If you surround yourself with positive and supportive people, any peer pressure you get might even help.

Q. What is it about America that made you want to come here?

A. Opportunity has been a major theme of my life. I grew up in a place where there was so little opportunity. In America, opportunity seemed to be everywhere, and better yet, it seemed available to everyone.

Q. What have you learned about America?

A. When I came to America, I learned that opportunity was everywhere, but just as in any place, you have to work very hard to make opportunities really happen.

Q. How do you deal with cruelty?

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A. Whenever we don't feel empathy and compassion for someone who seems different, we are being cruel. If we try very hard to connect with as many people, and as many different kinds of people, as we can, we are being less cruel. If we understand what cruelty is, we can deal with it.