

EDITORIAL

Everyone is complaining and blaming each other. Parents are pointing fingers to the young ones for being irresponsible, young ones are blaming parents for not understanding them well, and teachers focuses on the intellectual development of students in total disregard of their emotional growth. Almost everyone seems to either regret the past, or hate the present, or fear for the future.

The magazine invokes the reader to read the ‘signs’ of our times; that we are victims of ‘Psychic Lag’. This can be explained by the fact that many aspects of our life have changed, but our attitudes toward them have not. We are embroiled in a mode of valuation which is totally out of synch with our changed conditions. Hence the perpetual state of conflict in our society.

This magazine arouses the reader to the realization that we are living in ‘Tumultuous Times’ whereby we are trending upon the present on our shaky legs, with our blurred vision focused on the incredible future. In this journey of life we are almost naked of a persuasive ideological conviction, a comprehensive philosophical outlook and an enduring transmitted moral code. The chief assignment of this uncertain, amorphous and tense generation therefore, is to rebuild everything as if we had been cast into the wilderness and forced to begin everything a new.

Chief Editor
Gilbert Kinyua Mwaniki

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Seven QUOTABLE QUOTES for this Month

1. Who cares about great marks left behind? We have one life, rigidly defined. Just one. One life. We have nothing else.
- Ugo Betti (1892 - 1953), Italian dramatist and poet.
2. After your death you will be what you were before your birth.
- Arthur Schopenhauer (1788 - 1860), German philosopher.
3. Life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans.
- John Lennon (1940 - 1980), British rock musician.
4. No great man lives in vain. The history of the world is but the biography of great men.
- Thomas Carlyle (1795 - 1881), Scottish historian and essayist.
5. A lifetime of happiness: no man alive could bear it: it would be hell on earth.
- George Bernard Shaw (1856 - 1950), Irish playwright.
6. Immortality is what nature possesses without effort and without anybody's assistance, and immortality is what the mortals must therefore try to achieve if they want to live up to the world in which they were born.
- Hannah Arendt (1906 - 1975), German-born U.S. philosopher and historian.
7. Almost every man wastes part of his life in attempts to display qualities which he does not possess, and to gain applause which he cannot keep.
- Samuel Johnson (1709 - 1784), British lexicographer and writer.

Introducing the SEVEN 'SURVIVAL STRATEGIES' for this Month

In this fast evolving modern world, to be a 'civilized' person, is to promote democratic values of being fair to one and all, to emphasize the importance of fitting in a group, and to knowing how to cooperate with other people. If you are outwardly combative and aggressive you will pay the social price; unpopularity, isolation or imprisonment.

However, as our modern society trains and prepares us for peace, we are not prepared for what confronts us in the real world, in this school of 'Hard Knocks' – passive or active conflicts. This subtle warfare exists on several levels; our outright rivals and/or our hypocritical friends. On the surface everything seems peaceful enough, but just below it, it is every man and woman for him – or herself, this dynamic infecting even families and relationship. The society may deny this reality and promote a gentler picture, but we know it and feel it, in our battle scars.

Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR hereby strives to arm you with practical knowledge on how to deal with conflicts and the daily battles we face. And this knowledge is about how to be more rational and strategic when it comes to conflict, channeling our aggressive impulses instead of denying or repressing them. It is categorically asserted here that, if there is an ideal to aim for, it should be that of the strategic warrior, the man or woman who manages difficult situations and people through deft and intelligent maneuver.

In this regard, and in all disguises, a 'Survival Strategy' is more than a science: it is the philosophical application of knowledge to practical life, the development of thought capable of modifying the original guiding idea in the light of ever changing situations; it is the art of acting under the pressure of the most difficult conditions.

RAMPANT INFIDELITY IN KIRINYAGA

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

“A faithful friend is a strong defence. A faithful friend is a medicine of life”.

- The book of Apocrypha.

It was one in the morning and the husband of Wangu had not arrived. An attempt to reach him through the phone was repulsed by a disgusting ‘Mteja wa nambari uliopiga hapatikani kwa sasa’. She tossed and turned inside the blankets. It was only when the sun crept through the blinds the next morning that she tiptoed out.

After going to the washroom and relieving her bladder, her face felt hot and she started to sweat. She saw the moment of her greatness flicker. In short she was bewildered. After many years of suspecting her husband’s behaviour, it was now apparent that he was cheating on her.

“Am I being rude to him...Am I not being as lovely as I was... Who is that bitch who is hell bent on destroying my marriage of twenty years?”. These are the questions which seemed not to get immediate answers. It was time now to face her marital situation with utmost clarity and urgency. She would have to travel through uncharted waters to arrest this situation before it gets out of control

There are many problems taking place in the materially prosperous Kirinyaga. Most of the problems facing families today are not the same as which faced families twenty years ago. While our parent’s problems basically involved their economic survival,



and the survival of their children, the present problem is how to get along, amongst other things, as a husband and wife.

In this context, *Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR* has unearthed an epidemic that is haunting most families in Kirinyaga County. This is the dragon of infidelity or adultery if you want. Psychological manifestation of this menace aside, if it goes unchecked, there is the possibility of HIV/AIDS threatening to wipe out the whole population of this area which is amongst the richest counties in Kenya (rated at No. 3).

Every married man or woman knows that marriage is a sacred institution. All those who have attempted marriage are aware that having an affair outside marriage is the worst unappeasable and abominable sin. All couples

contends that there is no pain to the emotional stability of a man or woman than being told that one’s husband or wife is having sex with another person.

However, it is apparently clear that our morals have sunk so low, and our conscience so dirtied that we have tolerated what our ancestors could not even imagine about – casual sex. Adultery has become the norm and very few can claim that one’s wife or husband has never fished in alien waters. Wife or husband sharing has become the order of the day, that very few dares to speak against it as most are affected in one way or the other.

Various studies by psychologists indicates that infidelity or straying reflect attempts on the part of men and women to realize and satisfy, unconsciously, all those impos-

sible expectations that are missing in their marriage. Straying affair are foolish attempts to find external solutions to what are internal concerns such as problems of self-worth and self-respect.

Infidelity is an attempt to meet important needs that are unmet within the context of the marriage. The nature of those needs determines the person who will be sought out or the person whom you will allow to seek out, the length and depth of the affair and even whether or not the affair will be disclosed to the spouse in one way or another. While most clamour for a bit of excitement, some are hungering for those incredible moments of spontaneous magic.

We wish to take you through a tour of ten interlocking factors which are the chief contributors to this vice. These factors are not specific to Kirinyaga alone, and their effects can be generalized to the whole of Mt. Kenya region and in our African society.

1. Lonely Mummies

This is facilitated by many numbers of able single mothers. These are women who having begot children outside marriage and having been able to build a home outside the compound of their parents are hell bent to lure other women's husband for their sexual satisfaction. And this cannot be referred to as prostitution in the traditional sense of the term – paying for sex. These women have established for themselves a relative stable source of income through either trading in various farm produces, formal or informal employment. Their economic stability allows them to provide all the basic necessities for their children and even a good educa-

tion. What they desperately lack is someone to quench their conjugal appetites; their overriding need is sexual satisfaction without any desire for money from men.

In most cases it is the men who fall in their traps who get paid either directly or indirectly. These types of women become attractive to men because in the first instance there is no energy required to woo her, as in the case of seeking a young girl. Secondly there is no payment needed as is the case of going to a prostitute. Above all, there very low possibility of this secret leaking out.

2. Starved Spouses

There are many couples who are emotionally hungry but they are unable to believe there is any hope of satisfying their need with their spouses. For these people, allowing themselves to rely on a partner is dangerous and tantamount to putting all their eggs in one basket. They can't conceive of doing this, so they don't even try to. For them a husband or wife plays a particular role in their lives as provider, mother or the father of their children. They feel good about being married, but the bond is not as deep or broad for them as it can be, and as if it is for others who have richer and fuller marriages because they impose no artificial constraints. The temptation to satisfy these needs outside marriage, through affairs is very pervasive

In this category, we have those men who although married, have affairs with the wives of those guys who have drunk the very many cheap legal lethal brews that their performance in bed becomes highly compromised. These are fellows who are said to sleep

'under' the bed instead of 'on' the bed – although this statement is blown out proportion.

3. Unquenchable Thirst

There are those people who are victim of a psychological malady known as 'Don Juan Complex' (interest in many sexual partners). These are people who may be perfectly referred to as sex adventurers, but they fail to understand that the problem is internal and no adventure will solve the problem. One should turn to his or her partner for real satisfaction.

Most Don Juans face a common fate – become sexually incapable. This is because they get accustomed to sex without love, and they will never be able to handle sex with love. Their sex is for impression and failure to impress those who expect such impression can be traumatic to a person's ego. It makes a person feel guilty and inferior. There is a magic conviction in the person that he or she can't impress a woman or a man any more. The more one thinks about him or her the more it bothers him or her. The reaction of most victims is predictable, trying again for self-assurance. If one fails for the second and third time consecutively, the magic has stuck. One could look as if physically sick due to self pity

4. Uncommitted Idealists

Many people probably want far too much from their marriage. They expect it to be a kind of magical union that promises and delivers a steady and uncomplicated output of satisfying experiences. Even though our intellect tells us otherwise, many people hope their marriage will somehow beat the odds and remain unflawed.

They become let down and disappointed when it fails to achieve that impossible standard. When they intentionally look beyond the marriage for fulfillment, the type of infidelity that results is often the most destructive to the relationship. This is because the wish for an affair and the subsequent anger and resentment toward one's spouse are so intense.

5. Guilt Ridden

These are people who are ignorant on the dynamics of human sexuality. A person in this category behaves like a soldier who misuses his or her bullets in enjoying shooting bogus targets such that when the real enemy comes he or she has no bullet for the real job. Our sexual ability as human beings is for the purpose of maintaining marital harmony. But very often many venture out to try with the delicate balance of nature with inevitable consequences – impotence due to guilt.

For a satisfying sexual relationship the woman relies on man and vice versa. It is a heavy responsibility for both. With age either the man or the woman feels the stress of the call to duty. But because human sexuality, unlike animal sexuality, is controlled by decision and not feeling alone, there is penalty for exercising wrong decisions. A man or a woman decides to provoke and he or she lives with the consequences of the

decision as to provoke as many men or as many women he or she wishes.

6. Commanding Wives

In recent years women have become much more sexually assertive and comfortable with initiating, but this new behaviour is not always well received by the men. If a man has a problem of accepting that his wife should be assertive in sex, then this creates a problem in the entire relationship.

When a man in this relation-

1st SURVIVAL STRATEGY

Life is constant struggle, and you will in most instances find yourself facing bad situations, destructive relationships and dangerous engagements. How you are able to confront these difficulties will determine your fate. This is not to say that we should lose faith in the goodness of humanity; that we should construe the world as a war zone; that we should see ourselves to always under siege; that we should always be embroiled in the battlefield of the mind. The point underscored here is that your survival as a unique human being depends solely on your wits. The more clearly you recognize *who you do not want to be*, then, the clearer your sense of identity and purpose will be. Once you feel clear and motivated, you will have space for true friendship and true compromise.

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ship has an affair with younger women (naïve and timid), the central dynamic is also typically one of power and renewed sexuality. Even in good marriages, men sometimes have feeling of lost strength and vitality. If wanting to feel desirable and attractive drives women to seek a younger lover, it is wanting to feel effective and have an impact that pushes men in that same direction.

Men who, after a certain age, do not feel particularly successful at work are especially vulnerable to self-doubts about their strength and competence. At home this man feels taken for granted, and at work he feels disappointed and

overshadowed by others' successes. He may look at his wife of similar age as undeniable proof that he too is getting older. His wife may be strong, warm and loving towards him but he may crave a kind of adoration from her that is impossible and inappropriate for her to give him

7. Unsatisfied Conquerors

Men have always used sexual conquest as a way to measure power and attraction. When conquest comes easily it loses its appeal, for at the very heart of sexual

conquest is challenge. In the context of marriage, sexual conquest for men and women is but a distant memory.

With marriage, the conquest was achieved and there is no more

challenge. Yet many husbands and wives still harbor wish for a particular kind of sexual excitement in marriage, something reminiscent of conquest. The kind of sexual excitement and conquest one dreams of is something they think they can only get outside by having an affair.

8. Frustrated Dependency

If there is one benefit you should expect from a marriage, it is the ability to depend on your partner. Indeed, for many husbands and wives, leaning on each other and feeling the other person is there, is the strongest connection in marriage. When this feeling that

‘there is always someone for me’ lacks in a marriage one or both partners may try to seek it somewhere outside the marriage.

But there is a kind of affair that takes place which is direct result of fear of this dependency. Some husbands and wives will not allow this dependency. Some husbands and wives will not allow themselves to become too needful of their partner and therefore find themselves looking satisfaction outside the marriage. They may not be conscious of this inner dynamic but they engage in a kind of splitting by which certain functions are neglected to the spouse and others, which are left unsatisfied are then sought in the world outside marriage.

9. Depressed Partner

Depression is another cause of infidelity. Depression can be an incredibly complex phenomenon. It affects more people than we realize and can appear under a number of different disguises; as fatigue, illness, sleep or eating disorders (overeating or eating very little).

These people then, tend to look for something that will give them a ‘high’, something that will stimulate them. Men and women tend to view excitement a bit differently. For men, excitement is most frequently attached to work, while for women it is associated with relationships. When it comes to feeling depressed, men are susceptible to finding the excitement in their jobs. Women are vulnerable to having affairs to stir up the excitement they miss or cannot sustain in their relationship.

10. Early Marriage

Husbands and wives who have had a limited or nonexistent history of love affairs prior to marriage are prone to affairs whose primary lure is novelty and the excitement of the forbidden unknown. People who married at a relatively young age never really had a variety of romantic experiences and now, as they have grown older, feel deprived of those adventures.

These individuals believe they have missed out some very special moments of their life. They may be happily married, yet constantly bombarded by feeling that they

missed out an exciting and erotic experiences because of ‘tying the knot’ too young. While they love their spouses, they wonder whether they are going to live the rest of their lives without tasting those intense moments they may have missed. When a woman or man marries without ever having had previous sexual experience, the secret curiosity can be overwhelming. This is especially true of those women who do not have careers and are not working at something that continues to arouse their excitement and passion.

WHAT IS LOVE?

Love is a complex emotion, which involves feelings of cognitions and motivations that contribute to intimacy, becoming the most intense form of attraction between persons; family members, lovers, spouses, as well as friends.

‘Love’ whose essential inducement is making us feel alive and awake is basically a healing, a saving and a redeeming force in a dangerous world.

American psychologist and psychometrician Robert Jeffrey Sternberg (born 1949) developed the triangular theory of love in the context of interpersonal relationship composed of intimacy, passion and decision/commitment components.

Intimacy is the emotional component encompassing feelings of attachment, closeness, connectedness, warmth and bondedness.

Passion is the motivational component that underlies arousal, physical attraction and sexual behaviour.

Commitment is the decision-making component encompassing, in the short term, the decision to remain with another even in hard times, and in the long term, the shared achievements and plans made with ones spouse. Sternberg further noted: “The amount of love one experiences depends on the absolute strength of these three components, and the type of love one experiences depends on their strengths relative to each other.”

A LOVELY marriage therefore, is that in which, each appoints the other guardian of his or her solitude, and the shepherd of one’s aspirations. Lovers should exalt themselves together in repeating the words of English poet prose writer and clergyman John Donne (1572-1631) and use it as their ‘Love Anthem’:

“Come live with me, and be my love,
And we will some new pleasures prove
Of golden sands, and crystal brooks,
With silken lines and silver hooks”.

CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF ALCOHOLISM IN MT. KENYA REGION

By Kinyua Mwaniki

“The sway of alcohol over mankind is unquestionably due to its power to stimulate the mystical faculties of human nature”.

- U.S psychologist and philosopher William James (1842-1910).

Dr. Mugo strode confidently down the long narrow corridor towards his office, eager to attend his clients. A tight knot formed in his stomach as he sank into his coach. The word decadence thundered in his head. It was such monstrously awful-sounding word.

With all his immense training in psychology he felt shrill of helplessness threatening to water down his deep love for humanity as he contemplated on the lifelessness in the faces of his clients most of whom were adolescents; in the morning of their life.

He picked a copy of ‘*Alcohol Regulation Act (2012)*’ popularly known as ‘Mututho Law’. As he pondered how this former MP for Naivasha was intent at bringing sanity in the alcohol industry, an illuminating idea struck his mind: “Something more than legal mechanistic strategy is required to salvage the society from drowning in the sea of alcoholism”.

One thing for sure cannot be denied, that alcoholism is pervasive throughout the Mt. Kenya region. However, the bitter truth and hard fact is that, the presence or availability of many types of alcoholic beverages (legal or illegal, cheap or costly), should not at all serve as a scapegoat for using or abusing them.



Denial and blame shifting aside, we should focus on the underlying personal psychological motivations and social dysfunctions which propels or predisposes the individual to gravitate towards alcoholism. This is the only understanding which will serve as a solid base to assist the alcoholics or prevent new initiates from this menace. Simply stated: alcoholism is concisely only a symptom, and precisely not the cause of our societal problems.

Alcoholics should be treated by society members and the government as sick and maladjusted people. This is because, excessive drinking is basically an attempt to drown feelings of worthlessness, or to delusively elevate oneself from the pit of psychic boredom. Unfortunately, this indulgence is ‘a pervasively self-destructive behaviour’; a subtle way of committing indirect suicide as one ultimately catapults oneself into

the hell of physical rottenness and psychic decay.

The author of this article begs tolerance for presuming that, no living mortal in whatever elevation of the throne in this worldly kingdom has no idea what horrible thing loneliness can be. However, when people perceive themselves as individuals whose life has very little meaning and that little meaning is leaking away so irretrievably with everyday that goes, then psychic impotence has crept in their innards.

There are two types of deaths among human beings; physical death and psychic death. ‘Physical death’ is the final stage of life whereby the senses ceases to function and physical communication comes to a halt. In latent ‘psychic death’ the victim may seem to be leading a normal life, but essentially he or she has failed in learning effective methods of

coping with stress. Thereby he or she may be referred to as a moving corpse, for he or she is absolutely incapable of enjoying the 'tasty milk of existence'. This is why an alcoholic needs more empathy than being punished by law.

One is seized by a pervasive conviction that the individual can not do anything in the face of enormous cultural, social and economic problems. One loses hope as well as the vitality that keeps life moving. One loses that courage to be, that quality that keeps one going in spite of it all; that daringness to take risks, the strength to be compassionate, and the wisdom to be humble. One is weighed down by the tendency of seeing difficulty in every opportunity as opposed to seeing opportunity in every difficulty.

It is unnatural for anyone to think that he or she can escape the inevitable decay of life (aging) and shield oneself from the decline into final disintegration (death). It is also true that, all of us by virtue of being humans are in this caravan of inevitable progress towards the grave. But when all hopes have degenerated into disappointments, there would be no great unwillingness about the speeding up of this final going or even making artificial; it becomes not a choice between life and death, but what kind of death one can bear.

When a person finds him or herself marred in this catastrophic state in every corner one turns, this feeling of powerlessness may drive one to seek final escape from the situations – through suicide. Though suicide is a rare instance, the degeneracy of many people, partly caused by the brutal and unhappy conditions in which they work and live, often express itself in

the resort to the squalid form of escape – the lure of alcohol. To be more precise, all substance addicts are men and women who are deep in despair that, there is just nothing worth in life after having become convinced of final futility of efforts to break the mean daily, weekly, monthly and probably yearly cycle of despair.

For these addicts, nothing therefore, is seemingly left beyond the necessity of digging oneself deeper and deeper into holes in which there could never be anything like LIFE without that drink. The only source of solace for these 'living dead' is the half-thought that, there are so many others dead in life with them; their fellow drunkards. In the book *'The beautiful ones are not yet born'* (1969), Ayi Kwei Armah (1939 -) paints the picture of a desperado: "I don't feel any hope in me any more. I can see things, but I don't feel much. When you can see the end of things even in their beginnings, there is not more hope, unless you want to pretend, or forget, or get drunk or something. No. I also am one of the dead people, the walking dead. A ghost. I died long ago. So long ago that not even the old libations of living blood will make me live again".

This explains why the unprecedented increase in alcoholic beverages in our Mt. Kenya region has become a corrosive curse, posing a very high risk on the human resource of our society as well as the institution of marriage, as was the case of mid-19th Century American society. Alarmed by excessive consumption of alcoholic beverages which presented a serious threat to the integrity of their most vital institutions, especially the family, President Abraham Lincoln (1809-65) was

quoted as saying that the intoxicating liquor was "used by everybody, repudiated by nobody" and it came forth in society "like the Egyptian angel of death, commissioned to slay if not the first, the fairest born in every family.

"Drink .. provokes and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but takes away the performance", so noted William Shakespeare (1564 – 1616). All manners of substance abuse and addictions are the chief protagonist in signing a contract with poor physical and 'psychical' health and great impediments to acquisition of wealth. This virtual contract reads thus:

'I whose details as pertaining my self-imposed rogue appetite and enthusiasm for self-destruction, the will-to-die, have without duress, misrepresentation or undue influence, signed this contract with poverty and subsequent slow annihilation.'

"Drunkenness leads to the ruin of reason, destruction of strength, premature old age, and momentary death", so taught Father and Doctor of the Church Saint Basil the Great (AD 329-379). British philosopher and mathematician Bertrand Russell (1872-1970) was also blessed to realize that: "Drunkenness is temporary suicide; the happiness it brings is merely negative, a momentary cessation of unhappiness". A perennial addict is an impotently empty individual who has surrendered much of his or her life urge, withdraws from LIFE, fearing to test his powers in a world of change and danger. He or she is passive to the tyranny of this negative emotion and does not have enough faith in possibilities to take a chance and propel him or herself out into the world of ac

'CHARLATANS' MASQUERADING AS 'COUNSELLORS': BE WARNED!

*"Things fall apart; the center can-not hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity".
- W.B Yeats (1865-1939), Irish poet and playwright*

Problems and needs in society are nothing new. But today they seem to be proliferating in an unprecedented rate.

The unique problems in the changing family, conflicts in values, attitudes and morals, the new criticism about politics, economic factors, the changing role of work, new pressure and demands on school and the problems of the youth all points out the needs for the Counseling services.

Guidance and Counseling have a challenging role to play in every developing economy.

Having a big problem, may be a crisis if one does not know what to do or where to turn for help. These are the kinds of moments when one would appreciate help in order to cope.

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

However, in such a situation, where one goes to seek help may serve to solve the problem or cause more troubles to him or her.

In our Kenyan context, it is not an overstatement to categorically assert here without the fear of contradiction that 'counseling' is the most abused word and the profession of counseling the most watered down.

This is a field where quacks unleash their ignorance without any censure. It is a profession where-

In the first instance, it is worth noting that, the principles of professional counseling (which will be outlined in this continuing series) are easy to learn but difficult to apply. Their application requires the combination of self-understanding and mastery of various vital psychological principles.

The common errors made by many trained professional COUNSELLORS and much worse by those charlatans purporting to be COUNSELLORS include:

2nd SURVIVAL STRATEGY

Many psychologists and sociologists have argued that it is through conflicts that problems are often solved and real differences reconciled. Our successes and failures in life can be traced to how well or how badly we deal with the inevitable conflicts that confront us in society. The common ways that people deal with them - trying to avoid all conflict, getting emotional and lashing out, turning sly and manipulative - are all counterproductive in the long run, because they are not under conscious and rational control and often make the situation worse. Strategic warriors operate differently. They think ahead toward their long-term goals, decide which fights to avoid and which are inevitable, know how to control and channel their emotions. When forced to fight, they do so with indirection and subtle maneuver, making their manipulations hard to trace. In this way they can maintain the peaceful exterior so cherished in these political times.

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by those who would satisfy their flicking ego by trespassing in lives of others in the name of assisting them, wreck havoc in the lives of many ailing souls, leaving them more confused and doomed.

Before putting this noble profession in right the context and perspective, let us define 'What counseling is not'. Simply stated: COUNSELING IS NOT TELLING THE OTHER PERSON WHAT TO DO OR NOT!

i. Directing and Leading

This entails controlling rather than allowing and encouraging the person's expression of feeling and needs.

ii. Judging and Evaluating

This unfolds through statements that

indicate that the person does not meet your standards.

iii. Moralizing, Preaching and Patronizing

This implies telling people how they ought to behave or lead their lives.

iv. Labeling and Diagnosing

This means placing a label or category on the person rather than trying to find out the person's motivations, fears and anxieties.

v. Unwarranted Reassurance

This goes in the manner of diverting a person’s attention from an issue and humoring him or her by trying to induce undue optimism by making light of his or her own version of a problem.

vi. Not Accepting his or her feel-

personal solution.

viii. Interrogating

This means using questions in an accusatory way. “Why” questions almost always sound accusatory.

ix. Encouraging Dependency

This implies inflating the client’s

help individuals to get access to a greater part of their personal resources, as a means of responding to the challenges of their life. Counseling uses specific skills and techniques to help people become more competent, more contented and more creative.

Counseling does not deal with mentally ill people but people with normal individual problems such as: domestic, work oriented and social problems. Counseling is about helping one to grow in emotional fitness and health.

Counseling is a system of providing individuals with the help they need in order to address issues and possible problems with a view to making informed decisions and trying to implement the advice received to better their lives.

Counseling is the skilled and principled use of relationships, which develop self-knowledge, acceptance and growth, and personal resources. The overall aim is to live more fully and satisfying lives.

Counseling may be concerned with addressing and resolving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crisis, working through feelings and inner conflicts as well as improving relationships.

In a nutshell counseling is:

- A special relationship.
- A process.
- Involves Exploration, Understanding and Action (EUA).

In as much as our goal is to put ‘Counseling’ the right context, look out for the next issue to get informed on the ‘Professional Counseling Process’.

NEW LAW ON COUNSELLING

In what is really a new dawn for counsellors and psychologists in Kenya, the Counsellors and Psychologists Act 2014 was signed into law by the President on July 30, 2014. Thanks to Hon. Wafula Wamunyinyi (M.P. for Kanduyi) for moving the Bill in Parliament and seeing it through all the stages.

This was precisely history in making. For the lifetime of the profession, this practice has not had any legal or regulatory framework and the consumers of these crucial services in the mental health arena continued to be served by persons who had no certifiable registration credentials.

The profession, too, was, and to a reasonable extent continues to be infiltrated by all manner of persons claiming to be counsellors or psychologists whose registration credentials were not certifiable.

With the enactment of this law, unqualified and unregistered persons who shall offer counselling and psychological services, are liable to pay a fine of not less than Sh500,000, or serve two years in jail.

According to the Act, the minimum qualifications for one to practise as a counsellor or psychologist have been pegged at a Bachelor’s degree in either profession. Diploma holders will continue trading, but under a qualified counsellor or psychologist.

There are many professionals, including psychiatrists, medical doctors, nurses, educationists, clergy and social workers who offer quasi-psychological services, and who will now have to redirect their efforts to the professions they are trained in.

The Act creates a Counsellors and Psychologists Board whose main task will be to register all qualified counsellors and psychologists, handle all cases of indiscipline, and ensure adherence to professional standards which includes continuous professional education and supervision.

ings

This implies saying or adducing directly or indirectly that the person’s feeling should be different.

vii. Advising

This entails suggesting to the person what he or she should do before he or she had enough information or time to arrive at a

need for the COUNSELLOR’s continuing presence and guidance.

Having defined what ‘Counseling is not’, then ‘What is Counseling?’

Counseling is a helping process that uses safety engendered by a special kind of relationship to

UNDERSTANDING THE STAGES OF BUILDING A GROUP

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

The government of Kenya has made tremendous effort in trying to economically boost its population of the marginalized by giving out seed capital to start various businesses.

These groups include youths and women. In this regard, the government has set aside Youth Fund for the youths and Uwezo Fund for the women.

However, one of the major qualifications to access these funds is to form a group, which should be registered by the Ministry of Devolution.

To benefit highly from these funds therefore, requires building up of a group which is focused and which can be able to endure various challenges.

Building a high-performing team takes time, patience and professionalism. You can't expect a new team to perform well when it first comes together.

Team building takes time, and teams often go through recognizable stages as they change from being collections of strangers to becoming united groups with common goals. When you understand these stages, you can help your new team become effective more quickly.

Building up a group which you will be proud of and which will serve yourself and your team members maximally you need to understand key fundamentals of group formation: Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing.

Team members exhibit characteristic behaviors in each stage, and each phase has unique highs and lows, as individuals assume their roles and come to a greater understanding of themselves and each other. A leader's strong communication skills can help a team develop.

Forming

In this stage, most team members are positive and polite. Some are anxious, as they haven't fully understood what work the team will do. Others are simply excited about the task ahead. As leader, you play a dominant role at this stage, because team members' roles and responsibilities aren't clear.

This stage can last for some time, as people start to work together, and as they make an effort to get to know their new colleagues.

This first stage encompasses the transition from a group of individuals to a functioning team. During this time, members build confidence and trust in each other as well as their leader.

In this period of instability, you may initially notice:

- Frequent complaining about the organization.
- Inability to focus discussions on relevant tasks.
- Silence in meetings.
- Little or no interaction between members.

As a leader, it is important to help the team get to know each other and work through this phase in a

positive way.

The following communication tips can help build rapport:

- Always provide clear direction and purpose.
- If this is a new team, schedule a kickoff meeting to explain the goals.
- Define roles and responsibilities.
- Involve everyone in developing the project plan.
- Decide on when you will have project status meetings.
- Rotate the role of scribe to document decisions and avoid misunderstandings (this can be simple bullet-point notes from meetings and discussions).

When someone is added or leaves a team, the group's behaviors can also "re-form" or revert back to this primary phase. In order to re-form, bring everyone together to clarify shared goals, review processes, and discuss areas for improvement.

People should be encouraged to voice frustrations and make suggestions. Although some re-forming is inevitable over time and can be positive for a team, if a group is in a constant state of turnover, it may never emerge from the forming stage.

Storming

Next, the team moves into the storming phase, where people start to push against the boundaries established in the forming stage. This is the stage where many teams fail.

Storming often starts where there is a conflict between team

members' natural working styles. People may work in different ways for all sorts of reasons, but if differing working styles cause unforeseen problems, they may become frustrated.

In this second stage, people often begin to panic when they realize what is expected and the amount of work ahead of them.

As co-workers adjust, you may notice:

- Arguments.
- Complaints about management and/or the viability of the project.
- Questions about the knowledge or skill of individual team members.
- Defensiveness among colleagues.

If a group is in a constant state of turnover, it may never emerge from the forming stage. During this difficult period, the leader must act as negotiator, cheerleader, and psychologist. A skillful leader will identify power struggles and resolve them early on. For instance, a new salesperson may be ridiculed in a staff meeting for offering a suggestion that challenges the status quo. Or, when working with a hospital administrator, an IT person might face resistance to installing new software because the administrator was not involved in the decision-making process.

Many of the communications tools used before are useful in this phase as well.

- Make sure everyone understands how decisions are made, and once again, involve people in the process.
- Look for opportunities to help others understand and appreciate the differences in each other.
- Encourage people to take on responsibility.
- Be sensitive to non-verbal communication—what is not said is as

how the project is progressing.

Storming can also happen in other situations. For example, team members may challenge your authority, or jockey for position as their roles are clarified. Or, if you haven't defined clearly how the team will work, people may feel overwhelmed by their workload, or they could be uncomfortable with the approach you're using.

Some may question the worth of the team's goal, and they may resist taking

on tasks. Team members who stick with the task at hand may experience stress, particularly as they don't have the support of established processes, or strong relationships with their colleagues.

3rd SURVIVAL STRATEGY

The key to 'Survival Strategy' is self-mastery; for a person without this ego-strength is like a house that has been broken into. This entails seeing your emotional responses to events as a kind of disease that must be remedied. Fear will make you overestimate any conflict and act too defensively. Anger and impatience will draw you into rash actions that will cut off your options. Overconfidence, particularly as a result of success, will make you go too far. Love and affection will blind you to the treacherous maneuvers of those apparently on your side; your friends. Even the subtlest gradations of these emotions can colour the way you look events. The only remedy is to be aware that the pull of emotion is inevitable, to notice it when it is happening, and to compensate for it. When you have success, be extra wary. When you are angry, take no action. When you are fearful, know you are going to exaggerate the dangers you face. Success in this modern hectic life demands the utmost in realism, seeing things as they are. The more you can limit or compensate for your emotional responses, the closer you will come to this ideal.

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Norming

Gradually, the team moves into the norming stage. This is

important as what is articulated.

- Publicly celebrate individual strengths and work together to minimize weaknesses.

As in the first stage, documenting decisions and agreements is key to avoiding the confusion and tension caused by misunderstandings. Listen carefully to frustrations and recommendations from individuals and from the group as a whole.

This is an emotionally charged time in a team's evolution, so you may need to read between the lines to get an understanding of

when people start to resolve their differences, appreciate colleagues' strengths, and respect your authority as a leader. Now that your team members know one-another better, they may socialize together, and they are able to ask each other for help and provide constructive feedback. People develop a stronger commitment to the team goal, and you start to see good progress towards it.

There is often a prolonged overlap between storming and norming, because, as new tasks come up, the team may lapse back into be-

havior from the storming stage.

After the storm, members become used to working together. Conflicts are less pronounced as individuals work respectfully and productively, accomplishing shared goals. The team is cooperatively establishing ground rules for working together as a well-oiled machine.

At this point, the leader needs to continue to find opportunities to encourage and recognize individual and communal achievements.

Communication methods might include:

- Formal one-on-one meetings.
- Informal time together (after work).
- Intentional team building exercises (possibly off-site).
- Meetings that acknowledge milestones.

When a project is running smoothly, it is tempting to fall into a routine. However, maintaining a sense of forward progress and positive development is an essential element of norming.

Performing

The team reaches the performing stage when hard work leads, without friction, to the achievement of the team's goal. The structures and processes that you have set up support this well.

As leader, you can delegate much

of your work, and you can concentrate on developing team members. It feels easy to be part of the team at this stage, and people who join or leave won't disrupt performance.

As a group matures, it will smoothly accomplish a significant amount of work. Everyone is participating and collaborating in an effective unit and independently working through interpersonal problems and challenges.

JOB VACANCY!!!

WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN A HIGH PERFORMING TEAM IN THE NAME OF 'MT. KENYA COUNSELLOR'? DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE THE NECESSARY SKILLS OR PASSION TO DO OR LEAD A TEAM IN SALES AND MARKETING? SEIZE THIS GOLDEN CHANCE AND CALL 0720314852

At this point, communication among team members or with leadership often appears effortless. This ease is based on the concerted and consistent communication groundwork laid in earlier stages.

Established processes allow the team to work together toward common goals. The leader should continue to monitor performance, communicate project milestones, and celebrate successes.

Adjourning

Many teams will reach this stage eventually. For example, project

teams exist for only a fixed period, and even permanent teams may be disbanded through organizational restructuring.

Team members who like routine, or who have developed close working relationships with other team members, may find this stage difficult, particularly if their future now looks uncertain.

An established team experiences the same developmental issues as temporary project teams. When

membership changes, leaders often don't recognize the impact on a previously high-performing group until it becomes dysfunctional.

The loss of a valued member or the arrival of someone new can have an immediate effect, and a sophisticated team may revert to stage one behavior when it was previously performing

at a much higher level.

However, when a group has been performing successfully, it is easier to absorb changes and bounce back quickly. With a solid base of shared work experience, everyone involved already knows the feeling of operating efficiently and effectively.

Solid teams also typically exhibit high morale, and while a change may cause a temporarily setback, a leader can quickly guide the group through the earlier periods of development and return it to high performance levels.

MANAGING YOUR STRESS APPROPRIATELY

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

Ours is a hectic world whereby internal and external sources are threatening to offset our individual emotional balance.

From our works to our friends, to our families, time and time we find ourselves in situations bombarded by issues which may make us unable to cope. This is when we find ourselves stressed.

No one can be able to escape from stress, but learning stress management skills is a key to living productively in this fast paced world.

The term stress refers to people's physical and psychological reactions to demanding situations. The demanding situations that produce stress are stressors.

"There are a few times when I get home at night and everything has got on top of me when I shed a few tears, silently, alone." - Margaret Thatcher (1925 -). Former British prime minister.

Hungarian endocrinologist Hans Hugo Bruno Selye (1907-1982), a renowned pioneer of stress research proposed a three phase model (General Adaptation Syndrome, GAS) that explains the way in which the body reacts to stress. He proposed that the body respond to stress in three stages:

Alarm Reaction

In the first stage, the body becomes energized following the activation of the sympathetic division of the automatic nervous system.

The physiological responses that are triggered include increased heart and perspiration rates, blood flow to muscles, and secretion of

hormones.

These changes prepare the body for defense or evasive action. If the threat continues but is not severe to sustain the alarm reaction, the body enters into the second phase.

Resistance

The arousal level remains higher than normal but the body is able to replenish some of its resources.

During this phase, people are able to function reasonably well, but they are vulnerable to other stressors in the environment. If the body cannot find a way to neutralize the threat, the body enters the third phase.

Exhaustion

The body is unable to sustain a heightened state and energy reserves become depleted. Resistance declines and the stress reaction becomes more and more maladaptive, leading to negative consequences.

While Selye's model has remained influential, you should understand that the body's response to stress may not be as that general. Further, the stress reaction is influenced by the individual's cognitive interpretation of the stressor. This means that different individuals may react differently to the same stressor and what may be perceived as stressful by one individual may not be a stressor to

another.

While the concept of stress is often associated with negative consequences, it is important for us to appreciate that up to a certain point, stress has motivational benefits. Reasonable levels of stress may encourage individuals to strive hard in their work, leading to satisfaction that derives from success in surmounting challenges.

There are three broad sources of stress: Frustration, Conflict and Pressure.

Frustration

This occurs when one's personal, work and family goals are

blocked. When people feel they cannot achieve their goals they feel frustrated.

Conflict

This occurs when one has to make a choice between two or more mutually exclusive motives or goals. This implies that one can only achieve a goal and not both. There are four types of conflict.

In 'Approach-Approach Conflict', one has two competing goals each of these goals is attractive but only one goal can be achieved. For instance one may have a good job offer and a scholarship offer.

In 'Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict', one has to choose between two unpleasant motives. For

instance choosing between going for a surgery to get an amputation and staying with a cancerous leg.

In '*Approach-Avoidance Conflict*' one has a goal but it has both a pleasant and unpleasant aspect to it. For instance one may get a marriage proposal from a very good looking, successful and well to do person, who is known for his violent temper.

In '*Double Approach-Avoidance Conflict*' one has two competing conflicts both of which they have a pleasant and an unpleasant to aspect it.

Pressure

This occurs when one strives to meet social and psychological demands one imposes on oneself and those imposed by others.

Internal pressure results when one attempts to maintain ones self-esteem by forcing oneself to achieve higher standards, such as studying so hard to maintain high grades.

External pressures results from demands other people make on a person. Most of time people work so hard to achieve standards set by significant others.

Here is how to handle your stress effectively:

Time Management

Most of people feel stressed because they find that they cannot do things on time. This usually results from the fact that most people are yet to learn how to spend time efficiently to accomplish their goals. Therefore, time management involves developing skills for learning how to use time effectively to accomplish goals.

i. One of the best ways to manage your time is by developing a 'to-do-list'. This is a list that clearly states what you would like to accomplish on a daily basis. Towards this end you should review your goals, think of those that need urgent attention; write down the activities you want to accomplish the next day; number the activities in order of importance; estimate the amount of time required to accomplish each activity; schedule the activity for specific times of the day.

ii. Delegate duties.

iii. Avoid perfectionism.

iv. Be flexible.

Problem Solving

This is a series of steps to apply to a difficult situation to help you make responsible decision.

i. Identify the cause of stress and anxiety.

ii. Identify alternative ways to cope with the situation.

iii. Evaluate alternative ways you could use to cope with stress.

iv. Choose responsible action you can take to cope with stress.

v. Then evaluate the choice. That is to inquire to see if the action you decided on has helped alleviate the stress level.

Sometimes you might find it hard to go through these stages all alone. You might need assistance to successfully go through all these stages. At this point you need to see a counsellor, colleague, friend or relative to speak

to and get assistance.

Exercise

Regular participation in physical activity has been related to improved physical and psychological health. A person who regularly exercises for 25 minutes at least three times a week experiences increased physical and psychological well-being. The most recommended exercises are those that task the cardio-vascular system such as a brisk walk, swimming, running, and cycling.

Self-induced Relaxation

After a stress event, the body through the actions of the nervous systems induces relaxation. However you can help your body relax by the use of self-induced relaxation. They include meditation, yoga, and deep breathing among others.

Proper Diet

A proper diet will ensure one is in a good physical and mental state. This implies eating a balanced diet, eating regularly, and maintaining a healthy body weight.

Some people when very busy skip meals and end up eating heavy meals at the end of the day. This is an unhealthy practice. Others prefer to keep eating as they work. This is also a bad habit.

Enough Sleep

People generally react best to life when they have had a good night's sleep.

We all need between 6-9 hours of sleep. Therefore when stressed ensure that you get enough sleep.

NEGATIVE EFFECT OF WATCHING SOAP OPERAS

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

After a long day of toil, one needs to rest, refresh and re-energize for tomorrow's labour.

While most people especially men utilize their evening hours chatting with friend or having one or two beers, many others especially women are anchored in their TV's watching a Soap Opera.

In the case of children, all afternoons, after school, most of them arrive to their homes and what they do? In the majority of cases, they turn on the TV and start to watch programs, including soap operas. Children and teenagers spend a lot of hours in front of the television watching those programs that have a bad consequences in their behavior.

The Soap Opera is a television genre made for entertainment, but in many cases it has a negative effect on society because people copy the behaviors that could be violent. In the soap operas, writers develop fictional characters that model positive or negative behaviors, and through their stories and struggles, audiences learn about issues ranging from domestic abuse to personal bankruptcy.

Successful Soaps tend to be smartly written, sexy and replete with plot twists and love triangles. In the best-case scenario, the show becomes popular, and viewers begin to incorporate some of the themes into their lives.

Soap Operas taste so good! Where's the harm? But a more fundamental question is, why do people get obsessed by soap operas? It is possible to become

sucked into soap operas or addicted to them.

This happens when an unsuspecting viewer may, by chance catch a soap opera on TV completely by accident.

Soap operas become addicting because they continue their stories from day to day. There is no ending in soap operas as there are during a regular TV series.

There are no single episodes and there are rarely even two shows that are consecutive which are part of a single story or episode.

It is unfortunate that TV viewers who become addicted to soap operas are often sucked in after watching only two shows. TV viewers are lured back by the need to satisfy their innate curiosity, desire to "root" for their favorite character and a strong sense of loyalty.

The story itself with its ability to continue from day to day can connect to the viewing audience because as in real life, our stories do not end after one single day, but continue on and on.

The continuing story of the soap opera creates an addictive and obsessive emotional reaction in the viewing audience.

These addictions can destroy marriages and relationships, interfere with work performance and interfere with the living of a normal life. Soap opera addicts will do anything to get their daily "fix" of soap opera viewing.

Soap opera addicted audiences become obsessed with them after being constantly exposed to divorce, unplanned pregnancies, affairs, weird nuns and rich playboys on a daily basis. This is worse than any known narcotic. These people are getting high by watching soap operas.

Much more? The health hazard when it comes to Soap Operas is stress. Stress is a terribly dangerous thing. It can wreak havoc on your health, and it also strains your mind.

Soap Operas create a world inside your head filled with stress. There is never a peaceful, tranquil moment in a Soap Opera. And by getting caught up in it, it's as if you're having the stress of everyone's character in the show. Meaning you could have on your mind the stress of going through a break up, having an affair, lusting for a forbidden love, hiding a secret and so much more, all in a single week.

People watching Soap Operas can easily become addicted. They feel like they need something interesting going on in their life, and they get it from TV. This could easily lead to TV addiction, which could keep you from doing much physical activities.

Sitting around watching TV every chance you get will make it hard to lose weight. And of course, if you're fat, you're going to stress about it. Especially since it's the fat girl on the TV that never gets someone to love her.

HANDLING THE RIGOURS OF SINGLE-PARENTHOOD

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

A single parent, sometimes called a solo parent, is a parent, not living with a spouse or partner, who has most of the day-to-day responsibilities in raising the child or children. A single parent is usually considered the primary caregiver, meaning the parent the children have residency with the majority of the time.

Historically, death of a partner was a major cause of single parenting. Single parenting can result from separation, death or divorce of a couple with children.

A mother is typically the primary caregiver in a single parent family structure because of divorce or unplanned pregnancy.

Raising a child on your own can be stressful. If you're a single parent, understand how to cope with the pressure, find support and nurture your child.

If you're raising a child on your own, you're not alone; you're in good company.

Single-parent families are more common than ever. Know how to manage some of the special challenges single parents experience and what you can do to raise a happy, healthy child.

What are the most common single-parent challenges?

Child rearing can be difficult under any circumstances. Without a partner, the stakes are even higher. As a single parent, you might have sole responsibility for all aspects of day-to-day child care.

This can result in added pressure, stress and fatigue. If you're too tired or distracted to be emotionally supportive or consistently discipline your child, behavioral problems might arise.

Single-parent families also generally have lower incomes and less access to health care.

Juggling work and child care can be financially difficult and socially isolating.

You might worry about the lack of a male or female parental role model for your child, too.

How can a single parent deal with these challenges? To reduce stress in your single-parent family:

Show your love.

Remember to praise your child. Give him or her your unconditional love and support. Set aside time each day to play, read or simply sit with your child.

Create a routine.

Structure — such as regularly scheduled meals and bedtimes — helps your child know what to expect.

Find quality child care.

If you need regular child care, look for a qualified caregiver who can provide stimulation in a safe environment. Don't rely on an older child as your only baby sitter. Be careful about asking a new friend or partner to watch your child.

Set limits.

Explain house rules and expectations to your child — such as speaking respectfully — and enforce them. Work with other caregivers in your child's life to provide consistent discipline. Consider re-evaluating certain limits, such as your child's screen time, when he or she shows the ability to accept more responsibility.

Don't feel guilty.

Don't blame yourself or spoil your child to try to make up for being a single parent.

Take care of yourself.

Include physical activity in your daily routine, eat a healthy diet and get plenty of sleep. Arrange time to do activities you enjoy alone or with close friends.

Lean on others.

Work out a carpool schedule with other parents. Join a support group for single parents or seek social services. Call on trusted loved ones, friends and neighbors for help. Faith communities can be helpful resources, too.

Stay positive.

It's OK to be honest with your child if you're having a difficult time, but remind him or her that things will get better. Try to keep your sense of humor when dealing with everyday challenges.

TEN VITAL TRAITS OF A GREAT FATHER

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

In these days of polarized sexual politics, the value of a great father is often overlooked. But there are few things as valuable as a father who will do everything he can, and provide all the tools he has so that his children can become better than him.

Fathers should be dads who enhance active and positive emotional interaction, so that the kids may understand

face reading and be able to differentiate various emotional states, and avoid instilling fear by threats and ridicule, which results in kids with inadequate 'conscience'; kids who are under socialized.

Remember, you're molding a little life here, a very impressionable little mind, and you are your kid's role model. Their hero. Show him or her how it's supposed to be done; as your child grows older, you'll be amazed at how you two wind up having so much in common. Why is that? Because he or she is just like his or her dad.

It has been observed that, 'Father Hunger' on the part of the child is a cause for a lifelong search for the lost father or a substitute, which is very haunting. Now, paternal presence does not mean

being a 'second mother', another nurturer and comforter. It means having a more arousing and playful relationship with ones children.

Fathers as opposed to mothers,

4th SURVIVAL STRATEGY

To have a 'Winning Walk' in this game of life, you must train yourself to judge people by the results of their actions, the deeds that can be seen and measured, the maneuvers they have used to succeed. What people say about themselves does not matter; people will say anything. Look at what they have done; deeds do not lie. You must also apply this logic to yourself. In looking back at defeat, you must identify the things you could have done differently. It is your own bad strategies, not the unfair opponents or competitors that are to blame for your failures. You are responsible for the good and bad in your life; it is your prerogative to be happy or miserable. As a corollary to this, look at everything other people do as a strategic maneuver, an attempt to gain victory. People who accuse you of being unfair, for example, who try to make you feel guilty, who talk about justice and morality, are trying to gain an advantage on the chessboard of LIFE.

Cont. pg 24

are the ideal model of inculcating physical competence, adventurousness, new skills and confidence in asserting ones opinions.

Children with affective fathers get on better with their peers and display more social confidence. They are more comfortable in new situations, adapt to change more easily and achieve higher marks in intelligence tests. These children demonstrate a higher creativity and a greater ability to rely on their own judgment, thus developing the ability to plot their course.

A good father makes all the difference in a child's life. He's a pillar of strength, support and discipline. His work is endless and, often-times, thankless. But in the end, it shows in the sound, well-adjusted children he raises.

1. A good disciplinarian

A good father loves his children, but he doesn't let them get away with murder. He strongly disapproves of his children's misdeeds, using tough love to prove a point. He does this through the power of his words, not his fists.

Likewise, a father doesn't reward his children for actions that are expected of them, such as helping with house chores or performing well in school. If his child drops out of school, the father demands that he provide for

himself, considering the child no longer wants to invest in his own future.

2. Not so restrictive

A good father realizes that his children are human, and that making mistakes is part of growing up. Spending money recklessly, getting into minor car accidents, getting drunk and sick for the first time, even dating questionable women are rites of passage, and a good father recognizes this. However, he makes it clear that repeated irresponsibility won't be tolerated.

3. Open-minded

A good father understands that times, people and tastes change

over the years, and doesn't try to maintain some gold standard of his own time. For instance, he realizes that body piercings are more commonplace than before, that more couples have premarital sex, and that people talk more candidly about personal issues. In other words, he allows his children to be citizens of their day and age.

4. Teaches appreciation

A good father never lets his children take what they have for granted. From the food on the table to the good education he's paying for, a good father will make his children see the value in everything they have. He'll ask his child to get a job to help pay for a part of his personal requirements and take the time to illustrate how important a good education is. He doesn't let his kids treat him like an ATM.

5. Available

He spends quality time with his children. A dad knows how to have fun with his kids too, taking them out to games, movies, and supporting their sports teams by attending their matches. He takes the time to listen to his kids and have a good, easy chat with them. He also makes time to help them with their homework, every night if necessary.

6. Leads by example

A good father is above the old "do as I say, not as I do" credo. He will not smoke in front of his kids if he doesn't want them to do it, and definitely won't drink heavily. He teaches them to deal with conflict with a family member and with others by being firm but reasonable at the same time.

A good father also illustrates the importance of affection by professing his love for their mother in front of them. And he won't fight with her in their presence. In all, he adheres to the values he'd like his children to follow.

7. Supportive & loyal

Although he may be a football fanatic, if his son doesn't share his love for the game, he accepts it. He may be loyal to his alma mater and dream of having his kid follow his legacy, but if his son prefers to study abroad, he'll support his decision to take a different path.

A good father is also his children's public defender, standing up for them when needed. He waits for privacy to administer discipline. A safety net, a good father is also the person his kids turn to when things go wrong.

As the main provider of security and necessities, a father will do whatever he can for his family. He'll take a second job to provide for them, and he'll put his own safety on the line to keep them out of harm's way. This is how a father instills in his children the importance of personal sacrifice.

8. Positive challenger

A father wants his children to be the best they can be, and gives them challenges that help them grow as human beings. This means giving them some liberty to face setbacks and resolve conflicts on their own. Or it could be a task, such as building something for the house.

If a father wants his children to

take over the family business, he teaches them how to keep it flourishing — provided that's the path they want to take.

9. Teaches lessons

A father figure is the prime source of knowledge in the ways of men, and teaches his kids accordingly. From shaving to being courageous, a father molds his kids into well-rounded members of society. He especially instructs them in proper etiquette, on being honest and keeping their word, and on being thankful.

A great father knows he must sacrifice his own comfort for his fatherly duties. For instance, if he comes home from a hard day at work and catches his kids looking at porn on the Net, he'll take the time to address an awkward situation even though he's tired.

10. Unconditional acceptance

Everyone is different and a father knows this well. He won't expect his kids to live the same kind of life he does, and do the same kind of work. He also respects their values and opinions, as long as they don't harm the family or anyone else. Allow your children to steer their lives in a different direction, even if he don't quite agree with them.

Unconditional love is the greatest quality of a good father. Even though he gets upset at his children's faults and may lament that they did not attain what he hoped for them, a father loves his children no less for it.

From pg. 8

tion and adventure. Separated from ones creative powers, one remains ignorant of the rich emotional resources one buries inside oneself.

As a perennial addict is a victim of negative feelings and shows no positive attitude towards one's life, he or she is obsessed with notion of broken and shattered dreams without considering the effort one is actually making to make them

come true. The key statement is that 'I AM NOT OK'. There is sorrow or anguish in ones life, the consequence in most cases of multiple losses. There is anger - at oneself for being not good enough, anger to others too - one's family relative and friends. The worst consequence of this state of mind may be a gnawing feeling of the 'will-to-extinction'.

The bottom line here is that a perennial alcoholic is basically an 'existential escapist', and a 'pathological pessimist' whose vitality and 'will-to-live' has been sponged off, and who in the face of stark and harsh realities of this open and competitive world, coils away or shies out and finds a false refuge in a virtual grave (a state of intoxication). The little moment out of this virtual grave when he or she has not indulged him or herself in that intoxicant or that drug, becomes so unbearable that the way back into the grave becomes somehow inevitable. However, the grave becomes so

weary of this temporary visitor that it finally closes itself and the victim is swallowed in an ultimate real death. In short, substance addiction is the entombment of the fleeing soul from life's grey af-

Research has shown that individuals who have their first drink of alcohol before the age of 15 are substantially more likely to become alcoholic than those who have their first drink after age of twenty.

It also indicates that for each year adolescents delay use of alcohol, they decrease the odds of life long dependence by 14% and lifelong abuse by 8%. The results are similar for other drugs reductions by 5% for life long dependence and 4% for life abuse for every year they delay the initial use.

Indeed, if you don't take alcohol until age of 30 years, it is highly unlikely that you will ever take it! Since no one can predict the onset of addiction, nor the quantity of drug required to trigger it, the key to avoid addiction therefore is TOTAL ABSTINENCE.

fairs into the dust of one's psychic vacuum.

The social impact of alcoholism is often greater than the health impact, and can have devastating consequences on families. One of the most destructive consequences of men's addiction to alcohol is that they are literally absent from their families' lives. In other words, the psychological effect of father's spending so much of their work time and the time to adequately interact with their families in drinking dens can lead to what psychologists refer to as 'Absent Father Syndrome'.

Wives of alcoholics and even of men who may not be alcoholics but spend large amounts of time in bars will often say that it is not the consumption of alcohol that bothers them as much as the fact that the men in their lives are never at home with their families. And even when they are, they are too inebriated to be of much emotional support to their wives or chil-

dren where need be. Children, in turn, are growing up without the emotional support of their fathers.

The psychological and social consequences of an absent father have been documented by various studies. Boys who grow up without a male role model can become emotionally stunted. Girls who never experience a caring father figure, or whose father is not emotionally available to them, are known to become rebellious teenagers. Worse, having seen alcoholism in their own homes, many of these children

grow up replicating the behavior patterns of their parents; what psychologist refer to as *vicarious learning*. The boys grow up to be alcoholics, while the girls tend to marry alcoholics. Because they come from dysfunctional homes where their emotional needs were not met, they are attracted to situations that are emotionally painful or chaotic.

Addictions are for most part socially transmitted and individually acquired; a fact which further explains why the process of addiction is reversible. So it is apparent that, if the current pathetic trend of alcohol abuse is not checked and immediately curbed by giving youngsters a taste of life which will supersede a taste for alcohol, then we shall have a whole generation deleted from our history. The remnants shall be a batch of zombies; of dependent and unproductive physical and psychological weaklings, who shall be liabilities to the society rather than assets.

TERMINOLOGIES IN DRUG ABUSE

Dependence.

This is the state of being enslaved by drugs. Physiological dependence means that if you remove the drugs the body cannot function without great discomfort or feeling of sickness. E.g. you cannot fall asleep without the drugs, you have diarrhea, you have irregular heart beat, pain, shaking of hands etc. when you take the drug these symptoms disappear temporarily until the levels fall once more following which you have to take it again and again.

Not all drugs give you this kind of dependence. Physiological dependence is when the drug is taken for stimulation or pleasure (Miraa users get addicted to the stimulant effect and want to experience it again and again until they are obsessed), or a feeling of wellbeing (e.g. maintain the dream like state in bhang smokers), to escape reality, or maintain a drug induced pleasure (like in cocaine abuse). Some drugs have both psychological and physiological dependence e.g. alcohol.

Addiction.

This is a state when drug dependency has developed to such an extent that it has serious detrimental effects on the user and often on their family as well. It is characterized by a preoccupation with securing the drug and using it.

The person spends their time and resources at the expense of family and other responsibilities. At this point it is the drugs that abuse the user. Addiction is characterized by loss of control over the use of drug, resulting in an

unmanageable life and denial. An addicted person is compelled to use drugs every day, to remain intoxicated most of the time and has great difficulty in stopping drug use. Drugs take over their life. it becomes a number one priority in life of a drug dependent person.

Withdrawal symptoms.

This is when the normal balance of the body has been affected. The cells of the body have adapted to the presence of that substance. Without it they cannot function such that once we suddenly stop using a drug of addiction we experience a collection of signs and symptoms that could be mild or severe.

Withdrawal symptoms are characterized by tremors, fall or rise in temperature, increased pulse rate, high blood pressure, restlessness, hallucinations, seizures, sleeplessness, loss of appetite etc. you were created in a balanced state for normal functioning which has been interfered with. That is the reason why you feel bad when you try to stop.

Tolerance.

This is a condition in which the body requires increasingly larger amounts of the drug to achieve the same effect due to frequent and continuous use or administration of the drug. For instance the person has to take more and more alcohol to get high or take more drugs, or smoke more sticks of bhang to get the original desired effect or feeling. This is why some people can drink a lot of alcohol without getting drunk (they have developed the capacity)

yet this quantity is enough to kill other people. This is tolerance.

Tolerance is another indicator of progression to addiction. Even if such a person is not getting he or she continues to suffer poisonous effects of the substance on the body organs. It also has socioeconomic effects as more time and money is required to obtain the drug.

Denial.

Drug dependent persons are often the last to recognize their disease, pursuing their habits to the levels of insanity, the collapse of their health and ultimate death. Denial is an unconscious refusal to accept that one has a problem. It is the primary psychological symptom of addiction and the automatic unconscious component of addiction. Sadly, many addicts continue with their habits while their world collapses around them blaming everything except the addiction for their problems.

Denial is one of the reasons that recovery from addiction is usually not effective in cases where the chemically dependent person is forced into treatment. This refusal to admit the truth must be overcome before any healing process can begin.

It is important to note here that addiction can happen at any age. Even unborn children can get addicted because of their mother's drug use. There is evidence that some people have become alcohol dependent very early (there are 8 year old alcoholics), and sometimes with their first drink.

TEN VITAL TRAITS OF A LOVABLE MOTHER

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

Motherhood can mean many things, and our own definition of it is largely defined by our individual experiences. To one person, motherhood might simply mean the act of raising children; to another, motherhood might be what defines the children. But here are definitions of motherhood which can stand the test of time.

Motherhood means feeling a kaleidoscope of emotions simultaneously – fear, glee, worry, angst, pride. And it means being an advocate and a revolutionary who empowers her children to engage in society in a meaningful, fun, vibrant way. Motherhood means always giving up the biggest piece of cake and the last popsicle and being okay with that.

Motherhood means accepting responsibility. Every choice you make, from before a child is conceived, until long after you're dead, there is someone out there that will tell you how it impacted your kid.

Motherhood is how you stretch your heart in ways you never thought possible. It's how you love through the ups & down, the challenges that life brings. And, it lasts a lifetime from that first tiny cry.

Motherhood is a great honor and privilege, yet it is also synonymous with servanthood. Every day women are called upon to selflessly meet the needs of their families.

Whether they are awake at night nursing a baby, spending their

time and money on less-than-grateful teenagers, or preparing meals, moms continuously put others before themselves

Motherhood is the greatest thing and the hardest thing. However, motherhood has a very humanizing effect; everything gets reduced to essentials.

As it stands, motherhood is a sort of wilderness through which each woman hacks her way, part martyr, part pioneer; a turn of events from which some women derive feelings of heroism, while others experience a sense of exile from the world they knew.

Despite various conceptions of motherhood, humans, as a whole, are truly bound by a common goal: to raise the next generation to the best of our abilities under the circumstances at hand.

It is a religiously, customarily and professionally accepted assertion that a mother is only as happy as her least happy child. As a mother, you live, breathe, and sacrifice for the well-being of your children.

Seeing them succeed is the best thing in the world, and watching them falter is gut-wrenching. The important thing to remember is that the love you invest in your children absolutely makes a difference, even if you don't see it bear fruit at first.

Moms besides fostering relationship skills, needs to demonstrate that, treating people well is just as important as succeeding at school and sports.

This goes along in inculcating to children 'emotional intelligence' – the ability to tune to others needs. Being empathetic to others, these kids will stand a better chance of getting ahead in life.

1. Emotional Control

For proper development of 'conscience', individually, the mother should avoid showering their kids with excessive emotionalism by expressing her frustrations from whatever source and in particular showing her anger and disgust for the father to the kids.

This unfortunately creates emotional upheavals to these tender souls, who will eventually become emotionally cold and consequently will never be sensitive to the feelings of others at a later age.

2. Supportive

Never laugh at your kids hobbies, interests or friends. Instead, help your child follow their dreams by providing support, encouragement and the opportunity to do so. If for instance your daughter doesn't want to study medicine and become a doctor? Don't get angry, this is your child's life and they can make some of their own decisions. Understand that it's okay if your child thinks differently than you. Don't get mad because they have a different opinion than yours.

Who cares if your daughter listens to hip hop music and wears an excessive amount of eyeliner? She's still your daughter. You might not do what your kids do, but that is their decision, not yours. You

have a big impact on their lives already. - You choose what school they go to, when they eat dinner, the amount of allowance they get a week. Don't over do it.

3. Patience

Being a mother is a little challenging sometimes. But keep your cool and try to delay your impulses or temptation to outbursts. Try this approach to other problems. Stay calm, explain the practical reasons not to do something, and then why YOU don't want them to do something.

4. Concern

Take an interest in your child's interests. If your son likes music buy him a guitar and watch him play. Ask questions, like what is your favorite type of music, what is your favorite song, etc. If your daughter is interested in fashion, take her out for a shopping spree. Ask her what her favorite thing about fashion is.

Don't be afraid to ask, just don't

do, but don't automatically say no to everything your kid asks for. If you always say no and follow this with a lecture about saving money, you will be known as the "Tight Parent" (Mkono Ngamu), the one who never buys anything. Buy something small every now and then. Even offering to purchase some candy or chips at the store can make a difference.

Every now and then buy something big that you are sure your kid wants. For example, an iPod in their favorite color, or maybe a teenager would enjoy a nice computer. And be generous at birthdays, maybe buy them something they have been hinting they want for a while. You can also take them out to a special dinner, see a movie, and choose a nice gift or receive nice gifts from parents.

6. Approachable

Make sure you are an easy person to talk to. Try your hardest to always be understanding and a good listener. Knowing that they can go to their mom for friendship advice, information on puberty,

that you're being stubborn and teaches your kids that it's okay to make mistakes, as well as the importance of an apology.

Simply calm yourself, evaluate the situation, determine what you did wrong and why. Then apologize and explain how or why you acted the way you did. A good way to start off may be: "I would like to apologize for how I acted earlier, and I realize that I was wrong," then transition into the rest.

8. Accommodating

Respect your child's love for the other parent. You should not be jealous of your child loving their Dad, grandmother/dad, aunt, cousin, uncle, brother or sister and friends.

9. Loving

Let your children know and see that you value them more than anything. Without loving them, it means nothing whatever you do in your life. And understand

"When motherhood becomes the fruit of a deep yearning, not the result of ignorance or accident, its children will become the foundation of a new race." - Margaret Sanger

be pushy. Also when you call your child and they say, "What!" in a loud, angry like voice just say never mind and talk to them when they don't seem so mad. Sometimes when they say what in a that kind of voice you should ask them what's wrong. If they say nothing that means you need to go in there to see what's wrong, but sometimes let them come to you.

5. Don't be 'Mkono Ngamu'

Okay, so blowing money day after day isn't the best thing to

homework help, or just a hug goes a long way for kids. Not having someone they can talk to can cause kids to retire into a shell, so make sure you talk to them about how they feel regularly.

7. Remorseful

Be able to admit that something you did may have been wrong and don't be afraid to apologize. It might be hard, but it's better for everyone if you just admit to your mistakes and apologize. It saves everyone the trouble of being mad

whenever you love your child or not, somehow deep in your child's heart, they will love you forever whenever they are loved, or not.

10. Praising

Make your child feel special. Give them goodnight kisses, hugs and normal kisses, let them sit on your knee and show your love by sharing your memories and dreams and with special endearments (darling, honey, love) and nicknames.

DISCIPLINE STRATEGIES FOR TEENAGERS

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

If your child has recently done this or her KCPE, KCSE or is still in secondary school. Perhaps you have been having troubles with this teen. Don't groan anymore. *Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR* has researched for you some tips that will help you in disciplining your child effectively.

Your child has finished the childhood stage and he or she has entered the stage called 'Adolescence'. The first fact you have to come into terms with is that, your son or daughter is in transition from childhood to adulthood.

At this very important stage in his or her *psychosocial* development, he or she begins to demand autonomy or freedom from parental control and to regulate his or her own behaviour and make decisions.

As a parent on the other hand, you may feel that your adolescent son or daughter is too young, naïve, reckless, and too inexperienced to be given the freedom he or she demand.

The implication here is that, around this time that your child has finished primary school, you might need to adjust your ap-

proach to discipline.

Effective discipline for teenagers focuses on setting agreed limits and helping teenagers work within them.

In the first instance, as a parent you need to realize that, discipline isn't about punishment. It's about teaching children appropriate

Your child needs these skills to become a young adult with his or her own standards for appropriate behaviour and respect for others. An important part of his or her journey is learning to stick to some clear rules, agreed on in advance, and with agreed-on consequences.

Teenagers aren't equipped with the skills they need to make all their own decisions. Even if your child tells you he or she doesn't need your guidance, the research shows the opposite.

The limits you agree on for behaviour are an important influence on your child. Commu-

nicate openly with your child, so you can check in with each other about how the limits and rules are working.

Build and maintain a warm and loving family environment, so your child feels safe to make mistakes. Children with warm family relationships learn to control their own behaviour, especially when guided by parents.

Negotiation is a key part of communicating with teenagers and can help avoid problems. Negotiating with teenagers shows that you respect their ideas. It also helps them learn to make their own decisions.

5th SURVIVAL STRATEGY

In the search for success in LIFE, people tend to rely on things that seem simple and easy or that have worked before. This could mean accumulating wealth, resources, a large number of allies, or the latest technology and the advantages it brings. This is being materialistic and mechanical. But true strategy is psychological – a matter of intelligence, not material force. Everything in life can be taken away from you and generally will be at some point. Your wealth vanishes, the latest gadgetry suddenly becomes passé, your allies desert you. But if your mind is armed with the art of managing conflicts, there is no power that can take that away. In the middle of a crisis, your mind will find its way to the right solution. Having superior strategies at your fingertips will give your maneuvers irresistible force. As the ancient Chinese philosopher Sun-Tzu says, 'Being unconquerable lies with yourself'.

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ways to behave.

For teenagers, discipline is about agreeing on and setting appropriate limits and helping them behave within those limits.

When your child was younger, you probably used a range of discipline strategies to teach the basics of good behaviour.

Now your child is growing or has grown into a teenager, you can use limits and boundaries to help him or her learn independence, manage and take responsibility for his or her behaviour and its outcomes, and solve problems.

Clear limits and expectations can discourage problem behaviour from happening in the first place. Limits also help your child develop positive social behaviours, including showing concern for others.

Here are some tips for setting clear limits:

Involve your child in working out limits and rules. When your child feels that you listen to him or her and he or she can contribute, he or she will be more likely to see you as fair and stick to the agreed rules.

Be clear about the behaviour you expect. It can help to check that your child has understood

your expectations. For example, a rule such as 'come home after the movie' might mean one thing to you, but something different to your child. Stating this rule more precisely will make it easier for your child to follow it. For example, 'I want you to come straight home after the movie ends and not go anywhere else'.

Discuss responsibilities with your child. For example, 'I'm responsible for providing for you. You have responsibilities too, such as tidying your room'.

Agree in advance with your child

what the consequences will be if he or she doesn't stick to the rules you've agreed on. Praise your child when he or she does stick to the rules you've agreed.

Be willing to discuss and adjust rules as your child gets older – for example, by extending your child's curfew.

Discipline vs Punishment

Whereas punishment is retaliatory, based on command with the purpose of relieving anger of the punisher, discipline on the other hand is creatively instructional resting on suggestion and its purpose is to instill a sense of responsibility in the recipient. Punishment can also lead to undesired side effects like anger, hatred, or even outright rebellion, simply because to command a child (even an adult) is to arouse pugnacity and resistance and all the sleeping dogs of pride are aroused against us when we give order; at every imperative we stir up armies of defense.

way to deal with this is by using consequences:

Make the consequence fit. For example, if your child is home later than the agreed time, a fitting consequence might be having to come home early next time.

Withdraw cooperation. For example, if your child wants you to take him or her to social outings, you could say you'll do this if he or she follows the rules. Try to avoid making this into a bribe. Let your child know beforehand that you might withdraw your cooperation as a consequence for

misbehaviour. For example, 'If you'd like me to do this or that for you, you need to come home on time. If you're late, I won't do it next time'. The aim is to help your child understand your perspective and to learn that he or she needs to give and take.

Withdraw privileges. This consequence should be used sparingly – overuse will limit its effectiveness. The idea is to remove something that you know your child enjoys – for example, going to a friend's house. You need to let your child know in advance that this is what you plan to do. Research shows that you don't need to withdraw privileges for a long time for this consequence to be effective. Aim for a short withdrawal that occurs within the few days following the misbehaviour.

Different families have different standards and rules for behaviour. To check whether yours are realistic and reasonable, you could talk with parents and friends who have children of the same age.

Using consequences

Sometimes your child might behave in ways that test your limits or break the rules you've agreed on. One

Whatever consequence you choose, these strategies might help:

Communication: explain what's happening to your child. State clearly that he or she hasn't stuck to the rules you agreed on and that you'll be applying the agreed consequence.

Self-reflection: encourage your child to think about his or her behaviour and how it could be different in the future. Talk with him or her about the agreement you had, and what he or she thinks should happen as a consequence of breaking it. Often teenagers will be much harsher than their parents. This allows you to settle on future consequences that you both see as fair. It's best to balance rules and consequences with warmth and positivity. Try to aim for six positive comments for every negative comment.

REAPING MOST FROM YOUR RELIGION OR DENOMINATION

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

There has been many stories of preachers using the word of GOD to suck their followers dry. But late last year's case of a Nairobi pastor, Prophet Doctor Victor Kanyari who was busted by KTN investigative crew *Jicho Pevu*, faking miracles left most Christians bewildered.

Whereas most people have suggested that it is time the government drafts a law to regulate all churches and pastors in the country, the buck stops with you as an individual to shield yourself from any manner of exploitation. *Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR* categorically asserts that if you are the kind of a person who goes to a church to seek quick fix to your problems (financial, social or medical), then you have laid yourself bare to being conned.

We are living in a time where there is proliferation of many churches. With freedom of worship strongly anchored in our constitution, it is not a wonder that the number of these church groupings are destined to continue increasing in number. And it is always spiritually nourishing to belong to a certain church than not to be. It is always to your benefit (psychologically speaking) to believe in God than to be an atheist.

"An atheist is a man who has no invisible means of support", thus preached American religious leader Henry Emerson Fosdick (1878-1969). Unless we succumb to theological superficialism, an honest appreciation of the profound role which RELIGION has since antiquity performed, like

giving to a people a sense of belongingness, a sense of common purpose, a unity and a fervour that armed or arms them with a volcanic potential to overcome tremendous hardships, we make it 'categorically crystal clear' here that, without RELIGION, LIFE would be like a gun without bullets in times of war.

Having said that, a point of caution here is that, however religious you might conceive yourself to be, whereas you may attempt to convert others to your faith, you should not waste any of your time criticizing the other person system of worship. *Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR* invokes you abscond the "Holier-Than-Thou" attitude and to strive to benefit more and more from your religion, denomination or church.

"God has made different religions to suit different aspirations, times and countries. All doctrines are only so many paths, but a path is by no means God Himself. Indeed, one can reach God if one follows any of the paths with wholehearted devotion. One may eat a cake with icing either straight or sidewise. It will taste sweet either way", thus noted Paramhansa Ramakrishna (1836-1886). Besides discrediting the purported dogmatic superiority or inferiority of any religious orientation over any other, this enduring statement by a Hindu mystic has the implication that, the religious experience of mankind has led down many pathways resulting in the enormous diversity of religious expression found worldwide.

Here is an analysis of various dimensions of all religions which have found themselves on the face of the earth. As you get enlightened on each dimension, ask yourself whether you are getting most from your faith, and if not try to.

On the **Ritual Dimension** of religion, it is notable that, religion in part tends to express itself through repetitive forms of everyday behaviour, in the manner of socially structured ways of doing things, such as rituals and ceremonies through worship, prayers, offerings and the like in specific temples and churches.

Since rituals involves both an inner and an outer aspect, the former assists us in becoming productive members while when the latter dominates, it then degenerates into a mechanical or conventional process. If people go through the motions of religious observance without accompanying it with the intentions and sentiments which give it human meaning, ritual is merely an empty shell.

The **Mythological Dimension** involves the collection of myths, images, and stories through which the invisible world is symbolized. This dimension includes not merely stories about God (for instance the story of creation in Genesis), about the gods (for instance Homer's Iliad) but also the historical events of religious significance in a tradition.

Our use of the term myth in relation to religious phenomena is quite neutral as to the truth or falsity of the story enshrined in the myth.

The **Doctrinal Dimension** is manifested in an attempt to give system, clarity, and intellectual power to what is revealed through the mythological and symbolic language of religious faith and ritual.

In the instance where theology must make use of symbols and myths, the dividing line between mythological and doctrinal becomes blurred. However all world religions owe some of their living power to their

success in presenting a total picture of reality, through a coherent system of doctrines.

The **Ethical Dimension** concern the behavior of the individual and to some extent, the code of ethics of the dominant religion controls the community. Quite obviously, people do not always live up to the standards which are inculcated by the dominant faith in a particular society. These precepts may also not be believed by all section of that society.

It is indisputable that religion have been influential in molding the ethical attitudes they are part of. It is important, however, to distinguish between the moral teachings incorporated in the doctrines and mythology of a religion, and the social facts concerning those who adhere to the faith in question.

The **Social Dimension** gives re-

ligion its social shape which is of course, to some extent determined by the religious and ethical ideals and practices that it harbors.

The difference between the ethical dimension and the social dimension is that the latter is the mode in which the religion in question is institutionalized, whereby, through its institutions and teachings, it affects the community in which it finds itself.

The doctrinal, mythological and ethical di-

mension, express a religious claim about the nature of the invisible world and its aims about how men's lives ought to be shaped; the social dimension indicates the way in which men's lives are in fact shaped by these claims and the way in which religious institutions operate.

In the **Motivational Dimension**, we see that, besides serving as informal 'Guidance and Counseling' centers (although this has been made illegal), most churches have surfaced out as the most persuasive if not convenient avenues for offering motivational talk to their adherents, on how to handle the crippling burdens of the life. Most priests, pastors and church ministers besides finding it as their duties to prepare their flock in the way of going to heaven, find it also as their assignment of arming them with strong convictions for handling the hurdles and obstacles immanent in this world.

In most instances this dimension overrides the Doctrinal and Mythological Dimensions, and the scriptures are manipulated and tactfully quoted to serve the purpose of infusing vitality and zeal to the listener.

The **Experiential Dimension** is informed by the fact that although as humans we may hope to have contact with, and participate in the invisible world through ritual, personal religion normally involves the hope of, or realization of experience of that world. This dimension concern with the inner side – what religious mean in personal experience and how people have been molded by such experience.

It is worth noting the dialectic interplay between experience and doctrine. For instance as young people most of us are taught certain doctrines and mythological symbols by our parents, which are simply 'theoretical' as far as the young minds, are concerned. But supposing that one progresses to a deeper understanding of one's faith through a particular personal experience, or through one's response to the ritual and ethical demands of one's religions, then one will come to see that in some mysterious way God is an entity with whom he or she can have contact. One will now believe something other than what one first believed making the interplay between doctrine and experience fundamental to personal religion.

When all is said and done a one conviction you should cultivate and build is to be a light unto yourself by trusting your insights, and use self-control to reach perfection and inner peace.

"Suppress all religions for a century" Will Durant (1885-1981) noted, "then take off the lid, and religion would grow again in a year". Erupting directly from our instinctive and emotional fount, out of hunger for self-preservation, for reward, for companionship, for security, even for submission, 'RELIGIOUSNESS' is the very essence of human being. This need is spiritually nourishing when it is danced out to a state of consummation as King David did; when listened as it is couched in polyphonic music; when expressed through the medium of poetry, and phrased in imagery; and when it showers in our minds haloed with the supernatural.

HOW TO DEVELOP SELF-ESTEEM AS A TEENAGER

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

Adolescence is the perfect period for instilling of self-esteem. Being constantly criticized by family, friends, and society tends to slowly demean our feelings of self worth.

Our low self esteem strips us of the self confidence to make even the smallest of decisions. Improving self esteem increases your confidence and is a first step towards finding happiness and a better life. Here are tips on raising your self-esteem.

• Dress modestly

No one is more conscious of your physical appearance than you are. When you look good, it changes the way you carry yourself and interact with other people.

This doesn't mean you need to spend a lot on clothes. One great rule to follow is "spend twice as much, buy half as much".

Rather than buying a bunch of cheap clothes, buy half as many select, high quality items. Expensive clothes wear out less easily and stay in style longer than cheap clothes. Find things that you like and, in return, you will like the way you look.

• Have good hygiene

Take care of your personal appearance. In most cases, significant improvements can be made by bathing and shaving frequently, wearing clean clothes and brushing your teeth twice a day.

• Practice good posture

People with slumped shoulders and lethargic movements display a lack of self confidence. They often are unenthusiastic and don't consider themselves important. By practicing good posture, you'll automatically feel more confident.

the morning, it also creates positive momentum that you can build on the rest of the day.

• Give back to others

Volunteer someplace in your community. If you stop thinking about yourself and concentrate on the contribution you're making to the rest of the world, you won't worry as much about your own flaws. This will increase your self esteem.

• Compliment other people

Break the cycle of negativity by getting in the habit of praising other people. In the process, you'll become well liked and build self confidence. By looking for the best in others, you indirectly bring out the best in yourself.

6th SURVIVAL STRATEGY

Most of us in life are tacticians, not strategists. We become so enmeshed in the conflicts we face that we can think only of how to get what we want in the conflict we are currently facing. To think strategically is difficult and unnatural. You may imagine you are being strategic, but in all likelihood you are merely being tactical. To have power that only strategy can bring, you must be able to elevate yourself above the battlefield, to focus on your long-term objectives, to craft an entire campaign, to get out of the reactive mode that so many battles in life lock you into. Keeping your overall goals in mind, it becomes much easier to decide when to fight and when to walk away. "Know when fold, know when hold, know when to run", in the words of famous country musician Kenny Rogers in *'The Gambler'*. That makes the tactical decisions of daily life much simpler and more rational. Tactical people are heavy and stuck in the ground; strategists are light on their feet and can see far and wide.

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Stand up straight, keep your head up, and make eye contact. You'll make a positive impression on others and instantly feel more alert and empowered.

• Work out regularly

Physical fitness has a huge effect on self confidence. If you're out of shape, you'll feel insecure and unattractive. By working out, you improve your physical appearance and do something constructive with your time. If you work out in

ULTIMATELY:

Aiming for perfection in life is a lost cause because the term means different things to different people. Nobody is perfect in the eyes of everyone else. Instead, seek to achieve goals.

All in all, strive to be your best and do not criticize yourself if you fall short of your expectations.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

THE VARIATION OF CLIMATE (SEASONS) IN MT. KENYA REGION

Mt. Kenya region is richly endowed with good agricultural soil and various rivers which makes it a 'food basket' for the whole country. It is only in this area where all varieties of food-stuffs are grown.

The area receives moderate rainfall from 1000 mm per annum in the lowlands to 1750mm per annum in the highlands. For the purposes of simplification in the use of various terminologies we shall here use the name of seasons in the context of Kikuyu Language. The traditional Kikuyu year had four main climatic seasons and two main agricultural activity or planting seasons.

The first planting season coincided with the long rains season

between March and July when they planted a black bean *Njahi* (*Dolichos lablab*) thus it was named the *Njahi Season*. Today the main crop planted in this season is maize and subsequently it is called the *Maize Season*.

This was followed by a chilly cold season, *Gathano* between July and August. The temperatures in July/August can fall as low as 2° Celsius in Nyeri and this part of the *gathano* season was referred to as "rotting birds", *Mworia Nyoni*, as birds purportedly die of cold in their nests.

Though actual precipitation in this season is very low, in the higher parts of the plateau like Nyeri, people generally huddle in front

of a fire because the cold combines with a mist and an almost perpetual drizzle and wetness.

The third climatic season, the short rains happen between September and December and was also the second planting season, the millet season, *Kimera kia Mwere*. (*Pennisetum glaucum*)

The fourth climatic season January to March was called *Themithu*. This was the season all the millet harvest was finalized. With the millet in and the weather superb and no major work the opportunity presented itself for the major ceremonies and celebrations. Circumcision ceremonies with their accompanying song and dance were normally held in this season.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN NYUMBA, MBARI AND MUHIRIGA

Every Kikuyu belongs to one of the ten clans. When a man marries a woman from a different clan, the offspring will belong to the clan (*Mbari*) of the man although the woman continues to be associated to her father's clan and its practices.

All the members issuing from a man's union with one or more wives become members of the same *Mucii* which literally means homestead. In a polygamous homestead, each wife had a *Gthaku* or her "side" consisting of an area defined by her daily operations outside her

hut. The *githaku* not only meant a physical space but also a social unit. Each woman's children in a polygamous arrangement belonged to her *Githaku*.

Beyond first cousins, and other further removed extended families are what constitutes the *Mbari* or sub-clan.

This can be a very big affair and the *mbari* settled all along a ridge with a river or stream separating it from the *mbari* across the river. This does not mean that some members could not go and settle elsewhere. They always did, but always

referred to their 'real' home as where the main *mbari* was located. *Mbari* literally means side and the Kikuyus say the "people of that side", or that *mbari*.

Very many *Mbari*'s are what constitute a clan, *Muhiriga*.

DID YOU KNOW?

Unlike many African tribes who made the stool three legged, the Kikuyu made a clear distinction between the woman's four-legged *Giturua*, that was used in the *Nyumba* and the man's *Njung'ua*, a three-legged smaller affair which could be carried about by the man.

All the offspring of the several brothers and step brothers will belong to a *Nyumba* of their patriarch. This *Nyumba* or "house of" was usually named after the grandfather patriarch of that house for *nyumba* literally means house.

'NGATHA', 'TUCUNGWA' AND 'KIREKIO' IN MT. KENYA REGION

By Angela Wairimu

In Kikuyu, the first wife was referred to as 'ngatha'; in Kimeru, 'nkatha'; in Kiambu as 'ngaatha'. The term designates the first and the most senior wife, qualified by the home founder. All other subsequent wives are subject to her discretion in both hiring and firing.

The home founder was qualified not by the pair-bond subsequently, but by her proven pre-marital social grace, in the state of

virginity, and her inter-personal tastes and preferences with the husband.

The term 'ngatha', in this context, is a divine gift, manifested in one's personal character. Its awesomeness arrests a male's hearts, to an extent of placing an unbeatable trust upon the woman, in the office of a 'ngatha'.

Secondary wives were personally recruited by this virtuous wife, as her support staff, and she was their personnel manager. These support wives were called 'tucungwa (plural), 'gacungwa' (singular). At no time was 'ngatha' equal in status with the 'tucungwa', no matter the disposition of their competence.

A 'gacungwa' was understood as

a normal woman, who fell short of the orthodox social grace (call it virginity) before marriage, and this deprivation placed her in this second social grading of the prospective marital status.

The breaking of virginity, before marriage, automatically changed the prospective marital status

the father receives the marriage of his daughter.

This saying underlies the understanding that casual sex was widespread, and that only a handful of the local maidens were loyal to the cultural doctrine of the premarital virginity. In effect, the potential home founders were a

very rare community resource.

The common breed of the 'fallen' maidens, also called 'kirekio', or 'cegega', or 'kiegegio' in Kirinyaga vernacular, were the majority, and hence merited to be secondary wives.

7th SURVIVAL STRATEGY

Every day you face battles - that is the reality for all creatures in their struggles to survive. But the greatest battle of all is with yourself - your weaknesses, your emotions, your lack of resolution in seeing things through to the end. You must declare unceasing war on yourself. As a warrior in life, you welcome combat and conflict as ways to prove yourself, to better your skills, to gain courage, confidence, and experience. Instead of repressing your doubts and fears, you must face them down, do battle with them. You want more challenges, and you invite more conflicts. You should always be committed to forging and developing the warrior's spirit, and only constant practice will lead you there.

of the girl. It was the husband's responsibility, to discover her status, and report to the mother, of course, in a customarily diplomatic manner.

Once discovered, it was at the husband's discretion, whether to retain her as a second wife, or return the 'social goods' to the seller, in this case, her clan. Kikuyu has a saying, that 'kiumaga mburi kieremia'- literary, it costs goats when it gets tired of servicing itself.

In short, the meaning is that a young woman submits to the rule of one man, in the person of the husband, after having sexual relationship with several men. 'Mburi', in singular and plural, is the Kikuyu word for goats. They symbolize the bridewealth which

The term 'kirekio' designates something or someone, and particularly a maiden, dropped for lack of the desired value, having failed to meet the physical qualification of a virgin. Other adjectives, as mentioned above, implied a wayward, unstable woman (kiegegio) qualified by her weak self control (cegega) and having disregarded the virtuous training of the community. She was, therefore, a great icon of shame to her extended mothers, grandmothers, and the community.

A maiden was brought up, since childhood to hate the very concept of being labeled, a 'kirekio', such that an actual 'kirekio' was very hard to defend, and instead become a loving stock of her age group.

The point underscored here is that, the Mt. Kenya region communities tend to exhibit three categories of women, by their character. One, there is the category of irreproachable maidens; the 'Ngatha'. This was the rarest of the three.

The second one, 'gacungwa' is the lower category, which is qualified by the fact of losing the gift of chastity while in their parents custody, resulting in meriting to be married as second wives.

The third category is the 'kirekio'. In kikuyu, she was referred to as 'kiere kia njira-ini', meaning, the millet plants along the passage-accessible to everyone passing by, and one without security. It meant one disposed to rescue the passions of men. This third category was, and is still, accessible to all, and committed to none.

The bottom line is that, the worst result would be when the three classes are mixed up. If the third class is placed in the first category, then the husband cannot help to groan for ever. This is not a condemnation, but an appreciation of the social phenomenon, in respect to the character of women. This is well reflected in the words of Agur son of Jakeh of Massa (Proverbs 30: 21):

*“Under three things the earth trembles;
Under four it cannot bear up:
A slave when he becomes king,
And a fool when he is filled with food;
An unloved woman when she gets a husband,
And a maid when she succeeds her mistress”.*

THE SEVEN KIKUYU PROVERBS for the month

1. “Mbugi ndikirite muriha”

The bell needs its tongue.

In this proverb the word 'bell' means 'woman' and 'tongue' means 'man'. This implies that wives must be had, be they good or bad.

2. “Aka eri ni nyungu igiri cia urogi”

Two wives are two pots of poison.

The more women you have in your house, the more troubles you must expect.

3. “Aka na ng'ombe itiri ndugu”

Wives and oxen have no friends.

There are things which are not to be given to friends.

4. “Cia mucii iri gacuguma gacio gatathukagio ni muthuri ungi tiga mweneguo”

Home affairs have their staff, which cannot be brandished by anyone but the head of the house.

The proverb means either that private matters must not be spoken of to strangers or that in each house there must be only one in authority.

5. “Muka uri mwana ndoraga”

The woman who has children does not desert her home.

The proverb was meant to discourage women who had the habit of leaving their matrimonial homes after slight disagreement with their husbands.

6. “Cia uthoni ciambagia nguhi”

The buying of a wife begins from a little thing.

The proverb besides encouraging young people to marry irrespective of their economic status, also implies that 'great events have small beginnings'.

7. “Mutumia angikura atari mwana ndangiona mutahiri maai”

The woman that gets old without bearing a child, will have nobody to draw water for her, i.e. will have nobody to assist her.

A CLEANSING RITUAL AMONGST THE AGIKUYU

By Kinyua Mwaniki and Simon Kago

There were, and are, many taboos (in Kikuyu 'Mugiro') amongst African cultures, and more in particular in the communities of Mt. Kenya region.

A 'Mugiro' simply means a prohibited item or act. The forbidden item or act was and is believed to be unclean or sacred, and the taboo should be imposed for protection against the item's power.

Most taboos were moral customs considered so vital to the community that they need a religious sanction, a divine origin, to buttress them with fear and reverence.

In the book *'Experiencing the Worlds Religions'* (2008) American anthropologist and religious scholar Michael Molloy expounds on the concept of 'Taboo' which is found amongst almost all traditional religions throughout the world:

"When a taboo has been broken or a spirit must be placated, the person or group must atone for the lapse, often through sacrifice. The usual offering is food and drink. A libation (the act of pouring a bit of drink on the ground as an offering) may be made or a portion of a meal set aside for a spirit. An animal may be sacrificed and its blood poured out on the ground or on an altar as an offering of the life force to the deity".

A one such 'Mugiro' in Kikuyu community which requires a cleansing ceremony and a sacrifice is the cutting of 'Mugumo'

tree.

According to Agikuyu traditions and customs if a Mugumo tree falls on its own, another one grows at that particular point.

Moreover, a Mugumo tree is never to be chopped down, neither its parts should be used to build anything nor used for the purposes of lighting fire to cook or otherwise. If it fall down it should be allowed to wither on its own without disturbance.

But on 10th day of August last year (2014), a 66 year old man named Kimani Waweru from Mahigaini village, Mwea Constituency, Kirinyaga County, out of ignorance or arrogance committed one of the abominable act in Kikuyu tradition; cutting down a Mugumo tree.

The chairlady of village committee Mary Wangui, together with members of *Nyumba Kumi initiative*, Martha Miano, Lukas Mwangi, James Nduiguka, and Gathe Muriithi reported the matter to the Tebere senior chief James Wanyua, who conveyed the information to the custodians of Kikuyu customs and morals in Mwea; the KIAMA KIA MA.

Something had to be done immediately. The God (Ngai) had to be appeased, otherwise the worst would befall the community.

On 17th day of august this year of 2015, the residents of Mahigaini village, were aroused to a historical event. It was mild Sunday afternoon (around 2.00 p.m.) when

a convoy of ten vehicles arrived at the village.

To the amazement of the residents of this humble village, whose major source of income is rice farming, a group of confident men alighted and started to unload from the vehicles various items which included; a goat, knives, gourds of Muratina, calabashes and wood cuttings.

These men were the 'KIAMA KIA MA' elders.

What was the mission? To conduct a cleansing ritual and plant another 'Mugumo' tree.

Mugumo tree is a sacred tree amongst Agikuyu - it is under the shade of evergreen leaves of this tree where many vital rituals were conducted.

"According to Agikuyu tradition, cutting down a 'Mugumo' tree is a taboo, which can result in many misfortunes befalling the surrounding community and more worse the one who has performed the act", so intimated elder Waweru Kangangi alias Canja.

In this regard, to shield the community from the inevitable disaster, the elders were duty bound to conduct a cleansing ceremony and plant another 'Mugumo' tree. The ceremony was presided over by the charismatic chairman of 'KIAMA KIA MA', Mwaki wa Mwea (Mwea caucus), elder Murimi Githui.

For a start, elder Murimi gave a hearty greeting to the now assembled villagers and requested them

to enter in the prayer mood.

He motioned them to face Mt. Kenya, and immediately began to offer a highly spirited prayer which started and ended with “THAAI THATHAYIA NGAI THAAI”. This invocation led to a unanimous repetition of the same from other elders and the crowd.

Elder Murimi then addressed the assembled crowd on the importance of the cleansing ceremony and assured everyone that anyone who had unknowingly consumed any piece or part of the chopped ‘Mugumo’ will be cleansed by ‘Tatha’ (a mixture of goat’s intestinal fluid and blood).

After the awe-inspiring speech, a space was thoroughly swept and instantly a fiery fire was lighted. The area around the fire was profusely sprinkled with Muratina, by elder Muceke Waweru.

In a matter of seconds, the sacrificial goat was wrestled by other elders to the ground, and strangled by the neck until it suffocated to death. Meanwhile the dead animal was throated by elder Muceke, as other elders started to skin it. When asked for a comment, a mesmerized woman Mercy Kibe said, “I would like the sacrifice to work out well, for the purpose of ridding off those evils amongst us”. “I have never in my life seen such a spectacle, but I know and believe a Mugumo tree is holy”, exclaimed a villager Rafael Gachai.

Now, the slaughtered goat was chopped into pieces and the whole carcass put on the furiously burning fire. As the goat was being consumed by the fire, elder Murimi called forth (to be cleansed) all those who might have used any part of ‘Mugumo’ as firewood.

About fifteen people stepped forward, and amongst them was a tall, slender old man in his sixties who trembling with fear, regretted, “I did not mean to...but my children brought me only leaves for lighting fire”.



Members of ‘KIAMA KIA MA’ in a prayer mood

After the victims were sprinkled with ‘Tatha’ the remaining aqueous fluid was poured in a hole which was used to plant a ‘Mugumo’ shooting. Elder Murimi announced that the water in the calabash which was used to plant the ‘Mugumo’ was from three

ivers; Thiba, Nyamindi and Murubara.

As the mouth-watering scent of ‘Nyama Choma’ filled the air, Elder Murimi warned the assembled crowd that no one was supposed take any piece from the fire, for all the meat belonged to ‘Ngai’.

Mysterious as it may sound, the sky started swelling with cloud, amidst chants from the village members ‘rain, rain, rain...’

As the ritual had captivated even the skeptic amongst the assembled crowd, Tebere senior chief James

Wanyua was quick to announce the procedure of cutting any tree and cautioned them to obey the elders’ advice, saying: “It is now that all kinds of disobedience must end... the young must

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MY CALLING IS TO HELP THE DESTITUTE AND ABANDONED CHILDREN

By Kinyua Mwaniki

On the way from Nairobi to Embu, just about 200 meters from the Makutano junction, a unique initiative is evident. This is LITTLE ANGELS CHILDREN HOME.

Inside you meet a well-composed 57 years old man named Mr. Paul Gichuki, who is the director of this institution, and a soft spoken Mrs. Magdalene Gichuki, who is the matron. The couple is the owner of this altruistic institution.

Mr. Gichuki is a former seminarian (attended St. Paul's minor seminary and proceeded St. Thomas Aquinas major seminary) whose vocation was to become a Catholic priest.

He also worked in Mozambique as a volunteer, where he was very saddened to see children suffering.

He enthusiastically asserts: "My vocation changed after I met Fr. Antonio Robetti, a Consolata Missionary whereby I was inspired to work for the poor".

The story of his wife Magdalene is as stimulating as it is inspir-

ing. She was a nun at Precious Blood, Riruta Convent from 1985 to 1990.

The turning point to her life came in the year 1989, when she met Mother Teresa of Calcutta (1910-1997), a Roman Catholic nun, and founder of the Missionaries of Charity. "She called me with two of my fellow sisters, and told me that I was not called in the congregation. She then told me that God has a very special mission for me, and wanted me to serve him in

the Aged (located in Sagana) - she met Mr. Gichuki, and in 1993 they got married. The same year with the savings they had, they were able to purchase one acre of land where they have a residence and the 'Children Home'.

The key objectives of this 'Children Home' is to offer basic rights to the homeless children which includes food, shelter, clothing, education and medication.

With the current population of

50 children, according to Mr. Gichuki: "The home receives orphans from the Children's Department in the Ministry of Devolution or through the committal order of the courts".

Without any financial assistance from any NGO or Govern-

ment agency, but relying on well-wishers, and above all using the meager resources from their farming projects, Mr. Gichuki is able to send all those youngsters to the nearby primary schools, secondary schools all over the country and to the universities.



Mrs. Gichuki (far left) and Mr. Gichuki (far right) with some of the orphans

other ways...I cried a lot...I could not agree...It was very painful", says Magdalene tearfully.

After going to Tanzania for 6 months, she was called back by Bishop Kirima to assist him at the Nyeri cathedral in the secretarial works.

Several months later - during her service at the St. Mary's Home of

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USHAURI ULIOJAA UCHESHI

By Angela Wairimu

METHALI

Mstahimilivu hula mbivu

MCHEZO

(Chini ya mti ulio na kivuli kikubwa. Wazee wawili na mama mmoja wamekalia viti)

Baba John: Mama Ken, nduru za kuaminika zaniarifu ya kwamba Ken alipomaliza kidato cha nne, alipata kazi kwenye kampuni iliyopo pale bandarini, na mshahara wake ulikuwa mnono kabisa. Alikataa kwa nini? Na kama tunavyoelewa, kuna uhaba mkubwa sana wa ajira nchini?

Mama Ken: Ni kweli ya kwamba alikataa hiyo kazi, na akaamua kuendelea na masomo katika chuo kikuu, na sasa hivi tunavyoongea mshahara wake ni mara kumi ya ule aliokuwa amehidiwa.

Babu: Uamuzi alioufanya ni wa busara na wa dhamana sana, ukilinganisha na vile vijana wanakimbilia kazi duni, hivyo basi kukataa kuendela na masomo. Kweli 'subira ni ufunguo wa faraja'.

Baba John: Hakika 'subira yavuta heri; huleta kilicho mbali', na 'Mstahimilivu hula mbivu'.

WAZO NDANI YA KICHEKESHO: - Msimamizi

Jamaa mmoja alifanikiwa kupata ajira ya Msimamizi, (kwa lugha ya kimombo 'Bodyguard') kwa bwanyenye mmoja ambaye alikuwa na ndoto za kuwa mwanasiasa. Walipokuwa katika majadiliano kuhusu utendaji wa hiyo kazi, kaka wa huyu bwanyenye akaingia kwenye hicho chumba ambamo walikuwa. Huyu kaka alikuwa anamfahamu huyu bwana kama mlanguzu wa silaha aina ya bunduki.

Kama mto ambao umefurika wenye hauvukiki isipokuwa kwa kutumia mtumbwi, huyu kaka, alizua vurugu kwa kutoa tetezi kali sana kuhusu huyu bwana na kusisitiza kwa ukali na hamaki na hasira ya mkizi, "Hapa ndipo palipotoka soksi, kiato kikabaki. Utake usitake, nina kuamrisha bwana wee, uamke hapo ulipo, na ukae teke, mara moja." Huyu bwana aliendelea kutulia tuli, na alipokataa kuamka hapo, huyu kaka alitoa bunduki kibindoni akamuelekezea huyu bwana na kutisha kumpiga risasi, "Na apa kwa Miungu yote na hata Mashetani ya kuwa, kama hauna ghamu na hamu ya kuwa marehemu, 'usipo jipee shughuli', mimi sina budi wala kukupee tikiti ya kuelekea Jehanamu, kwa kuizima hiyo roho chafu kama kilihafu".

Wimbi la simazi liliigumba hiyo nyumba ya mabwanyenye, ambapo ubishi mkali sana ulizuka kati ya bwanyenye na kakake, huku kakake akiendelea vitisho vyake vya kumpiga huyu bwana risasi. Walakini huyu bwana alikuwa mgumu sana wa roho kiasi ya kwamba hakuvunjika wala kung'oka moyo. Kama Chui ambaye hawezi shikwa na kiwewe kwa sauti ya mbwa koko akibweka, hata kwa hizo vitisho vya kuuawa hakumbanduka wala kutetemeka.

Katika kilele cha zogo, mama mzazi wa wale kaka wawili aliingia na kuhoji ni nini chaendelea. Ali-poelezewa kinagaubaga ukweli wa mambo, alishtuka sana kuona huyu bwana hatetemeki, hatishiki, habaduki, hata kwa kutishiwa kuuawa. Hili jambo lilimfanya huyu mama kuamini ya kwamba huyu bwana ana kipawa, ujasili na ukakamavu wa kuwa Bawabu. Mama aliingilia na kufanya uamuzi, "Kama wasemavyo wabenzi ya kuwa 'mkono usiyoweza kuukata hauna budi kuubusu', huyu bwana anastahili kwa hiyo kazi".

MCHONGOANO

HALO! HALO! Huyu raia ni mtulivu sana, hivi kwamba akipita karibu na mtungi uliojaa maji ambayo yametulia tuli, maji hutepeteka, na kunguruma puruuuu.

SAFE DATING/COURTSHIP TIPS FOR YOUTHS

By Angela Wairimu

*My Darling, prickly hedgehog
of the hearth,
chocolates, cherries, hairshirts,
pinks and glass—
when we joined in the sublime
blindness of courtship
loving lost all its vice with half
its virtue.
- Robert Lowell (1917 - 1977).
U.S. poet.*

In his first year in psychology class, in Nairobi University, Mwangi started to develop some secret attraction to this girl named Njeri, who according to him was an embodiment of all fine human character. Inside and outside the lecture halls he would keep a subtly concealed eye to her every move. He had tuned himself into a spy to say the least.

His personal research and concentrated observation had made him to conclude that, while Njeri preferred to swim on life's surface, he tended to dive deep. And this to him was a perfect match for a long lasting relationship.

One day, in one of the lectures, he strategically arranged to sit next to her, in the lecture hall. After the lesson was over, he felt that it was time to end all the wanderings of his heart, by confiding to her his burning feeling. "Good morning madam", he said with shaking voice. Njeri replied with an unconcerned voice, "I'm fine thank you".

He had the unmistakable sense that both of their hearts had seized up and that neither of

them was breathing. "Aaaa... Would you wish if I take you to the cafeteria for cup of mango juice?" Mwangi said in a rather uncertain manner. Njeri stifled the urge to laugh out loud and said, "Mr. Mwangi I'm terribly flattered by your request. But I'm terribly afraid I must refuse. I am having one of my very rare creative inspirations, and if I let it expire without jotting it down, it may vanish forever."

This reply struck Mwangi's mind like an electric shock. He felt extremely dizzy for some strange reason. He'd never felt so ridiculous in his life. He felt as if a sharp knife has stuck in his heart. Mwangi, who was not normally given to leaky displays, had to use every ounce of his will to keep tears that filled his eyes from spilling over.

As he stood up and said to her a soft good bye, he felt his romantic instinct rebel. Although this first attempt has been frustrated, his adventurous spirit will persist until he wins this girl. As a person who would never admit to possessing any iota of defeatist attitude, he vowed from the bottom of his heart to pursue this girl with an equal measure of toughness and a sense of reality.

An important psychological development task for young adults, is the establishment of intimate meaningful social relationships. However the key to the achievement of this intimacy is the establishment of an identity of who one is during the adolescence period. Intimacy is a mutual process through which an individual

knows the innermost subjective aspects of another person.

Intimacy is characterized by:
Mutuality (shared interaction in which individuals care for one another and are willing to make sacrifices and to compromise);
Self-disclosure (sharing the innermost being with another and being able to accept the other as he or she is);
Interdependence; Care for others;
Commitment (devotion and investing in the relationships for mutual good); and
Love (feelings of cognitions and motivations).

In societies in which individuals choose their partners with out parental influence, after intimacy has been anchored in one's relationship, for some it serves the basis for marriage.

Factors that influence the selection of mate when seeking an intimate relationship include:

- * Physical appearance;
- * Proximity (as in the nearness of residence, workplace);
- * Homogamy or Similarity (as in education level, religion, race, age, appearance);
- * Complimentary reasons (to bridge the gap in personality traits that we lack);
- * Exchange (get from others as we give out).

While physical appearance may be the most important factor in selecting new acquaintances, its influences declines later as individuals seek to establish a marriage relationship. Moreover, it is important to factor in gender

difference in the selection of a romantic partner, such that while physical attractiveness is highly appreciated by men, women place greater emphasis on social and personality characteristics such as faithfulness, warmth and honesty. All these considerations form the basis of courtship.

Courtship is a turning point in one's developmental process and begins with a casual encounter of Dating between two individuals and progresses into a more serious relationship. American philosopher and historian Will Durant (1885-1981) in *'Pleasures of philosophy'* (1953) termed courtship days, as "the fairest part of human destiny", and cautioned us: "Not that courtship waited till maturity; half the games our childhood played were love games; and even a girl of five can flirt with skill. Courtship serves vital purposes; it stimulates love to greater fullness, and gives time for that selection of the best which slowly raises the quality of life".

Developmental psychologists propose three stages that individuals go through during courtship period, filtering out those who do not fit at each stage: Stimulus stage, Value-comparison stage and Role stage.

In the initial stage which involves brief encounters, individuals form first impressions about the other person, and responds to certain characteristics of the other person chief among them being physical attractiveness. In the second stage, individuals begin to gather information about the interests, attitudes, needs, and values of their partners, and in the event of success in this regard, they accept values of their partners and are in agreement about most important

values in the relationship. In Role stage individuals began to plan for a long term relationship and in the process they evaluate their current personal roles and whether these roles fit into the picture of their planned future. During this stage, individuals engage in self-disclosure, sharing their intimate feeling, thoughts and behaviours.

Courtship may lead to engagement, also known as betrothal – the formal agreement to marry, and one that ushers in serious planning for the wedding and the life ahead. Whereas there may be negative reasons for marriage like sex, economic support, escape loneliness and escape parental home, a lasting marriage is anchored on positive reasons like commitment, companionship, intimacy, love, happiness and procreation.

Consequently in this age of divorce the adhesive force that keeps couples together has the ingredients like:

- An ability to change and adapt;
- Enjoyment of each other;
- Trust for one another;
- An ability to live with the unchangeable;
- An assumption of permanence;
- A balance of dependencies;
- A shared and cherished history;
- and a degree of luck in choosing a worthwhile partner.

From this perspective, it is vital to note that, dating someone new can be the most exhilaratingly sweet rush ever! You get an exclusive opportunity to get attention from, and give attention to a new entry in your life you have been thinking about so much.

In the beginning, it's all new and everything seems great. You fantasize about being your fierce,

darling, witty, super-fun self — always saying the right thing at the right time and looking fabulous while doing it. And, the two of you get to spend time together. The first-date fantasy is a great turning point for you.

But then, the questions start rushing in: How do my parents feel about me dating? What are my feelings for him/her? Where are we going to go? What am I going to wear? And...is it even a date?

Clearly, there is a lot to handle. Outlined here are some dating advice, perfect for teens.

Talk to Your Parents About Dating

Remember you need the approval of your parents to start dating. Yes, dating has changed since mom and dad were your age, but talking to your parents about dating is important.

Being open will strengthen your relationship with your parents and help you understand more about your feelings and dating as they ask questions and discuss their opinions.

Set Boundaries

Setting boundaries is key to a healthy relationship. Don't let anyone talk you into participating in activities you aren't ready for. If anyone is pressuring you to do something you don't want to do, get yourself out of the situation, and end this relationship. Respecting one another's boundaries is a non-negotiable when it comes to dating.

Don't Make Having a Boy/Girlfriend Too Important.

TEXT MESSAGES TO SEND TO YOUR BOY/GIRLFRIEND

By Angela Wairimu

The new technology of mobile phones is here with us. Unlike your parents who used to write very well crafted letters to their Boy/Girlfriends, which would take not less than two weeks to reach to him/her, these days you can communicate with your Boy/Girlfriend constantly and instantly at a click of a button

You're all looking for some unique text message ideas to send to your partner. Especially if you're the kind of friends that texts constantly, you'll want to send something special, loving and romantic more often than the functional ones. You might need a few gentle reminders, ideas or just plain things you can rip off as your own.

You text your boy/girlfriend all the time, but now you want some unique text message ideas that show him/her just how much you care. It's tricky though, isn't it? To come up with something that's special and meaningful in just a few phrases? Well, that's where I come in: to help you find the exact words you need to show him/her specifically that you care, that you're thinking of him/her, that you're proud to call him/her your boy/girlfriend.

Share How You Feel - Really
"You know how sometimes you look at a mountain, and it's so beautiful, it brings you to tears? That's how I feel when I look at you". Now, you may not burst into tears when you look at your boy/girlfriend, but I'll bet you've been overwhelmed with emotion for him/her more than once. Remem-

ber that feeling. Honor it. Then, text him/her exactly that. Trust me, he/she'll melt.

Share Your Smile

Whenever something happens where you've suddenly got a sappy grin on your face because of him/her, share it with your boy/girlfriend. "You're the reason for my smile today," works, or even something more specific, like, "I can't wipe the smile off my face today! Every time I think of our last meeting, I start grinning".

Why You're My Boy/Girlfriend

Well, why is he/she? Can you annotate the ways, reasons, feelings that made you want to say to the world, "This chap/gal is mine!" Start off by sharing the whole phrase: "Reason #1 You're My Boy/Girlfriend: because you awaken the best in me!" After a handful of reasons over a couple of days, just start enumerating them when you text: "#21: You're so beautiful, you take my breath away".

Send a Picture

Okay, so it's a bit of a cop-out as opposed to actual words, but sometimes a picture really does tell the story better. Maybe you see a heart-shaped box, or his/her favorite flower. Take a picture and send it, with the annotation, "Thinking of you..." Rainbows, a screenshot of how long until you complete studies, or even a picture of you pretending to kiss him/her will all work. Get creative!

Share the Reminders

You used to watch a specific program with your boy/girlfriend that you talked about at length. He/she introduced you to it, would point it out every time it came on TV, and you perhaps had sat together and watched it, with him/her explaining some of the slang that you didn't quite get. No matter where you saw the show or either of the main characters, you think of him/her. Use these types of reminders to text your boy/girlfriend, in a language only the two of you know. Perhaps it's a restaurant in your case or a certain smell. It really doesn't matter what it is, or how many things remind you of him/her; just send him/her a note each time you do run across one, and share with him/her briefly how you feel. "Just saw that show we love, it made me feel all warm and fuzzy thinking of when you explained '.....' to me". The more romantic the text, the better!

How Does It Feel?

Psychologists have put more emphasis on visualization when it comes to love and relationships. So, I want you to close your eyes (after you finish reading this, of course!) and think of how you feel when you're with your partner. Think of the first time you held hands, kissed, were intimate in some way. How did it feel? Really, truly feel it. Let it get in your bones, your hair, your breath. Now, text your partner with that feeling, as if it was coursing through your phone to his/hers. "I melt like rich, warm chocolate

every time I look into your eyes”.

Be Poetic

We all have those moments when there's something so beautiful, so moving, that we can't help but burst into song, dance, or a poem. Look at some of your favorite movies, writers, or songs that you've both belted out together, and share those as both a reminder, but also, a celebration of your relationship. "Because I'm happy/ Clap along if you know what happiness is to you" - baby, happiness to me, is being in your arms! (from Pharell's song, Happy)

Here are some examples of Love Short Text Messages. Practice to make your original ones, and you will be a treasure to your friend

1. <-@ A rose for you Because I love you.

2. 1 min, 1 hr, 1 day, 1 wk, 1 mth, 1 yr, no matter how long, I'll treasure the times we've spent together!

3. 3 words made my heart beat faster, 3 words made my legs shake 3 words made my head spin, 3 words: I love you!

4. A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T V W X Y Z oops! i miss "U"

5. A butterfly needs its wings ... an icebear needs cold weather and I ... I need you!

6. A day without your love is a day without life.

7. A dream costs nothing unless you want it to come true.

8. A friend is always welcome ... Early in the morning or late at night. Time is of no importance ...

When it concerns real friendship!!

12. A sweet little rabbit, just like you, because I love you!! kisses...

13. As a true friend you have reached for my hand and touched my heart.

14. All beautiful moments do not last long, except in our memory.

16. By following my heart I came to you, I only forgot to take something back with me. For my thoughts are still with you.

17. Without your Love -- dayz are "Sadday, moanday, tearsday, wasteday, thirstday, frightday, shatterday... so let's be in Luv everyday...

18. Doubt that the stars are fire, doubt that the sun doth move, doubt truth to be a liar, but never doubt I love you.

19. Talk 2 me when i'm bored, kiss me when i'm sad, hug me when i cry, care 4 me when i die, love me when i'm still alive.

20. Life is 4 living, I Live 4 U. Songs r 4 singing, I Sing 4 U. Love is 4 caring, I Care 4 U. Angels r 4 keeping, Can I keep U...?

21. I have no regrets. I will never regret loving you because the feeling of love for five minutes is greater than an eternity of hurt.

More than likely you are not going to meet the person you will spend the rest of your life with during middle school or high school. So don't lose those friendships you have spent so long to build by canceling plans and only hanging out with your boy/girlfriend.

But then there's also this dreaded situation: You and your friend have a crush on the same person. If that's the case, this article has a recommendation, too:

Don't abandon your friend for a person you won't date for very long. The relationship could end. And you could find yourself heartbroken with one less girlfriend.

If you do end up getting into a relationship with another person, here are some suggestions:

When it comes to a relationship, take everything into account. Being infatuated with another person could make you miss some red flags: his/her lack of commitment to exclusivity if you both agreed to it, keeping you a secret from his/her friends, consistently rescheduling dates, etc. It's important to take a step back every now and then to make sure the relationship is healthy from an outsider's point of view, too!

It is also recommended here to stop by a bookstore to find a book on dating you believe is right for you. There are many choices available so it is important you select a book you will be engaged in and want to learn from.

Dating should be fun and you should treat one another with respect. If respect isn't there, you aren't dating the right person.

POSITIVE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA: HAVING A GOOD ONLINE REPUTATION

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

Everyday adolescent social behaviour is appalling. There is the online chat, the texting, the surfing, and the emergence of a new teenage sphere that is conducted digitally. That trend is real.

Is it, as most adults/parents fear, turning kids into emoticon-addled zombies, unable to connect, unable to think, form a coherent thought or even make eye contact? Could this be true? Could the parents be raising hedonistic kids who live only in the thrill of the computer-generated moment and who are in distinct danger of detaching themselves from what the older members of society would consider the real world.

New technologies always provoke generational panic, which usually has more to do with adult fears than with the lives of teenagers. In the 1950s, parents fretted that radio was gaining “an invincible hold of their children”. In the 80s, the great danger was the Sony Walkman – producing the teenager who “throbs with orgasmic rhythms”, as philosopher Allan Bloom claimed. When you look at today’s digital activity, the facts are much more positive than you might expect.

Indeed, social scientists who study young people have found that their digital use can be inventive and even beneficial. This is true not just in terms of their social lives, but their education too.

So if you use a ton of social media, do you become unable, or unwilling, to engage in face-to-face contact? The evidence suggests not. Some studies have found that

the most avid texters are also the kids most likely to spend time with friends in person. One form of socialising doesn’t replace the other. It augments it.

If used positively, social media can offer many benefits personally, socially and even professionally. It may allow you to participate in conversations with a wide variety of mentors or role models that you wouldn’t have access to otherwise. The online world may offer you remarkable opportunities to become literate and creative because you can now publish ideas not just to your friends, but to the world. And it turns out that when you write for strangers, your sense of “authentic audience” should make you work harder, push yourself further, and create powerful new communicative forms. You will eventually develop skills in cooperating with far-flung strangers and keeping a cool head while mediating arguments.

Our social networks can tell a story about us. So make sure that the story your Twitter or Facebook tells about you is a good story. Your online reputation is very important.

For example, the first thing a hiring manager is going to do when they receive your application is Google your name. With a few clicks, your Twitter, Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram and an array of other information about you is at their fingertips.

So how does one ensure a positive online reputation? It’s simple:

i. Keep it Clean

Be entirely sure about what you’re posting. Party photos with alcohol are an absolute no-no. Would you want to have your boss see these photos? Make sure to post content that you feel positively reflects you, your creativity and your skills.

ii. Don’t Trust Privacy Settings

You have a private Twitter account so you can post anything you want? This is decidedly not the case. Privacy settings make it harder to see your full account, but it’s not impossible. Under no circumstances should you rely on privacy settings as a way to protect inappropriate content.

iii. Ensure You’re Polished

Keep it classy! Discover your brand, or what you want people to think of you. Proper spelling and grammar is always a plus, but it may not be your brand. Think about what you want people to think of you and go with it.

Follow these few simple rules and you’re well on your way to building, or restoring, an online reputation. Using social media positively doesn’t mean you can’t have fun and use it to express yourself; however, you want to ensure that everything you post you’re OK with anyone seeing. Once you click post, there’s no looking back! Like it or not, your social networks reflect you. Make sure you look like the shining star that you truly are.

ORIGINS OF THE COMMUNITIES OF MT. KENYA REGION

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

All the communities of the Mt. Kenya region include the Ameru, Achuka, Aembu, Ambeere and Agikuyu.

These communities are a Bantu race and their migration movements and subsequent settlement in Mt. Kenya region is documented as part of the wider Bantu migrations into East Africa from Central Africa (perhaps the Congo Forest on the border between Chad and DRC).

However, historians are still sketchy on actual origins.

The migrations of the Meru and related groups probably began at the coast, but some of the speakers of Kikuyu, and Embu probably moved north from the Taita hills.

As a matter of intellectual honesty, it would be appropriate to contend that, we cannot be absolutely sure about the extent of this migration, as our knowledge is still incomplete.

Some writers have suggested that about the year 1300 the Chuka came up from the Tana river and were the first to arrive in the Mount Kenya area. They were followed by the Embu, about the year 1425.

The last group, the Kikuyu, seem to have arrived in Murang'a by the middle of the sixteenth century and in Kiambu by the end of the seventeenth century.

The Kikuyu entry into the Kikuyuland plateau from the South East followed the course of the River Tana and at Ithanga (near current Sagana), there parting ways with the Gicugu, and proceeding up the now Sagana River up to a point in Gatari, Murang'a called Mukurwe wa Nyagathanga.

From here, which is considered the central point of dispersal of the Kikuyu into the rest of the Plateau, a group went North and another South while another remained.

Because of the nature of the drainage which is determined by the slope of the Aberdares Ranges and Mt Kenya, the various moving

"One can understand a little of the Kikuyu feeling towards their mountain: it dominates every ridge and valley, wherever you look it is there, mighty and magnificent." – Jomo Kenyatta, in 'Facing Mt. Kenya'.

bands of settlers would occupy the ranges of the rivers as they moved further North or South of the Central dispersal point.

Those who moved to the South kept moving until they came to the area of Kabete and could move no more South as the area was settled by the Kaputie Maasai.

The settlement to the North reached as far as Nyeri plains which were the Laikipia Maasai Southern reach.

To the South East beyond the Ol Donyo Sabuk, were the beginnings of the dry poor agricultural plains where the Kamba inhabited. The Kikuyu did not seem to have settled beyond Thika in this direction in the early 1900's.

The migration of Mt. Kenya Peoples, suggests that settlements did not happen at once but seem to have come in several waves and from quite different sources.

The Plateau was forested with Equatorial forest from both the Aberdares Range and Mt. Kenya that thinned as the land sloped to the South East plains.

This forest was originally occupied by two groups. The first group were tall hunters called the Athi who occupied the forest and from whom the Kikuyu negotiated farming rights in the forest.

The second group was a short hunter gatherer type, the Gumba who seems to have been assimilated.

By the 17th Century the Kikuyu had settled into the area as loosely three groupings, the Northern Kikuyu, Gaki, now Nyeri shared Ruarai River with the middle group Metumi, now Muranga who shared the Thika River (Chania) as a ritual marker with the Southern Kikuyu, Kabete, now Kiambu.

THE LASTING LEGACY OF MZEE MURIMI GITHUI (1966 – 2015)

By Kinyua Mwaniki

“There is no such a thing on earth as an uninteresting subject:

The only thing that can exist is an uninterested person”.

These words by British writer and poet Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936), may serve to depict John Murimi Githui whose ravenous appetite to know and invest in almost all aspects of life was unrivalled. In his late 40's standing taller than almost everyone around him, with bright, liquid eyes and a sensuous mouth, Murimi was full of juices of life.

Few see more of the world, and few does more to change it and few enjoys life quite so much. But for Murimi everything was a stepping stone and every moment a source of inspiration. His soft penetrating voice boomed with good fellowship, and he displayed a talent for the social arts and a passionate interest in the world.

Whereas he worked with the SHELL Company whereby he distributed aviation fuel to various government and private institutions, his interest did not end there. A casual visit to his homestead located at the outskirts of Ngurubani town revealed his other brilliant side. In this eighth of an acre plot, you will get Fish farming, Quill farming, Turkeys, Ducks and many types of birds.

His other farming activities in other parts of Mwea included Maize as well as Rice farming. According to his cousin Mzee Karanga: “Most of his farm products were distributed freely to the needy in the society and friends”.

A good and empathetic listener, Mzee Murimi would forfeit his personal duties to solve people's disputes in regard to family matters or land matters. His inborn talent to make wise, objective and sound decisions made many to gravitate towards him with reverence like the Biblical King Solomon.

This generosity was extended to



The late Elder Murimi Githui

all his many personal assistants, employees and maids, whereby he made sure they acquire relevant life skills like driving or taking small courses in salon. All these he facilitated from his pocket and did not deduct the expenses from their salaries. Moreover, by the time of his death he was sponsoring about 8 children in secondary schools and colleges.

His unrelenting effort to improve life of other people did not mean that he neglected his family members. For instance he transferred his mother from Subukia, bought him a plot in Mwea and built a house for her. In addition he made sure that all his immediate and extended family members bought land in Mwea, either for farming, constructing commercial plots or building residential homes.

As many of his associates would honestly testify, most or almost all were able to acquire a piece of land through him. This insatiable need to build the capacity of others made him a friend to all local and administrative leaders in Mwea.

His leadership potential endeared him to be the *de facto* chairman of KIAMA KIA MA, Mwea caucus. Whereas he was the chief architect of this group, he foresaw its monumental growth and sometimes facilitated most initiatives of the group from his pocket.

Among the major achievements in regard to KIAMA KIA MA is the initiation of the program of circumcising boys and molding them into responsible adults. With special target to the boys of the single-mothers, many boys in area came to see in him a progressive ‘Father-Figure’.

According to Mzee Karanga, his vision was to “build a cultural center with hostel where boys could be circumcised used modern medical techniques and be counseled until they heal”

His ability to make quick friends and to spearhead almost everything, made him also a *de facto* chairman of KIAMA KIA MA, Mwaki wa Makadara.

His presence in the minds and souls of many leaders was evidenced by the number of prominent personalities who attended his burial ceremony which took

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Last year alone, Mr. Gichuki is proud to have sponsored from his pocket 3 KCPE candidates, 9 students in High Schools and 2 students in the Universities. “We rely on God’s providence”, says Mr. Gichuki.

At the moment the home is a shelter to two autistic children. Autism is a neurological disorder which affects the social, emotional, and behavioral development of children, and it is marked by serious difficulties in interacting and communicating with other people.

Whereas these autistic children require constant medical attention and therapy the challenge facing Mr. and Mrs. Gichuki is access to good medical care. “We like taking these kids to private hospitals but we have, besides other challenges the problem of means of transport”, says Magdalene.

With a vision of sheltering, feeding and educating about 70 orphans, Mr. Gichuki says that he and his wife would be very happy if they get a donor, who can assist in furthering their dream of altruistic service to the disadvantaged.

This plea is extended further to the relevant government authorities, to recognize their effort and dedication and assist them with bursary funds and other services which the government is able to. “Let us have the heart of assisting the needy children”, concludes Mr. Gichuki with a very conscientious tone.

If you would want to assist the ‘Little Angels Childrens Home’, with clothes, food or money, call the director: - 0712070349

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learn to obey their parents...and all must learn to respect the ancestors, and above all obey the law of the country”.

The 2 hours ceremony was closed with a word of prayer - while all facing Mt. Kenya- by elder Muceke.

Although this event was organized and hosted by KIAMA KIA MA, Mwaki wa Mwea, it was attended by other prominent personalities from various parts of Mt. Kenya region who are respected leader in their particular Mwaki’s.

The authors of this article were able to interact with some of them who gave their views on this unfortunate incident, as well as on the need for people to be enlightened on their customs, beliefs and traditions.

Maina wa Kamau – “This should serve to educate the old and the young ones on the need to uphold our Kikuyu customs”.

Kimani wa Waweru – “Let us seize this precious moment to trace our roots where we can locate our destiny”.

Nyaga Gacamba (Kerugoya) – “We have reached a point where we have realized that most problems affecting us arise out of ignoring the beliefs of our ancestors”.

Kiumu wa Muriithi (Karatina) – “Obeying and following traditions and customs is vital to the identity and thriving of our community”.

Muhoro Muchiri (Narumoru) – “To ignore our customs is to court danger and subsequent annihilation

tion of our community”.

Mwaniki Munditi (Mbeere) – “It is apparent that we are moving in the right direction if the elders continue giving ‘Kirira’ to the young ones”.

Kamau Kairuthi (Naivasha) – “We should keep on adding fuel to the fire of our ‘Kirira’ and we will prevent the present generation from moral decay”.

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place at Wang’uru Stadium on 28/01/2015.

These dignitaries included: former minister for internal security, Dr. Chris Murungaru, Mwea East County Commissioner, Murang’a County Commissioner Madam Kula Hache, Mwea D.O 1 Mr. Towett, Senior Chief Tebere Location James Wanyua, O.C.S Wang’uru Police Station, and senior Kenya Shell officials, senior Kenya Pipeline officials.

Also in attendance was the National Chairman of Kikuyu Council elders, Muthamaki wa Kiama kia Athuri Mzee Ng’era, as well as various county chairmen Nakuru, Nairobi, Naivasha, Kirinyaga. Nyeri, Nyandarua, Murang’a, Kiambu.

The vacuum left by the departure of Mzee Murimi may be hard to fill, but only time will tell.

May God rest his soul in peace, as American preacher and editor, Edwin Hubbell Chapin (1814-1880) teaches: “Death is a great revealer of what is in a man, and in its solemn shadow appear the naked lineaments of the soul... Death is the condition of higher and more fruitful life”.

DEATH AS A VITAL FACTOR IN GIVING MEANING TO LIFE

By Angela Wairimu

The reality of DEATH should not only illumine our ideal of immortality after death, but should evoke in us the need to utilize our mortality to the maximal. The conception DEATH should arouse in us the psychic ability to grasp and put in the right perspective the longing of the immortality in the light of the considerations of mortality.

DEATH is a very important factor in giving meaning to life, since in case of its absence, there would be no responsibilities; thereby rendering life meaningless as actions could be postponed indefinitely. In what he called the categorical imperative of Logotherapy German-born US psychologist Victor Frankl (1905-1997) exhorts us: "So live as if you were living already for the second time and as if you had acted the first time as wrongly as you are about to act now!"

"Once you accept your own death, all of a sudden you're free to live. You no longer care about your reputation. You no longer care except so far as your life can be used tactically to promote a cause you believe in", so noted American community organizer Saul David Alinsky (1909-1972). All of us human beings in our mortal 'existence' are linked with the real eternity of the objective world; a link being forged in the process of our creative activity. It therefore goes that, our involvement and immersal in any productive labour enables us to extend each of our 'I' beyond the limits of our narrow fleeting existence. This this is what we would feel honoured to

receive here as 'Mortal Immortality'.

This is solidified in the argument forwarded by Ernest Becker in his work 'The Denial of Death' (1973), which goes that, human civilization is ultimately an elaborate, symbolic defense mechanism against the knowledge of our mortality, which in turn acts as the emotional and intellectual response to our basic survival mechanism.

By embarking on what Becker refers to 'immortality project', the human being creates or becomes part of something which he or she feels will last forever, and become 'heroic' and, henceforth, part of something eternal; something that will never die, compared to his physical body that will die one day. This, in turn, gives man the feeling that his or her life has meaning; a purpose; significance in the grand scheme of things.

This illumines the contention that, we should live our LIFE such that upon our DEATH, the indelible beacon of our productive deeds shall endure sparkling, as our positive qualities shall continue to exist in our children, with the torch being handed down from one generation to the next.

It is only in this way that the divine deliciousness of history and nature finds ultimate consummation in the human beings. Listen to German-born American political scientist Hannah Arendt (1906-1975): "The connection between history and nature is by no means an opposition. History

receives into its remembrance those mortals who through deed and word have proved themselves worthy of nature, and their everlasting fame means that they... may remain in the company of the things that last forever... Immortality is what nature possesses without effort and without anybody's assistance, and immortality is what the mortals must therefore try to achieve if they want to live up to the world in which they were born."

Basically, if anyone can look at the seeds of time and say which grain will grow and which will not, then he or she can claim infallibility. As this is not human nature, then human beings are prone to downfalls. But because a wrong is a wrong in the world, and we have the world for our labour, then we can with concentrated effort make any wrong right.

We should assert our human responsibility of confronting our DEATH by consolidating the choice of how to live without hesitations. Listen to the memorable words of 5th Century Sanskrit author Bhartrhari:

"Morn after morn dispels the dark,
Bearing our lives away;
Absorbed in cares we fail to mark
How swift our years decay;
Some maddening draught hath drugged our souls,
In love with vital breath,
Which still the same sad chart unrolls,
Birth, ... disease, and death".

THE HEALING POWER OF PRAYER

By Angela Wairimu

Most people believe in the power of modern medicine – based on the premise that there is a natural course of medicine – and rightly so. Prayer seems arbitrary. But this reminds me of a phrase embedded in the walls of one of the most popular missionary hospital in my home area (Karira Mission Hospital); “We Treat, God Heals”. If then the work of doctors is to treat, and God does the ultimate task of healing, which is the most precise means of contacting God? Absolutely, through the avenue of prayer.

It’s unclear how any form of energy currently known to modern physics can account for the distant influence of prayer, but abundant anecdotal and experimental evidence supports this phenomenon.

In the late 80’s many studies conducted under strict laboratory conditions showed that prayer brings about significant changes in a variety of physical conditions. Perhaps the most convincing study, published in 1988, was by cardiologist Dr. Randolph Byrd. A computer assigned 393 patients at the coronary-care unit of a San Francisco hospital either to a group that was prayed for by prayer groups or to a group that was not remembered in prayer. No one knew which groups the patients were in. The prayer groups were simply given the patients’ first names, with brief descriptions of their problems. They were asked to pray each day until the patient was discharged – but were given no instructions on how to do it or what to say.

In the Byrd’s sample of 393 patients who all had severe chest pains and/or heart attacks; half were prayed for and half were not. The prayed for group required fewer antibiotics (three in the prayed-for group, compared to 17 in the group not prayed for), had less need for mechanical respirators. (Zero compared to 12), required fewer diuretics. (5 compared to 15), suffered less congestive heart failure. (8 compared to 20), experienced less cardiopulmonary arrest. (3 compared to 14), fell ill with pneumonia less often.

In 1995, a pilot study on the use of distant healing and prayer for Aids patients was initiated by psychiatrist Elisabeth Zarg. Twenty patients with advanced Aids were randomly selected, and half received 10 weeks of distant healing from 20 professional healers across the country. Blood and psychological test were administered before and after the study, as well as three months later. Results were encouraging.

Other studies suggest that prayer can have a beneficial effect on high blood pressure, wounds, headaches and anxiety.

Studies have shown results occurring not only when people prayed for explicit outcomes but also when they prayed for nothing specific. Some studies showed that a simple “Thy will be done” was quantitatively more powerful than specific results held in mind. In many experiments a simple attitude of prayerfulness – an all-pervading sense of holiness and a feeling of empathy, caring and

compassion – seemed to set the stage for healing.

In an article in *Reader’s Digest*, May 1996, Larry Dossey writes, “Today we equate prayer almost exclusively with waking awareness and rationality. That prayer may occur in the depths of the unconscious, even during dreams, may seem preposterous. And the possibility that our unconscious may know how to pray better than our conscious mind is not entertained”.

Dr. Herbert Benson of Harvard Medical School was one of the first medical researchers to study the health benefits of prayer and meditation. He found that among Christians and Jews who prayed regularly, Catholics used phrases such as “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon me”, Jews used the peace greeting “Shalom” and Protestants frequently chose the first line of the Lord’s Prayer or the opening of Psalm 23. All these, Benson found, were equally effective in stimulating healthy physiological changes in the body – what he called the “relaxation response.”

Benson also discovered a connection between exercise and prayer. He taught runners to meditate as they ran and found that their bodies became more efficient. His research showed not only that prayer is good for the body, but also that our methods of prayer vary widely. Prescribing specific way to pray can disenfranchise people from the prayer process and result in prayer dropouts.

STUDENTS' GOAL SETTING SKILLS

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

Setting goals are crucial to success not only in studying for academic endeavors, but for all aspects of life.

There are a variety of strategies for setting goals you can implement, starting with some tips listed below.

Four steps in writing effective goals

Make your goals specific.

This means that goals should be clear and realistic. Once you realize you can make specific goals, it will give you motivation to continue setting goals for success.

Set specific target dates and times.

Give yourself deadlines; this provides motivation.

Note all individual steps required to meet the goal.

This allows you to see how much time will be spent on each step.

Plan for rewards after you meet your goal.

Extrinsic rewards are things that are tangible (a CD, a concert, dinner out, and so on). Intrinsic rewards are feelings that you have when you meet your goal (higher self-esteem, excitement, confidence, happiness, and so on).

What if you do not meet your goal? Do not fret; all is not lost. If you are unable to meet a goal,

you should take a few minutes to go through the following list of questions.

Was my goal unrealistically high? Did I think that this goal was really attainable? Could I visualize myself reaching this goal?

“Goal setting is obviously a powerful process...the manifestation of creative imagination and independent will. It’s the practicality of... translating vision into achievable, actionable doing.” - Stephen R. Covey (1932 -). U.S. educator, leadership consultant, author, and academic.

Was this goal set too low? Was I unchallenged by this goal?

Did I accurately assess how much time each step would take? Were my target dates and times realistic? Did I have motivation to reach my goal? Did I really apply as much effort as I could have?

How to create and keep motivation in goal setting

Prioritize goals in order of importance.

Break down larger goals into smaller, more easily attainable goals.

Visualize yourself reaching each goal. This is a very powerful psychological method to help in motivating you to achieve your goals. If you cannot visualize yourself achieving a goal, it might be unrealistic for you.

Another powerful psychological method to help keep you motivated is the use of positive self-talk

and affirmations.

You should often give yourself words of encouragement. This will help you to believe that you can achieve realistic goals.

You can build your confidence and self-esteem through positive self-talk and encouraging affirmations.

Often monitor your progress in reaching set goals.

Remember that it is great to praise yourself for recognizing your accomplishments.

Project timeline

What is the goal?

What are some possible benefits earned by achieving this goal?

List the consequences experienced by not achieving the goal. What obstacles could stand between you and reaching your goal?

How can you effectively deal with these potential obstacles?

Who (or what other resources) can help you achieve your goal?

Goal organizer

Step 1: List detailed tasks involved in project.

Step 2: Estimate time.

Step 3: Double the estimated time (to avoid underestimating).

MWANIKI 2A/3P GUIDANCE & COUNSELING Model

By
Gilbert Kinyua Mwaniki

As an individual you are just an atom in the molecule that is the human species, which is just a drop in the ocean that is 'Existence'. REALITY is so immense (even infinite) that trying to search your individual reality (or cause of your maladjustments) in the wide range of information (theories, doctrines, dogmas or even heresies) from the inexhaustible pool of cultural heritage of humanity in general, may be very exhausting if not frustrating.

In your personal strive for a solid self-understanding (or to deal with your emotional disturbances), you have read many books, pamphlets and magazines, or perhaps you have read very few or none, or you have sought assistance from friends or COUNSELLORS.

But this GUIDANCE & COUNSELING Model sincerely bets that, you have never come across a written material which precisely reflects your aspirations and guides you as an individual in meeting your objectives and living a creative and a contented LIFE. In this hectic life, reading what puts supreme value to your personal problems as function of your personality, genetics or developmental process may be a redeeming experience.

This is what this SOFTWARE seeks to do: give you a once-in-a-life chance to have a book (or a reference material) written "BY YOU, FOR YOU, and WITH YOU". By honestly responding to some promptings (not really questions) you will get to find your unique individuality (who you are) and what is holding you back in unleashing your God-endowed potential, in the thick forest of the wisdom borne of serious biological, psychological and philosophical research.

2A/3P simply means African Assertiveness / Provoking Positive Perceptions. The bottom line here is that individual change is often times about changing your perspective ... you cannot control events in your life but you can control how you react to them. The core ideal for this MODEL is: Locating your Bearing, in order to Actualize your Potential. The key word is WILL, which suffices out as a natural growth of autonomy, independence and self-determination; an unbroken resolve to exercise freedom of choice and of self-restraint.

To 'help' you to 'help' yourself to achieve a Holistic Humanistic Health (meeting all physical, social, emotional, vocational and spiritual needs) this SOFTWARE has SEVEN packages. Whereas each package is independent, all are unified together to arrive at the overall goal of mankind: SELF-REALIZATION as a stepping stone to SELF-ACTUALIZATION.

1. WILL-TO-LEARN

This package captures on study skills which are in synch with one's personality trait. One is enlightened on one's unique learning ability. The individual is made aware of career and vocational choices which reflects one's temperaments and inclinations. Skills to improve on one's pet subject are explained. Insights into improving one's academic are offered. All vital aspects in regard to the real world of work are put in the right context. The enigmatic issue of 'Passion' is given utmost consideration.

2. WILL-TO-RELATE

This package captures on the teenage rebellion, peer pressure and sexuality. The teenager is aroused on social implications and parameters of his or her generation. One is made aware of the stage one is in regard to his or her adolescence and specific characteristics thereof. After being informed on thinking patterns which he or she may engage in as result of newly acquired mental abilities, the adolescent is taken through a personal pilgrimage of understanding intrinsic motivations which drives him or her. Further the teenager is enlightened on personal and societal forces (negative and positive) which may serve to determine his or her future. All factors which affect the teenager's relationship with the society, one's parents, teachers and the fellow peers are discussed in great depth.

3. WILL-TO-LIVE

This package dwells on giving the individual the necessary insight into one's irrational impulses and unconscious

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NEED OF COUNSELING IN OUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

*“And I will show you something
different from either
Your shadow at morning striding
behind you,
Or your shadow at evening rising
to meet you.
I will show you fear in a handful
of dust
- T.S Eliot (1888-1965). British
poet*

Counseling is a specific process of assistance extended by an expert in an individual situation to a needy person.

This means the counseling situation arises when a needy person is face to face with an expert who makes available his or her assistance to the needy individual to fulfill his or her needs.

There is an urgent need of introducing and strengthening the counseling service in the schools and colleges of our country to meet the various needs of the students administrative and the educational system.

Outlined here are core purpose of school counselling:

1. To help in the total development of the student:- Along with the intellectual development proper motivation and clarification of goals and ideas to students in conformity with their basic potentialities and social tendencies are important total development of the student necessitates that individual differences among them are expected, accepted, understood and planned for and all types of experiences in an institution are to be so organized as to contribute to the total development of the student.

2. To help in the proper choices of courses.
3. To help in the proper choices of careers.
4. To help in the students in vocational development.
5. To develop readiness for choices and changes to face new challenges.
6. To minimize the mismatching between education and employment and help in the efficient use of manpower.
7. To motivate the youth for self-employment.
8. To help Freshers establish proper identity. Guidance and Counseling service is needed to help students deal effectively with the normal developmental tasks of adolescence and face life situations boldly.
9. To identify and motivate the students from weaker sections of society.
10. To help the students in their period of turmoil and confusion.
11. To help in checking wastage and stagnation.
12. To identify and help students in need of special help.
13. There are such students as the gifted, the backward the handicapped who need special opportunities. They need special attention and opportunities.
14. To ensure the proper utilization

of time spent outside the classrooms. The manner in which student spend their non class hours clearly affects their success in achieving both academic competence and personal development of all types. A positive direction to students should be provided by influencing how they can use those non class hours.

15. To help in talking problems arising out of students population explosion.
16. To check migration to prevent brain drain.
17. To make up for the deficiencies at home.
18. To minimize the incidence of indiscipline.

The following situations are where counselling is required:

1. When a student requires not only reliable information but also an interesting introspection of those information which can solve his or her personal difficulties.
2. When a student needs an intelligent listener who has more experience than the student to whom he or she can recite his or her difficulties and through which he or she can seek suggestions for his or her working plan.
3. When the COUNSELLOR has to assess those facilities which can help in resolving the student problems but the student doesn't enjoy such an access to those facilities.
4. When the student has some

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TEACHING SKILLS THAT FOSTER STUDENTS' SELF-EFFICACY

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

It is particularly exciting to note that teaching strategies used in the classroom can and do make a difference to students' self-efficacy. Research shows that the type of learning environment and teaching method can improve self-efficacy in the classroom.

Albert Bandura of Stanford University concludes that cooperative learning strategies have the dual outcome of improving both self-efficacy and academic achievement. "Cooperative learning structures, in which students work together and help one another also tend to promote more positive self-evaluations of capability and higher academic attainments than do individualistic or competitive ones."

Other pedagogies for improving self-efficacy include:

- Establish specific, short-term goals that will challenge the students, yet are still viewed as attainable.
- Help students lay out a specific learning strategy and have them verbalize their plan. As students proceed through the task, ask students to note their progress and verbalize the next steps.
- Compare student performance to the goals set for that student, rather than comparing one student against another or comparing one student to the rest of the class (Bandura).

In his 1994 textbook chapter, Albert Bandura notes that certain well-worn pedagogical practices may have the unintended effect of diminishing the self-efficacy

of students who do not reside at the top of the class academically. These include:

- Generalized, "lock-step" instruction that is inflexible and does not allow for student input. A formulaic type of instructional setting makes it harder for students to ask questions or become involved in the process. The result may be that if a student becomes confused or discouraged, they are likely to remain so.
- Statements or teaching practices that compare students' performance against each other. This may raise the self-efficacy of the top students, but is likely to lower the self-efficacy of the rest of the class.

Self-efficacy is the key to success outside and peace within the student. Here then are tips to improve self-efficacy for struggling students

Use moderately- difficult tasks:

If the task is too easy it will be boring or embarrassing and may communicate the feeling that the teacher doubts their abilities; a too-difficult task will re-enforce low self-efficacy. The target for difficulty is slightly above the students' current ability level.

Use peer models:

Students can learn by watching a peer succeed at a task. Peers may be drawn from groups as defined by gender, ethnicity, social circles, interests, achievement level, clothing, or age.

Teach specific strategies:

Give students a concrete plan of attack for working on an assign-

ment, rather than simply turning them loose. This may apply to overall study skills, such as preparing for an exam, or to a specific assignment or project.

Capitalize on students' interests:

Tie the course material or concepts to student interests such as sports, pop culture, movies or technology.

Allow students to make their own choices:

Set up some areas of the course that allow students to make their own decisions, such as with flexible grading, assignment options or self-determined due dates.

Encourage students to try:

Give them consistent, credible and specific encouragement, such as, "You can do this. We've set up an outline for how to write a lab report and a schedule for what to do each week - now follow the plan and you will be successful."

Give frequent feedback:

Giving praise and encouragement is very important, however it must be credible. Use praise when earned and avoid hyperbole. When giving feedback on student performance, compare to past performances by the same student, don't make comparisons between students.

Encourage accurate attributions

Help students understand that they don't fail because they're dumb, they fail because they didn't follow instructions, they didn't spend enough time on the task, or they didn't follow through on the learning strategy.

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR CHILD'S IQ

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

It is the dream of every parent to raise a child he or she can be proud of. However, most of actions that parents do militate against this noble ideal.

all work together to nurture a child's intelligence. But is there something more you can do to actively boost your child's IQ?

puter programs. But they do have insights you may find useful in helping your child reach his or her full intellectual potential.

Do you think you've done your best to help your children develop their minds in order to actualize their full potential in future?

Perhaps you started reading to them as infants; you bought them educational toys; you took them to the library. Now they're doing well at school. But should you be taking credit?

According to child psychologists, your children would have done just as well without your zealous efforts. Provocative as it may sound, the key point underscored here is that 'parenting styles have no influence on a child's intelligence'.

You probably already that know genetics along with good nutrition, protection from toxins, and plenty of playtime and exercise

Surprisingly, most child development experts aren't touting the flashiest new toys or com-

parental attention – even such a

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PLAY THERAPY

Play is to a child as work is to adult. It is a crucial activity during the childhood years. It is a non-serious and self-contained activity engaged in for sheer satisfaction it brings.

Play is a universal activity for all healthy children, it is form of recreation and boosts child's emotional state, i.e. acts as catharsis by releasing emotion tension in children. Play is an activity which caters for the growth of the "whole child". To a child, play is one of the making purposes of life and without it life would be very boring.

Play helps children develop physically, emotionally, mentally and socially; it enhances language development. It enables children to learn to master and manage their environment, cope with difficulties and problems, adapt to the demands of the adult world, and establish satisfying social relationships. A healthy child desires physical movement and bodily skill. He or she thus uses and enjoys his/her body during play.

Parents, teachers and other care-givers must therefore provide a rich and varied environment with different kinds of play material and a warm friendly atmosphere. Children should be given periods of uninterrupted play.

Play materials must be kept within children's reach so that they can choose what they want to play with. The materials should be safe and clean and children should be allowed to choose with whom, what and where they want to play.

After years of being told how important it was to stimulate their children's intellects, many parents have understandably become confused. Are efforts to improve their children's skills just time down the drain? No, says many researchers.

Various studies acknowledge the important roles played by both genes and environment (which includes a child's health and nutrition, as well as family upbringing). Even if genes play a dominant role, that leaves plenty of room for parents to influence the outcome.

Indeed, a growing amount of research shows that, especially in the early years of life when the brain is still taking shape,

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problem but he or she is unaware of that problem and his or her development, he or she is to be made aware of that problem.

5. when the student is aware of the problem and difficulties created by the problem but he or she feels difficult to define it and to understand it that is, when the student is

familiar with the presence of the problem and its nature but he or she is unable to face the problem due to this temporary tension and distraction.

6. When the student suffer the main maladjustment problem or some handicap which is temporary and which needs careful long due diagnosis by an expert.

Majority of students lack a sense

of direction, a sense of purpose and a sense of fulfillment and involves themselves in destructive activities which lead to social damage and loss.

Adequate Guidance and Counseling facilities is the only answer to help and guide the youth to worthwhile channels and help them to realize the goals of optimum academic, personal and social development.

FOUR SOURCES AFFECTING SELF-EFFICACY

Professor Albert Bandura has defined perceived self-efficacy as “people’s beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance that exercise influence over events that affect their lives. Self-efficacy beliefs determine how people feel, think, motivate themselves and behave. Such beliefs produce these diverse effects through four major processes. They include cognitive, motivational, affective and selection processes”.

Bandura points to four sources affecting self-efficacy:

1. Experience

“Mastery experience” is the most important factor deciding a person’s self-efficacy. Simply put, success raises self-efficacy, failure lowers it.

2. Modelling based on “vicarious experience”

“If they can do it, I can do it as well.” This is a process of comparison between a person and someone else. When people see someone succeeding at something, their self-efficacy will increase; and where they see people failing, their self-efficacy will decrease. This process is more effectual where the person sees himself as similar to his model. If a peer who is perceived as having similar ability succeeds, this is likely to increase an observer’s self-efficacy. Although not as influential as past experience, modelling is a powerful influence when a person is particularly unsure of himself.

3. Social persuasions

Social persuasions relate to encouragements or discouragements. These can have a strong influence: most people remember times where something said to them significantly altered their confidence. Where positive persuasions increase self-efficacy, negative persuasions decrease it. It is generally easier to decrease someone’s self-efficacy than it is to increase it.

4. Physiological factors

In unusual, stressful situations, people commonly exhibit signs of distress; shakes, aches and pains, fatigue, fear, nausea, etc. A person’s perceptions of these responses can markedly alter a person’s self-efficacy. If a person gets ‘butterflies in the stomach’ before public speaking, a person with low self-efficacy may take this as a sign of their own inability, thus decreasing their efficacy further. In contrast, a person with high self-efficacy is likely to interpret such physiological signs as normal and unrelated to his or her actual ability, which will continue to be seen as high regardless of trembling hands etc. Thus, it is the person’s belief on the implications of their physiological response that alters their self-efficacy, rather than the sheer power of response.

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simple activity as playing a game – helps construct the complex brain circuitry essential to intellectual development.

As a parent you need to recognize how important your input is. Through a concerted well informed effort you should be guaranteed to see positive results in your children. But you have first to understand some fundamentals about human mind.

An infant is born with thousands of millions of brain cells called neurons. Some are wired to other cells before birth to regulate the basics of life, such as heartbeat and breathing. Others are waiting to be wired to help him or her interpret and respond to the outside world. Experience dictates the hookups.

As the child matures, cells reach out and set up pathways to other cells needed to determine a behavior. For instance, the neurons in the eye send branches to the visual cortex, which interprets what the eye sees and, via other branches, cues the person to react to what is seen. Each time experience is repeated, the pathways are strengthened.

The first two years of life are an explosion of brain growth and connections. By the age of two the brain has more than 300 million million connections. At the same time, cells that aren't being connected or used are being discarded.

There seems to be a timetable for this programming of the young brain – “windows of opportunity”, as one neurobiologists put it – when specific connections may be

made.

For instance, the neurons governing vision undergo a growth spurt in the first six months of life, and by eight months are connected to 15 000 others.

There's similar window of opportunity for understanding language and learning to talk. A newborn has the capacity to distinguish among sounds in any human language. If you miss a window of opportunity, will you child be forever handicapped? No, because opportunities to strengthen brain connection abound throughout childhood.

Using positron emission tomography (PET) scans, which trace glucose consumption in the brain, paediatric neurologists have been able to show that the brains of three-to-ten-year-olds use twice as much energy as the brains of adults.

That is because the brain has far more connections during those early years, which makes it easier to learn new skills. Consider, for example, the process of learning to speak a foreign language. While a preschooler picks up an unfamiliar tongue more readily than a nine-year-old does, the nine-year-old learns it more readily than does a high-school student or adult.

What then can a parent do at home to bolster a child's IQ? In the first instance, it is worth understanding that you needn't try to teach your child in the formal sense of instruction. What's necessary is creating a stimulating atmosphere for casual learning. Start early in the child's life.

Following are three critical steps

as researched by child psychologists:

i. Look them in the eye

Your six-week-old's eyes focus at roughly 20 centimeters – just about the distance at which you hold him or her in front of you and gaze at the face.

That tracks brain connections into a pattern of recognition that's strengthened with each exposure, and helps your child sort the world into what's different, what's the same – crucial skills in learning.

ii. Talk, talk, talk

Early command of language is important to successful intellectual functioning. A grasp of language goes beyond being able to say words.

Studies indicate that the amount parents spoke to their children during the second year of life has a major effect on children's vocabulary size.

iii. Make room for music

Music does more than teach children about rhythm and melody. Giving three-year-olds group singing lessons dramatically improves their spatial-temporal reasoning. Many researches show that, these kids becomes more accurate and faster than three-year-olds who have no lessons. Moreover, spatial temporal reasoning is important in understanding maths and science.

Using a computer model, researchers have predicted that maths and music could share common neuronal firing patterns.

A STIMULATING BOOK WITH A TIMELY MESSAGE

TITLE: Good CHOICES, Bright FUTURE: Student Pocket COUNSELLOR (SPC)

AUTHORS: Gilbert Mwaniki & Milcah Nyaga

No. of PAGES: 186

PRICE: KSH 350

The writing is manifestly clear on the wall of our African society: “A terrible darkness seem to be slowly falling upon us”. In this state of disillusionment should we succumb, and lose our sense of direction? Absolutely NO! We are called upon to light up the lamps of courage and creativity, which will awaken all the hidden treasures in us. This is the central creed in this well-researched book which narrows down on guidance and counseling needs for youths falling as they are under three categories: person-social, academic and career.

The message which cut through this book is that unprecedented social and economic changes have over years changed the way we Africans manage our lives. Consequently not all the lessons of the past can effectively deal with the challenges of modern times. To cease from grinding along, without a sense of one’s destiny, to tap the reserves of one’s mind; that virtually limitless ability to learn and grow, is the legacy of every student in particular and all human beings in general. As a result, one will begin to grow into a large notion of what one can do and accomplish.

Life is short, and in its brevity one is supposed to acquire the necessary experience to carve a niche and live productively in this world. There are only two things that shape our destiny – the people we meet and the books we read. However, to rely solely on experience you gain through interacting with others may leave you doomed. The reason for this is that the world is composed of ‘group thinkers’ who crowd it with mediocrity and ‘over thinkers’ who hold it captive and make it mark time, ‘remote thinkers’ who take it backward and ‘circle thinkers’ who make it sink. This book teaches you to be the ‘critical thinker’ with a progressive way of seeing things; making good CHOICES which will guarantee your bright FUTURE.

This book invokes the reader to realize that his or her fulfillment in life is dependent on becoming what one was born to be; for without CHOICE, life has no heart and therefore no heartbeat, no FUTURE. CHOICE is related to personal potential; it is what you carry that indicates where you are going. Work (not job) releases that potential. God deposited the FUTURE of everyone, not ahead of them, but inside them. Potential is this unused power, the doormat success, who you are but no one knows yet; how far you can go but haven’t.

By making the good CHOICES of cracking the cocoon of your self-imposed limitations, you will start shaking out your wings, and consequently claim your birthright to a sound mind, and balanced emotions which will form the basis for a bright FUTURE. Ultimately your life after being spiced with vital ingredients will be turned upside down and inside out, as a fertile future focus will illumine your aspirations.

This book grapples with four questions which every student should address. Who am I? the question of identity. Where am I from? the question of heritage. Why am I here? the question of the reason for existence. What can I do? the question of potential. These questions are crowned by the fifth one, Where am I going? the question of FUTURE address in life.

The key word which forms the DNA of the marrow of this STUDENT POCKET COUNSELLOR, is WILL, as expressed in all five topics: Will-to – Self-Knowledge, Will-to – Intellectualism, Will-to – Vocation, Will-to – Self-Help and Will-to – Self-Actualization.

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IF YOU ALSO FEEL THAT YOU CAN MARKET THIS BOOK, CALL THE ABOVE NUMBERS

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motivations which may be directing and informing the individual present behaviour. All factors that may be derailing the individual growth including messages hidden in one's dreams, cognitive biases, defense as well as escape mechanisms are exposed. One is focused on the core functioning of one's personality and neurotic trends, which may help or hinder the individual in finding meaning to life. One is informed on his or her personality predisposition as a function of various interlocking factors, which then serve to inform him or her on how to achieve one's objectives. One is given a chance of choosing a therapeutic tool that is persuasive in digging deep into wells of one's divinity.

4. WILL-TO-PARENTHOOD

Are you a parent looking for a little help figuring things out, and maybe have a laugh about the world's hardest job – parenting? This package seeks to assist parents in making parenting a nourishing and enjoyable experience rather than an inescapable burden and/or a lifelong regret. The parent's eyes are opened to his or her child's possible struggles and how he or she can assist. He or she enlightened on the cognitive, emotional and social development of his or her children at every stage of their growth. The parent is informed of poor parenting style one may be applying or may gravitate towards and how to deal with it. One is armed with well-researched and proven tactics which will enable one to raise his or her children (whether single, married or divorced) into responsible adults who one can be proud of. All possible conflicts which each parent may be encountering with his her or children at different ages are put into sharp focus and an individualized antidote suggested.

5. WILL-TO-HEALTH

This package teaches the individual on how to shield oneself from, or reduce suffering and attain inner peace. One is propelled on the natural path towards one's physical well-being, by relying primarily on one's genetic make-up (one's body and blood type). More emphasis is put on dietary choices one should follow which augers well with one's blood type. The emotional source of the physical pain one may be encountering in certain parts of the body is explained and antidote suggested. The person is armed with the necessary tools which will help him or her to clear off the debris of Negative Emotions which may be doing a lot of harm to one's health. A meditation technique (to cleanse one's faculties) that suites one's tastes and orientations is suggested.

6. WILL-TO-LEAD

This package is intended at arming the individual with leadership and managerial skills which will help him or her to sail through this competitive and fast paced world. The individual is given a chance of choosing a psychic program alloyed to a historical motivating model, which he or she can immensely learn from. One is aroused on one's leadership leverage as a function of one's inherent disposition and temperament. All the dangers which affect our African continent are put in their right perspectives and solution suggested. One is initiated to being a partaker in building an African Civilization and is informed on one's role in facilitating the dream of an African UNIFICATION.

7. WILL-TO-TYPICAL 2A/3P

This package is the epitome of the name of our MODEL: African Assertiveness / Provoking Positive Perceptions. It precisely arouses the individual on the stumbling blocks as well as stepping stones to one's ego and psychic strengths. This realization becomes the only vital necessity in arming him or her with the ability to be a well integrated, resourceful individual and to live harmoniously with other society members. One's mind is strengthened by well focused and relevant philosophical points. One is assisted step by step on one's specific road towards achieving the highest level of human awakening one is capable of.

How the SOFTWARE works:

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AGIKUYU TABOOS AND PROHIBITIONS GOVERNING HOMESTEAD

By Mt. Kenya COUNSELLOR team

The moral ethic and code of behavior of the Kikuyu was governed by a system of taboo. There was a prescribed cause of action for undoing the expected ill-effects of breaking any one of the taboos.

Many of them required a certain purification procedure sometimes by a medicine-man depending on the severity of the taboo broken and usually involved the sacrifice of a goat. Because of the heavy cost both emotional and economic of breaking taboos, behavior was thus controlled. These taboos for all manner of things may seem to us today as dealing with trivial matters but each prohibition was grounded in sound reasoning with the people's protection in mind.

Breaking a prohibition, *mugiro* results in an unclean state of abomination, *thahu* which is removed through chastisement and sometimes involves a vomiting out ritual by the offender, *gutahikio*. This vomiting out ritual returns the offender back into the pure state of being.

A list of all the taboos and prohibitions is a tall order to compile but a sampling of the rules and regulations governing just the homestead and the house is hereby given to illustrate the importance of the taboo system in the day-to-day maintenance of a Kikuyu homestead.

There were several levels of severity of the prohibitions, and while some were merely bad form, others required purifications by a *Mundu Mugo*. These were equivalent to modern Building By-Laws.

1. It was forbidden for a hut to have two doors.
2. It was taboo to lean a spear up against the roof of a hut. All spears had to be either stuck in the ground, or leaned against the fence or under the eaves. There was no penalty for breaking this taboo, but it was never done. Under no circumstance is a spear allowed inside the hut of a woman.
3. The door is a sliding one and is not hinged and it must always be opened on the side that a man's father and grandfather opened it. If a person opens it on the wrong side he must go out again, shut the door, and re-enter correctly: otherwise he may not eat any food in the hut.
4. No one may close the door other than the owner of the hut. A visitor may open the door to enter, but closing the door must be left to the woman or her sons.
5. A husband may not shut the door of his hut save on his wedding night.
6. When entering a hut, a person had to pass and enter the kitchen space on the side of the fattening ram's pen, *gicegu*.
7. You may not keep standing inside a hut. If you do not want to sit then you must go and stand outside.
8. It is taboo for young boys and girls to swing with the door lintel. They are wishing the death of their parents.
9. It was taboo for a man to sleep on the side by the outer wall of his wife's bed.
10. It was taboo to start moving a woman's hut to a new site while she was menstruating.
11. It was taboo for a fire in a hut to go out at any time when beer was being brewed in that hut, or when any special ceremony or sacrifice was taking place in that hut or in connection with it.
12. In no circumstances might all the fires in a homestead be allowed to go out together. For the purposes of this rule the subsidiary homestead of a married son attached to his father's homestead counted as part of the main homestead.
13. If a cooking pot cracked while food was being cooked in it, that food might not be eaten except by women past childbearing.
14. If a woman was preparing castor oil from castor oil berries, and during the process of heating them over the fire, she either let them boil over or dry up in the pot, a purification ceremony and sacrifice was essential.
15. Should anyone in anger or drunkenness pluck thatch from any hut in a homestead, a sacrifice and purification would be essential to avoid disaster.
16. In a woman's Nyumba, the head end of her bed was towards the *thegi* (a woman's private store which is never entered without permission) and the foot end towards the *kweru* (boys' bedroom). The head end of the girls' bed was towards the *gicegu* (a ram's pen, situated near the entrance of the

hut) and the foot end towards the *thegi*. It was taboo for anyone to sleep in these beds except with their head at the head end of the bed.

17. A circumcised man may not under any circumstance approach the side of his mother's side of the kitchen or touch her bed.

18. Young unmarried girls who are circumcised may not sit on the *Kweru* side of the kitchen but must sit on their bed side. All grown men had to sit on the *Ruri* (the screen that divided the lobby space from the main kitchen space which was made of planks) side of the hut.

19. There is only one fireplace in a hut consisting of three stones. In the event of a temporary secondary fireplace being created by the addition of a two more stones, the head of the family may eat food from that secondary fireplace.

20. If the firewood drying rack above the fireplace, (*Itara*) breaks and falls, a sacrifice must be done to replace it.

21. It was prohibited to pass food through a crack in the wall of a hut. Such food had to be taken out and brought in through the door before it could be eaten.

22. It is not permitted to pass food over the fireplace to a person on the other side, nor can food be taken around a pole. Food passed over the door may not be eaten by the head of the family.

23. If anyone deliberately broke a cooking pot or a gourd in a homestead, the purification ceremonies and sacrifices involved the slaughter of seven goats and sheep.

24. If a man or woman fell down within their own homestead, purification and sacrifice were necessary.

25. If a bedstead broke when someone was sleeping in it, purification was required of the person.

26. No one might touch or approach the garbage dump (*Kiara*) of a homestead other than the members of that homestead. If they did so, purification would be necessary.

27. If anyone, other than a child that had not been "born a second time," or a very sick person, defecated within a hut or in the courtyard, a purification ceremony was essential.

28. It was taboo to come into contact with the menstrual blood of any other person (something which could happen easily in a hut), and purification was necessary if this happened. (There were certain minor exceptions).

29. In certain circumstances huts were pulled down and either left to rot or the materials stacked for future use; these circumstances were linked with death and divorce respectively.

30. It was taboo for any person including a child to die inside a hut. In the event of such an occurrence purification of all the inhabitants of the hut was necessary and the hut demolished.

31. If the child's harness, *Ngoi* was accidentally left outside overnight it must be beaten with a leather strap in the morning being asked, "where did you sleep?"

32. If the owner of a homestead cut himself and drew blood either

while in the homestead or when he was out in the fields, he had to sacrifice a goat or sheep for purification.

33. If a hyena should enter a village or homestead and dung either in the open clearing of the entrance area (*Thome*) or in any courtyard (*Nja*), ceremonial purification was essential.

34. If a hyena should enter a hut, a purification ceremony must be performed.

35. If a jackal barked in the entrance area or in the courtyard of a homestead, a ceremonial purification was necessary.

36. Should any beast—calf, goat, or sheep—suck or lick any part of a human in a homestead, that animal had to be sacrificed for a purification ceremony at the village of a relation-in-law.

37. Should a toad, frog, or lizard fall or jump into the fire in the hearth of a hut, a purification ceremony was essential.

38. If an owl hooted near a homestead, or worse still, perched on any hut or granary, purification was necessary.

39. If a snake was killed within the confines of a homestead, a purification ceremony had to take place.

40. It was taboo to kill a bird called (*Cossypha* or Robin chat) within the confines of the homestead.

41. If a kite, when flying over a homestead, let its droppings fall on any person, that person had to be purified, the manner of purification depending upon the sex of the person involved.