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BOOMERANG ADULTS

Moving in with your parents is a great way to cut costs and save toward your goals — but it's also a big lifestyle change. Four young adults who moved back home after tasting the boundless freedom of college share their experiences **P.4&5**

Podcast Review

ManTalk KE

Hosted by content creators Eli Mwenda (*inset below*) and Oscar Koome, this podcast dives deep into topics ranging from toxic masculinity, fatherhood, feminism, and dating, to self-care. *ManTalk Ke* has evolved to be more inclusive by incorporating women into these insightful discussions. The aim of the podcast is to provide a space for men to open up about real issues affecting their lives.

The hosts bring a refreshing perspective to each episode, fostering an environment where authenticity is paramount. *ManTalk Ke* has become a go-to source for individuals seeking engaging, honest, and enlightening conversations. It is more than just a podcast, it is a platform that dismantles stereotypes, encourages vulnerability, and promotes understanding in a world that often demands more authentic dialogue.

Hotspot

Raha Fest

Get ready for an unforgettable celebration of African music, art, and culture as Raha Fest makes its debut at the breathtaking Uhuru Gardens in Nairobi on March 30 and 31. The lineup guarantees a one-of-a-kind celebration, seamlessly blending Kenyan talent with renowned African artists.

This dynamic mix creates a musical fabric that reflects the rich diversity of the continent's artistic expression.

Captivating art exhibits are set to showcase the vibrant and diverse world of African fashion, creating an immersive experience for all attendees. Confirmed Artists include Nviiri, Bensoul, Otile Brown, Hart The Band, Nadia Mukami, Femi One, Sanapei Tande and Samidoh. Congolese musician, JB Mpiana will also perform.

MyNetWork Show Biz Elizabeth Ngigi E2

T5

Milly Chebby

Content creator Milly Chebby has joyfully acknowledged 2023 as a year that brought unprecedented success for her family. She particularly singled out the sold-out show she hosted on December 11 together with her husband and fellow content creator Lawrence Macharia, alias Terence Creative. It was also the year that Milly was honoured with the prestigious Women in Business Award where she was named the Female Digital Creator of the Year. Milly says she hopes to continue using her talent to inspire fellow women

1 You recently revealed that 2023 was your year, tell us more about this...

For the better part of that year, I had not been sleeping enough. I feel blessed, grateful and favoured that I can see the results of my efforts. Judging by the last 12 months, I realise that it is now time to harvest the seeds I sowed in previous years. My brand is shining bright, and I am living my purpose.

When I turned 30, I felt like I lacked a clear sense of purpose, which prompted me to reflect deeply on my life. Now, at the age of 37, I stand in awe as God has unveiled his purpose in my life. The past year was simply transformative.

2 What did you study in school, and do you think your degree is relevant to your current aspirations?

I hold a degree in human resources, although it wasn't my initial career choice. Nevertheless, my education equipped me with the skills to effectively manage and interact with my employees. During my early years in school, I was known for being quite talkative. In my upper classes, I was punished almost daily, and I often wish my teachers then had recognised that my outspoken nature was an inherent talent, not a sign of indiscipline. I hope that today's chil-

dren are understood, and that they can be allowed to bring out their true personalities. I see it all the time in my five-year-old daughter, whose distinct traits I can already observe. When I was in Class Eight, one of my teachers predicted that I would excel as a journalist, which aligned perfectly with my aspirations.

Interestingly, I attended the same school as Citizen TV's Chemutai Goin, who happens to be my lifelong companion. We share a deep connection, evident in the fact that she was my chief bridesmaid, and I reciprocated the role at her traditional wedding.

Unlike her, my parents faced financial challenges in securing my education at a reputable university. In contrast, Chemutai Goin's parents recognised her potential and provided the necessary support. Although I knew journalism was my calling, I wish it had been nurtured at an earlier stage and more effectively.

3 At what point did your journey in the digital content creation space start?

It all began in the year 2020 when I discovered the power of social media, and decided to give it a try. Initially, I was only concerned with sharing diverse cooking recipes, which proved to be the most challenging aspect of content creation. Over time, I've diver-

sified my content and incorporated more ideas.

While I still produce cooking content, it is still hard for me to sustain that. I was previously employed for about 10 years. My first job at the age of 19 was at an Indian establishment where I earned Sh5,000. I worked tirelessly every day, including during holidays, and accepted reduced pay on less busy days. I demonstrated exemplary work ethic. At the time, I lived in my mother's house, and her belief in me fueled my drive and encouraged me to keep shining.

4 What has been the most challenging aspect about your current job?

Social media was a highly toxic space back in the day. At least right now people have accepted that it is a space where people can grow and establish their careers.

Navigating this space requires grace and commitment. I have encountered challenges, particularly cases of bullying due to my weight. I was not this big when I first went online. When I gave birth, my body changed. I added about 40 kilograms and it took four years to shed that weight.

I've come to recognise the uniqueness of my body, and I now understand that at times, even with rigorous gym sessions, desired transfor-

mation may not occur. I've also come to realise that when faced with bullying, it is crucial not to internalise the negativity. The first step is to cultivate self-love and embrace one's identity. When others try to define you, regard it as mere noise.

Of all the trolling I have endured, the one incident that deeply affected me was when someone targeted my baby online, wishing her death. That distressing experience nearly led me to quit social media.

5 How do you manage to strike a balance between family life and work commitments?

First, I have a very supportive family, especially my husband. They are the people who hold me together. I hang out with my husband the most, as I am also his manager. I am the extra-man in my family. My immediate family attends most of our events but they don't like me to mention them.

You might never see them and they discourage me from posting their pictures online. As a public figure, you just have to respect that. Even when there is too much for me to deal with, I have a very supportive online team that fully believes in my dream. My mantra is, just work and give it your all. This space is very slippery. It has squads and cartels and that is why I never work for awards.



Safara acquires a 'bar' from a deal gone wrong



The hustler

BY MIKE SAFARA

After that strange incident with my first client and the extorting Motaro couple, business boomed in my 'AirBnB' over the next two weeks, so that I had a cool Sh45,000 in the bank.

This was because after that incident, we had bonded with the caretaker, Dog (I never asked him why *Mbua?*), and he had told me that, actually, almost half the apartments in the building were short rentals, run by the landlady herself, a top corporate banker called Priscilla.

But she seldom came around, so that it was Dog doing the actual donkey work of setting them up, renting them out, and cleaning afterwards. "Yet *nalipua tuu saloya caretaker...*"

Sensing his discontent, the Hustler in me immediately detected an opportu-

nity in Dog's resentment at being an unpaid janitor.

"Why don't you, when people call you for any AirBnB in the building, direct them to mine, Dog?" I said. "We will charge them Sh3,500, and you can take Sh500 from each rental."

"So sasa sisi ni ma-partner kwa hii biz?" Dog asked, his eyes shining.

"You bet!" I said, firmly shaking hands.

And that is how I ended up with my short rental having clients every day for an entire fortnight.

Until landlady Priscilla called me on Monday at noon, and I imagined that face I only saw sometimes on Business Daily newspaper as she said she was going to have to terminate my lease, pronto!

"Why?" I cried.

"I want a relative to move in there," she lied, voice smooth as lacquered velvet.

"You have to give me a month's notice at the end of the month," I said.

"That's alright," she purred. "You will pick up your notice from Douglas, to move by Feb 28 this year."

"Feb 29," I said peevishly. "It is a Leap Year."

"Let's just say March 2, Saturday, so you

don't have the hassle of moving on a weekday, Mike," she said, magnanimously. "Also, in February, you can live off your deposit. I think that is fair."

Personally I thought it was very unfair! I had just hit a goldmine, and now it was already gone?

Not yet, Safara, I thought. You've still got 50 days, so you will make your 150k clean, then ciao!

Back at Priscilla's Palace (name of apartment block), I soon unraveled what had happened.

Dog, a lakeside lad, with Sh500 spare daily from our 'partnership', was buying Cheptoo at the gate lunch daily for Sh150, and had bragged to her about our special arrangement (exaggerating that he got a cool Sh1,500 cut to impress her). Somehow, Amos Mutiso, the night guard, found out (he also fancied Cheptoo) and ran to Priscilla to get rid of a rival. This love triangle had cost me my 'empire'.

I decided to go to Natasha's Bar across the street for a drink to drown my sorrow that evening, but it was closed. My barber next to this popular Wines & Spirits stall also told me Naliaka, Natasha's salon assistant, hadn't returned

from Western after the New Year holiday.

"*Huyo ashaoa mtu wa boda*," he added bitterly.

As if by telepathy, my phone rang. It was a frantic sounding Natasha on the other end, and she needed me to go down to the police station.

"But isn't your boyfriend a cop?"

"Just kuja. *Wacha kuniuliza maswali mengi kama ya polisi!*"

Smelling an opportunity

Turns out that Natasha, at her other stall business in the CBD of selling new clothes, had given some stock worth 100k to a Hope in the neighbouring stall to sell over Christmas and New Year for a commission. Since Hope didn't have capital to buy clothes to sell, and Natasha needed a week off for a family re-union somewhere in Kiambu, it was a win-win situation.

Except that Hope disappeared with the stock!

When Natasha and her cop boyfriend finally tracked Hope to a stall in another part of town, and caught her red handed selling the same clothes, Natasha lost it. Holding Hope, who was petite, from

behind, Natasha then instructed her police boyfriend to 'discipline this lil thief!'

The man pistol-whipped Hope so bad, she ended up in hospital.

It was neighbouring shop sellers that intervened, with the policeman maneuvering his way out (by threatening to shoot) but Natasha was mobbed, roughed up a little bit, then frog marched to the police station, as Hope was taken to hospital.

"I need 50k cash bail," Natasha pleaded. "When I sell out my bar stock, Mike, I will give you 60k." I considered the offer overnight from Tasha, with whom we had had a short lived fling, before I found out her predilection for crazy men in uniform.

"Here's the deal," I told her the next day at the police station, where she was looking quite whacked out. "Since Naliaka hasn't returned, I will take over your pub for the next 50 days, sell stock, as you concentrate on your clothes stall in *tao*. I get my 60k, plus 25k for labour." "Sawa," Natasha said, and signed the agreement I had handwritten. Then I paid her cash bail.

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Movie review

BY MICHAEL OCHIENG

LIFT 2024
WHERE: NETFLIX
GENRE: ACTION, COMEDY

Lift is a fun and fast-paced heist movie that showcases the versatility of Kevin Hart and the skills of director F. Gary Gray. Hart plays Cyrus, the leader of a team of high-tech thieves who are hired by Interpol to steal gold bars from a plane in mid-air. The premise is outrageous, but the film embraces its absurdity and delivers some thrilling and hilarious set pieces.

Hart proves that he can do more than just comedy, as he portrays a confident and charismatic con artist who has a complicated history with Gugu Mbatha-Raw's Abby, an Interpol agent who recruits him for the mission. The two have great chemistry, adding tension and drama to the film. The rest of the crew are also entertaining, especially Billy Magnussen as the safecracker, who steals



every scene he is in. Director F. Gary Gray has made some of the best action movies in the past, such as *The Italian Job* and *Straight Outta Compton*. He brings his expertise and flair to *Lift*, making it

visually appealing and engaging. The film has some impressive locations, such as Venice, London, and Brussels, and some spectacular stunts, such as the opening chase and the climactic

heist on the plane. It is a quality and enjoyable action-comedy that will keep you entertained and amused. It is worth your time and money, especially if you are a fan of Hart or heist movies.

MyNetWork Cover Story

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Going back home: Th

Returning home was once seen as something shameful, but sometimes it is inevitable

This is thanks in no small part to a shrinking job market, and an expensive rental market

BY MARGARET MAINA

Life after graduation can be both exciting and frustrating. Due to the high rates of unemployment and the challenges of finding a job as an inexperienced but qualified person, many graduates find themselves with no option except to return home and live with their parents. But before you pack your bags and make such a move, make sure you have examined all angles and thought deeply about your decision.

This week, four graduates who encountered this dilemma after graduating open up about the profits and pitfalls of living with their parents after tasting boundless freedom in college, and explain the reasons they chose to move out of the nest soon afterwards.

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BRET OLINGA, 27 VIDEO EDITOR

Mr Olinga graduated from St Paul's University in 2017 and immediately packed his bag and returned to his parent's home.

"To be honest, the moment I received my calling letter to university, I was so excited. Being independent and in charge of your schedule brings a great deal of joy and excitement. When I moved into my bed-sitter, I had only a bed, a laptop, and a single chair. I was all set to start a fresh phase of my life.

"I lived by my mother's mantra, which is that every decision has a consequence. I relied heavily on my mother's advice, but because I was inexperienced and foolish, I made some poor choices along the way.

"By the time we were graduating, I genuinely believed that my four years of living alone had transformed me from a boy into a man. Post-graduation, life truly began *kuniramba* because I was no longer receiving financial support from anyone and things weren't as cheap.

"My mother would always say in a sarcastic voice that if I was finding life difficult wherever I was, there is no shame in going back home, and then she would hang up, whenever I called home in need of financial assistance."

"At one point, I found myself in a difficult situation and decided to return home with the household items I had gathered over the years.

"I moved back to my tiny bedroom. One day, after returning late from a party, I found the gate was locked. I was only permitted to enter after being informed that 7pm was the latest time I should return home.

"From that moment, I realised I needed to come up with an escape plan because I had come too far to allow someone to control something as fundamental as my schedule. Of course, we would argue frequently about a variety of topics.

"In the middle of 2022, I moved out of my parents' house after finding a reliable job that would give me a chance to be independent of my mother.

"The greatest benefit of living at home was that I didn't have to worry about where my next meal would come from. One drawback of moving out of the nest is that it might make one feel like a failure if they find themselves having to move back into their parents' house, yet life can be very unpredictable.

PURITY KINUTHIA, 23 JOURNALIST

Harmonious living between parents and graduates requires effort from both sides, regardless of how good the relationship between the two may be. Whatever the case, it will require some getting used to, but if parents and children take the initiative, the entire process can be smooth.

"I still live at home with my mother and I commute to my workplace which is in the same town every weekday. I graduated from Maseno University in 2022 and secured a job four months afterwards. Staying at home was the best choice as I need time to find my footing, even though I am working.

"It was really difficult for me to adjust from being a young adult with unrestricted freedom while I was living on campus, to living with my parents. I was used to coming and going as I pleased. I had a lot of freedom but now that I'm back home, I have to follow my parents' rules.

"Most of my friends are still living with their parents, and we all have similar grievances. Going from doing things your way to having to follow someone else's rules or methods can be strange and annoying. We all agree on one thing, though. There's no feeling as satisfying as that which comes from spending time with your loved ones. We are also grateful for the opportunity to work and save money as we get ready to leave the nest.

"Since I am working, I have to help my mother with some bills. However, I am looking forward to moving out and being independent.

"I miss having my private space. Sometimes, when I get home from work and we have guests, I am compelled to sit with them and have conversations even if I had planned to relax and settle in. This at times irritates me.

"Also, when you have a roof over your head and the necessary resources you need to survive, you may be blinded and deterred from working hard to get a place of your own. You may falsely think that your parents will always have your back.

"Also, you may start getting into small fights with your family members, which may affect your relationship. For instance, I feel it is a little awkward to have to keep my parents informed if I want to leave the house. You feel like you have to seek permission, and this can be annoying.

"Additionally, living with your parents as an adult may negatively impact your social life. You may not be able to have friends over at your place, so you always have to go visit them. This makes the activities one-sided.



From Left: Bret Olinga, a videographer and a graduate from St Paul's University, Purity Kinuthia, a journalist and graduate from Maseno University and Brian Omondi, a business solutions executive and graduate from St Paul's University. PHOTO: BONIFACE MWANGI

One profits and pitfalls



BRIAN OMONDI, 31

BUSINESS SOLUTIONS EXECUTIVE

Like many who find themselves in this situation, Brian Omondi packed his belongings and returned to his parent's house. This was after four years of living in his college hostel, enjoying his independence, and having unlimited interactions with his peers. He reveals that the transition was not easy.

Everything looked great as he graduated from St Paul's University in 2016. He had great aspirations and was full of life. The messages of congratulations from his friends and family members still rang hot in his ears.

"I had no idea what awaited me after college. In school, everything was easy and stress-free. There was never any rush or hurry. The moment I began using time as a gauge of the level of my success, the complexity of adult life became apparent. To adapt to life after college, I had to change everything – from my mindset, to my attire, and even my demeanor. My mother was my driving force. Without her the struggle to adapt would have been much harder.

"As long as I was in her house, I had to ditch my college habits and align with the routine at home. I could no longer sleep and wake up whenever I wanted. It was business unusual.

"Cleaning up around the house and staying well-groomed was a must, otherwise there would be cold war at home. After some time, I just kept hearing a voice saying to me, 'You need an upgrade'.

After living with his parents for a year following his graduation, he moved out. He craved a space of his own, and some level of independence.

"I have never looked back ever since. I face challenges here and there but I live one day at a time. I have only one objective – to keep fighting to become a better version of myself. Looking back will be like taking a bullet to the foot.

"As a business solutions executive, I compete with many other brands, but I believe I am also a brand.

"I chose change because I learnt after my graduation that change is inevitable. For me, every day is a graduation day, as long as I have fulfilled my objective. I can now live independently thanks to that bold step I took a year after graduating.

One day, I found the gate locked, and was informed that 7pm was the latest time I should return home,

Bret



I feel it is a little awkward to have to keep my parents informed if I want to leave the house,

Purity



As long as I was in my mum's house, I had to ditch my college habits and align with the routine at home,

Brian



I had no idea that moving out meant more than just paying house rent!

Shish



SHISH DAVIS, 30

CONTENT CREATOR

Before graduating from Kenya Institute of Management in 2017, Shish spent the majority of her free time watching YouTube videos about makeup.

Even though her passion was in content creation and makeup artistry, like any other graduate, her dream was to land a well-paying job, and then further her education. She dabbled in the fantastical world of YouTube, convincing herself that it was something she was just doing for fun.

"Even though I excelled using the same strategy, I would not advise anyone to use rebellion as a means of achieving freedom. I liked going out on some nights, but living with my sister was tough because she knew all the tactics in the book—from house-sitting to setting up fictitious sleepovers at friends' houses to convincing with my other sisters. It could have been much easier to trick my father.

"Although having a large family was wonderful, there were too many people at home and not enough resources. I couldn't wait to grow up and eventually move out.

"At 24, I secured a job in a hardware store and after months of saving, I felt grown and ready to spread my wings. I had no idea that it meant more than just paying the rent. Moving out came with so many responsibilities!

"My only goal when I started my first job was to work tirelessly so I could move out. Without letting my parents know, my friends and I went on a joyous house-hunting excursion one evening while we were intoxicated,

and I discovered my spot.

"That was the simple part. Getting my sister to agree to let me move out was a daunting task. She required a lot of persuasion and I had to also have a tense talk with my father that left him upset, but I remained firm and by the end of that year, I was living alone.

"The first challenge I encountered was how to manage my new found freedom. It was difficult for me to adjust to this stage of my life. I had too much to figure out, I was stressed about everything, and the stillness in my house was deafening. I had never felt so alone in my life.

"I missed the company of my family members, as well as the comfort of not having to worry about what to eat for the next meal, and most of all, I did not enjoy spending my money on bills.

"Shortly after moving out, Covid-19 came and I suffered a long and unexpected period of unemployment. I had quit my job and managed to get by, but only for a few months.

"Things became unbearable. I packed my belongings and moved to my best friend's house where I stayed for two months. I was left only with my clothes, a broken heart, and a very confused mind. Before getting to that point, I had tried my hand in various business, so I settled on offering makeup services. Currently, I am a brand ambassador for one of the popular makeup brands.

"As a young woman, living alone taught me a lot about surviving and adulting. The most important lesson, however, was on remaining principled in an environment where I was free to act however I pleased.

"I am glad I took that risk and moved out, even though sometimes I think I should have waited a little longer.

Passion Judith's love for football started when she was aged 12

Judith: It is possible to bounce back from early motherhood

I firmly believe I can fulfill my responsibilities as a parent while also excelling in my personal pursuits,

Judith

Kenyan striker Judith Atieno in action during a league match. The 22-year-old turns out for Rwandan club Rayon Sports Women FC. PHOTO: POOL

Q&A

BY TOTO AREGE

Judith 'Crouch' Atieno is a talented Kenyan footballer who made history as the first-ever Kenyan woman footballer to play professional football in Rwanda.

At the age of 22, Judith currently serves as a striker for Rayon Sports Women FC of Rwanda, where she has showcased exceptional skills and made a significant impact on the team's performance throughout the last season.

She boasts of an impressive record as a top scorer in the 2022/23 Rwanda Women Division One League, where she scored 43 goals in just 21 matches. She also had 21 assists in the same season, which further solidified her position as a key driver of the team's success.

Take us through your football journey...

It all began in Kasabuni, Ruaraka area in Nairobi, where I was born and raised. I grew up in a sporting family, with my father being a footballer and my mother playing netball.

My love for football started at the age of 12, and my first competition was against Kayole Starlets, where I scored a brace for Mathare Women FC. Since then, I have never looked back.

I am a product of Mathare Youth Sports Association (MY-SA), which is one of the best football academies in Kenya.

I previously featured for Ruaraka Girls and Auntie Babes Academy in Nairobi. In 2018, I won the Football Kenya Federation Division One League title with Mathare United Women and I was the league's top scorer with 37 goals in 30 matches.

The following year, I became the club's top scorer with 28 goals in 30 matches, but unfortunately, Mathare was relegated to the lower tier in 2021. In 2022, I joined Rayon Sports on a one-year contract from Mathare Women FC, and my star has been rising ever since.

How does it feel like to play away from home?

It has not been easy, but since arriving here in August last year, I have found a second home in Rwanda.

The people here have been welcoming and I feel at home. However, I sometimes miss home because that is where the heart is.

After the expiration of my contract, I decided to extend my stay at Rayon for an additional year. I made this choice after careful consideration of the opportunities and experiences that Rayon has to offer.

As I continue my journey with the club, my primary objective remains unchanged – to contribute to the team's success by scoring more goals.

I am excited about the opportunities that lie ahead and look forward to making a positive impact on the field.

I could have scored more goals for the club last season, but I joined the club in the second leg following a delay in processing my work permit, which was a little late. I am however happy with what I was able to do during the rest of the season.

Have you ever dreamed of playing for the national team?

That has been my dream since I was 12, and I still believe that I will one day represent my country.

I was part of the Starlets provisional squad that was called to camp on May 14, 2019, in preparation for Cecafa U20 Women Championships that was held in Nairobi that year.

Unfortunately, I did not make it to the final squad. Despite this setback, I remain optimistic that with dedication and perseverance, my day will come.

Who or what inspires you?

My baby inspires me. As a young mother, I firmly believe that I can fulfill my responsibilities as a parent while also excelling in my personal pursuits, particularly on the sports field.

While some may argue that being a mother inherently limits one's ability to focus on other aspects of life, I am determined to prove that it is possible to balance motherhood and sports achievements.

Becoming a mother at a young age is certainly not easy. The demands of raising a child are immense, as the young ones require constant attention, care and love. However, being a responsible mother does not have to mean sacrificing one's own dreams and aspirations.

I hope to inspire other young women who aspire to be footballers, by showing them that they have great potential despite having children, and that they can harness that potential and excel as footballers.

Who is your football idol?

I have always admired the talent and skill of Francesca "Fran" Kirby, who is a prominent attacker for both Chelsea Women Football Club and the England national team.

Since her arrival at Chelsea in 2015 from Reading FC, she has showcased exceptional abilities. Last season she scored an impressive 60 goals in 93 appearances for the club.

Her dedication and success inspires me to work hard and achieve my own goals in the world of football.

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