

## VALENTINE'S DAY WITH A TWIST.



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Cupid, the ancient Roman god of desire, erotic love, attraction and affection was the son of Venus and Mars. He carried two arrows: one with a sharp golden point and the other with a blunt tip of lead. A person wounded by the golden one would feel uncontrollable desire for another while he who would be struck by the lead would desire to flee instead of becoming attracted. This specific Valentine's Day, Cupid had struck the members of AKAD Group at MOW Sports Club that morning with both arrows.

It began with Nyamiwah Charo, the Director of trade in the county of Kwale and an adult mentor at AKAD Group. He seemed to have been struck with the lead pointed arrow for he made a swift escape within the first fifteen minutes of the session. This was most confusing to me for it seemed that he chose to exit when I arrived. Was my clothing offensive? My choice in shoes? What an amazing way to begin my Valentine's Day!



*Mr. Nyamiwah Charo challenges us to think bigger.*

Those who arrived after me did not get the opportunity to hear this great man speak of his inspiring story. He claimed that when he first joined AKAD, he could not communicate in English. He spoke of how possible one's dreams are attainable if only he is determined and ready to face the challenges head on. He left us in awe when he informed that he had a plane to catch out of Nairobi county and had only flown in for the weekend. What class he upheld!

The negotiation class began soon after the director's departure. What fun it was! Filled with new terms and practical examples. BATNA, WATNA, ZOPA, concessions, value, character, bias and framing were just the tip of the iceberg. To understand negotiation, one has to grasp these terms fully. The practical examples were there to help. We were to pair up: a gentleman and a lady and within five minutes, the gentleman was to ask the lady out. Dr. Weche, the team leader of AKAD Group was exempted. Quite a narrow escape he had!

When Dr. Weche first took a negotiation class in Harvard, he was almost expelled. The lady he was negotiating with reported to the professors that he was trying to make an inappropriate move on her. This piece of information had me shaking with laughter until I almost spilled tea on myself. With that, the males were put to the task and turned to face the ladies. The clock was ticking. Cupid was clearly working overtime! Promises of sending Uber taxis to the ladies' houses were made, talks of high class restaurants and my favourite, romantic walks in the streets and beautiful views. This, I found preposterous for in which streets of Nairobi will two young soul mates walk safely without being mugged? I guess love really is blind.



*Edwin Oyamo takes on the charming, Margaret Dzimba.*



*"Did she just say that she wants to take a flight to Mombasa!" Marvin Osolo thinks to himself, ready to faint.*

Had this been a movie, it would have made it to the top of the bestseller list. Ruthlessly, the girls judged the boys and gave their verdict. However, had they known that the tables would turn on them soon, they would have been more careful with their words. It was time for the girls to negotiate with the boys and tell them what they really wished to do on this day of love. One Marvin Osolo, shocked to hear that his "date's" wish is to milk him dry, almost collapsed. He rose to the challenge gracefully and offered to meet all her demands at almost no price at all. That is what I call negotiation!

I love my boyfriend. We have been dating for over four years. I really don't know why he hadn't proposed yet. Boys of these days just don't get the hint! What is he waiting for? As I took a casual stroll down the park, I saw my best friend with him. How sweet of him! He even likes to ensure that my friends are alright and checks up on them. Wait! What are they doing? Right in front of me, I saw him lean in.... Back at home later that day, I wait for him to arrive. The second he steps inside, I pounce on him. A ninja sword in one hand and a Nyeri woman mindset. He must die! Can he negotiate his way out?



*Tit for tat is a fair, right?*

Negotiation skills are needed in our everyday activities. Currently, I have to negotiate out of a debt with a man who has perfected it for many years. This is somebody who adores it and sees it to be a “dance”. Research is something that I have to do before engaging in anything. Work on my terrible listening skills for a good negotiator talks less and listens more. I have to keep in mind that I do not want the relationship between him and I to be ruined for I consider him to be my father. A very interesting family relationship we have, I can promise you that! I seek a win-win situation. Who will be holding me accountable, well, my creditor himself!