

SINGLE PARENTHOOD

Life as a single parent is one difficult thing to accept. It is a tragedy in itself by nature. You can imagine its effects on the victims, it is like finding yourself in a totally strange environment with a different type of culture, traditions, customs etc. You probably would find it difficult to embrace the new tragic life, a journey unplanned and that gives you very little or no joy at all. It's not a break up or divorce which would place you in a better position than this which is a matter of death.

Losing your beloved partner with whom you had got a child or children is too painful especially in a continent like Africa where poverty and unemployment are the order of the day for a lot of families. The huge gap left is always more or less a burden on the living partner. Looking at the areas of providing food for the family, health care facilities, taking responsibility for the children's schooling and all other basic needs concerning their welfare, these are no easy things at all. Perhaps the single parent might be working and earning basically enough to take care of these things but their long absence at home each day leaving the children all by themselves with no one to monitor their activities could lead to some other things that could negatively impact them such as various bad influences from the neighbourhood, peer groups and instilling of harmful social behaviours and attitudes into them.

Single mothers seem to be more vulnerable in a situation like this. Making ends meet could be more difficult for them than for fathers, nevertheless, they are in a better position to look after the home and the kids or children than the fathers as it is them that mostly spend the most of time with the children at home. The security of the home and children is well assured when the father is alive.

Making choice of another partner to replace the lost one is another menace especially when considering whether or not they would serve best in that capacity. That is one reason why some single parents stay for a long time before accepting love/marriage proposals or making them after the death of their partner because sometimes the pain of their partner's demise is still felt in their heart and dwells in their memory and sometimes they would want to be meticulous in making such a decision.

The challenges are obviously there in raising up kids as a single parent, nevertheless their success stories mostly become the most interesting, heartfelt and motivational ones. There is high tendency for the single parent to love their kids the more in a time like this and the kids too to do likewise to their living parent since they consider the parent as the only one they depend on. The children see it as their sole responsibility to take care of their parent when they grow up and start earning. So both the parents and children have roles to play and responsibilities to take up for each other as it relates to single parenthood.