ZAINABU:

I: Good Morning. So who am I speaking to today?

Z: my name is Zainabu Abihanifah Godoro.

I: So tell me a bit about yourself. Where did you grow up, how many siblings did you have, how was life for you as a child?

Z: I grew up in Thika, Kiambu County. Im a third born, among 4 siblings. My brother died when he was young so now we are three. My father also passed away, may his soul rest in peace, my mother is still alive. She still lives in Thika.

I: So you grew up in Thika?

Z: Yes, I grew up in Thika.

I: So how did you come to the city, what is the story of Zainabu?

Z: Most of my family members, they live in Nairobi, so actually when we were young we always used to visit our aunties and our cousins. So after school I came to college. I never got good grades to go to university, but I could go to college and enrolled in Nairobi. This is how I came to live in Nairobi.

I: When was that, around what time?

Z: This is mainly around 1999

I: That’s a long time ago.

Z: yes.

I: One year after the bomb blast.

Z: yes.

I: What was life like for you here in the city and who were you living with?

Z: I was living with my auntie back then cause I was commuting from her place to college on and off. That was in 1999. And then I think I stayed with her for like a year. Then I did my exams. After my exams around 2000. 2001 I got my first job, I worked as a hotelier. So when I got my first job, even without getting my first pay, I moved out with my friend in Nairobi West. This is now how I came to start living on my own.

I: Aha. And how old were you around that time?

Z: I was around 20, yah around 20 years.

I: Wow, very independent.

Z: Yes.

I: And when did you start your own family?

Z: Ah, my own family, it took time. My first born, I gave birth to him in 2006, so yah 2006, yes. And my second born was born in 2008, then my third born was born in 2012.

I: Actually, lets take one step back. To you what is a family, how would you define family?

Z: Interesting. Family, hm, whats a family to me? Family is actually for me the way I can describe a family, I don’t htink its like it has to be extended or like people who are blood related to you. Friends can also become family. I think family mostly are people who are there for you in your every day life. They can be either related by blood, your colleagues, they become your friends and then you become family, it can just be friends, neighbours. That is how I associate family.

I: And is this from your experience growing up or kind of living in the city and defining things for yourself? Where do those values come from?

Z: Actually these values come from my grandmother. We used to live with her back home in Thika. My grandmother accommodated everyone, everyone. People would come from all calibres of life, cause our house is just next to the mosque, im a muslim, our house is just next to the mosque, and so she opened our house to everyone. That’s how I learned that family is not only the people who are bridged to you by blood, but anyone who comes and you can be able to accommodate, be associated with, do so many things along together, that’s family.

I: If you were to ask, who are the members of your family, how would you answer that?

Z: my members of my family? How can I… can you repeat that question again?

I: Who would you say are the members of your family?

Z: Ah members of the family. Those people who are really like close to me know my like everyday struggles, know my everyday achievements, who keep tabs with me, id call them family. Because there are also members of your family, like your blood related, but they really don’t care about you. You only meet with them maybe during weddings or funerals, that’s when you realize, oh, that’s my family.

I: Because the typical definition of a family is either like a nuclear family, so like a father, mother and children, or your extended family, your grandparents, your cousins, your aunties and uncles and things like that. So for you, that definition doesn’t describe how you see things?

Z: yah, for what I have undergone, for me that doesn’t define to be family.

I: So does religion play any role in how you live your life?

Z: yes, it does.

I: How so?

Z: Can I say yes it does, and yes it doesn’t?

I: absolutely.

Z: Why id say yes it does, cause you need to have faith in whatever you do. So for me, my religion is what guides me. But again, most of my family members that id described they don’t come from my religion. Most of them are Christian, I also have friends that who don’t believe in god or things like that. And I also have family members who are muslim. So yes, I believe in my religion but also when It comes to family, I don’t like mixing religion with family.

I: and for your own personal life, has religion played a role in how you dress, where you build your house, how you go about your way, has it played any role?

Z: When it comes to dressing, actually most people don’t think that im a muslim, because I don’t dress like a muslim, I just, its called conservative, just like everyone else, but when it comes to my religion im very strict, I pray 5 times a day, I fast, I do everything what my religions asks me to do. I don’t dress like a muslim, but I dress appropriately.

I: Well anyway it’s a personal choice so its not, there is nothing wrong with that, its about the faith in your heart. So tell me about your household. Who do you currently live with and how do you define the tasks inside the house?

Z: Im a single mother, ive separated from my husband for now 5 years ago, I have filed for divorce but its still in process. I live with my 3 children and currently im fighting for custody of the boys. 5 years ago is when I separated from, I moved out from my matrimonial home, and began living alone. I actually left my kids with my ex-husband. Then he couldn’t raise them and he took them to my mom. And then I went and picked them up and then I started life with them.

I: So your household is…

Z: Its me and my three kids.

I: And it also feels like it’s a refuge, like a space you created for you and your children. And so in this household that you have created for yourself, how do you operate things? Are you the chief decision maker are you the bread winner, how do you run your household?

Z: im the one who makes all the decisions, im the sole bread winner, but I divide tasks among ourselves. We sit down and discuss with my kids. My firstborn turned 14, so now hes a teenager, so im kind of delegating some of the duties to him. Yes, but my second born, him, the first one, is in Boarding School so most of the time he is not at home. So my second born son also takes care of his siblings. What ive delegated for him is household chores like washing dishes. Thanks to COVID now, they are learning how to cook, so they cook in turns.

I: How does your family meet its financial needs?

Z: I currently, I am not working currently cause of COVID, but I do small small businesses, like I sell eggs nowadays, and I also sell potatoes. The little income that I get from that is what now sustains us though it’s a really big struggle cause I have three kids, and thank God again, due to COVID now, we are not paying school fees, so at least that burden has gone down. The only big burden that now im really struggling and im lagging behind is rent. Before I would be able to pay my rent and also pay school fees partially, but small small in bits, but at the moment things are not very well. But I still thank God we are alive and we´re able to eat and im able to take care of the kids and they´re healthy.

I: Do you get support from your relatives?

Z: Yes, my relatives are really very supportive, they understand what I go through and they are always there for them, for me.

I: Do you also find that you take care of other relatives, or how does that work?

Z: I actually support relatives and non-relatives. I believe like just the way that you´ve asked me, my religion says you have to give and I believe when you have to give, its not exactly like what you really like, you don’t just have to give money, or anything, you assist where you think youre are able. Im that kind of an outgoing person whereby I go out of my way and even help more people than… sometimes even what I have I give out.

I: What are your views on same sex relationships?

Z: Same sex relationship. As I said im a muslim and I wouldn’t encourage it, but now its really like happening in the world, most people are embrassing it, but I wouldn’t.

I: Are there members in the family that are married or are in long-term same sex relationships?

Z: I know of one, but he kind of like hides, hes a relative, yah and hes gay. But he doesn’t show it off, we kind of like, I personally got to learn of it through someone else. And after observation, yes I think he is gay.

I: Hm I don’t know if that’s applicable, but has he adopted children or conceived them by surrogacy or?

Z: not yet cause hes still like hiding hiding, and he has not yet come straight forward.

I: So who leads the task of raising your children? Is this something you do by yourself or does your ex-husband participate?

Z: Its me. My ex-husband I actually forced him to like participate but hes not really keen. Actually I would say that im the one who really takes care of the kids, because the number of times that hes had them visiting, it always ended up like im going back to square one.

I: Why is that?

Z: Because hes an alcoholic and most of the time when they go to visit him, he takes them to the bars and drinks with them, yes. He would take them out as if they´re going for an outing, but he will take them where a place where he can be able to access alcohol. And you see he abuses alcohol so it kind of sometimes affects the kids. And then when he takes alcohol, I think he gives negative vibes to the kids, yah.

I: and so for you, how important is it to create an atmosphere and a space for your children that is not that. Let me ask it better. Obviously you had reasons why you left your marriage, and it maybe perhaps has shaped how you raise your children. What are the things you have learnt now as a single mother and the things that your children need and what they need to learn to build their own families?

Z: can I go back and explain why I actually, people don’t really understand why I left my marriage. Of course when I met my husband it was for life, but in between things change. He started, he was drinking, I also drink, but for him alcohol took charge and he ended up losing jobs, not taking care of us, and also not really being a role model to the kids, because he would come home, because of alcohol, he would come home drunk. But again also you see he´s still the father of the kids, there is no way I can change that. And I always, you know you always have that faith that with time, things will change. With time he would change, he would stop drinking, but in my aspect he never like changed. He continued drinking drinking drinking, and you see like Im a muslim and I have been raised the Swahili way whereby youre told to vumelia and usitoye sirie nyumba yako like outside. That simply means youre not disclosing your problems to other people. So for nine years, I kept it inside. Though my family members used to see him drinking, but they said, no its not a problem. Until when I went to them and explained to them that this guy is drinking a lot and hes abusive, he was beating me up. When I first told them they never believed. I am a very talk-active person, niko naherehere nyingi. Kiherehere is, I know a lot, I talk a lot, I am maybe thick headed or something like that.

I: You are head-strong.

Z: I am head-strong and im a very outgoing person. So when you look at me and when you look at my ex-husband and you look at me, you would always say I am the one who is always on the wrong. So they actually, my family members actually supported my husband over me. They actually never believed me. Until that day when we sat down, both family members, and they kept on telling me, you see, youre husband is saying he´s going to change, hell stop beating you up, it was a mistake he did. Deep down I knew he hadn’t done it, like that was not the first time, it was only the first time that they have come to hear it like then. So I knew if I go back that would be the biggest mistake of my life, so I refused. I actually totally refused and for the first time in my life my brother-in-law told them: this is my brother and this is the wife. When they first met they were two of them, so we can never force her to go back. Shes the wearer of the shoes and she knows where it hurts most. So lets give her time, cause you can see that she is really crying and she´s saying no. I used to, I cried my heart out that day, me im not going back, im not going back. Whatever you tell me, I am not going back, even if you guys will not support me im going out on my own and im going to make it.

I: And that was now five years ago?

Z: No that was not five, it was like, was it five, no like six years ago.

I: oh at the beginning now of the separation.

Z: Yah, at the beginning, beginning of the separation. So after some time, two three weeks, my relatives came with a plan, they said they’ll take him to a rehab and they told me just go back. I told them I only go back – cause I had left my kids – all this process of separation, I ran away and I left my kids. In my mind then, I was like im young, and I think im still fertile, so that even if I get another man I would still be able to conceive the kids and I didn’t have a job. So I kept – and I didn’t have the support of my family and so I was like where am I taking these kids. How will I survive with them? I first have to go out there and make my own life and then I can be able to now go and support them. All along, all this time that I was married, everyone thought that it was the man who was doing – you know in an African perspective we always think that the man is the head of the house, but I think things have changes. Nowadays we … coparent, not even coparent, we share our roles in the house. That I can be able to like give something, my share and he brings his share in like that and then we, but in like a …

I: like a ahm, whats the word? I know that word, sorry for interrupting, but I know that word… egalitarian relationship, where you are partners, youre equal.

Z: Yes, yes, yes. But in my marriage it was not like that. It was like im in a marriage and I want it to work but im the one who is bringing in the big junk. And its not like this man was not working, this man was working and he was getting a lot of money but he – him, he is older than me so probably he had seen life better than me and he knew how to maneuver and – he had like blinded me so I couldn’t see forward. But for me, I was there to make it work forever till death do us part. But now the fighting really increased and I was not at peace in my home and I was not myself. Then I had even stopped reaching out or talk, I didn’t even have friends, i stopped seeing my friends, I stopped seeing my relatives. I was in my own cocoon of marriage, it was not a good thing, it was never a good feeling. And I didn’t want my kids to see me suffer like that. And I also didn’t want my kids to grow knowing that dad used to beat mammy. I wanted them out, I preferred them to live with dad and mammy left. That’s why I left my marriage.

I: You talked about earlier that the idea of separation or divorce or talking about, the idea of talking about problems in a marriage was not accepted, or was not welcomed. Do you think that’s what kept you in the marriage for nine years and what are your thoughts on that, that kind of external pressure?

Z: you see that when you look at other people, were always told that in mostly African communities women are always taught that a man is the head of the house, so whatever he says you have to follow and that you have to be under him. And whatever happens in your marriage its your secret. You just have to work it out, both of you. But again when you are in that marriage, you sit down and you like try to talk it out and solve your problems. It never worked out for me. Me personally it never worked out, cause I tried. I even tried – funny enough my in-laws knew more of my problems than my own relatives. And for me to bring on both my relatives is because I was tired. And this were his people. And of course they would always support him. So I thought when I bring my people we would sit down and of course we would sit like both families and put sense in to my husband for him to stop. But it never stopped. It only stopped for like maybe a week or two weeks. Then when he goes for his drink, then when he comes back, that’s it.

I: Ah that’s so unfortunate. So now you have, you built a life for yourself and here you are five years later. Do you still believe in the concept of marriage?

Z: if you would have asked me that question five years ago, I would tell you no. But now yes, now I can tell you I still believe in the institution of marriage and I know it is workable but it is workable when you get into a relationship and do the process of – there is a process for you to get into marriage, like you have to date, you really have to get to know this person and then you must have like - you have to know what you want for yourself. First it has to be yourself, then that other person, what does he want for himself? And I believe that what he wants for himself and what you want, if you put it on the table and you look at it like this, its something that you can be able to work it out.

I: is this something that you have learned as a matter your experience of life or do you think its also like the modern way of relationships.

Z: its part of the modern way of relationship and what I have experienced myself. Because right now of course there is so many people who have approached me, and yes im in the dating process at the moment and I feel more comfortable with now dating and then getting to know this person well. Then when I look back at how I did it before, its much better now than before. Now I believe in that institution that now this is what I want and I still believe in the institution of marriage.

I: So at what age where you seeing your cousins or your relatives getting married, what was the typical age?

Z: Around from 25 and above, 25 till 30, there.

I: and you mentioned that youre muslim. Is the idea of multiple partners something that is accepted and have you seen that within your family?

Z: Funny enough im a muslim and in my family its only my one uncle who has married several wives, but he has not done it the way its usually done. You see in Islam a man is allowed to have 4 wives. And if you have all these 4 wives at the same time, the first wife has to give consent for him to marry the second one. And the same case goes to the second and to the third. In my family, like nuclear family, its only one of my uncles who has married several wives, but he has married the after he divorced the first one. They all are not like, you see they allow 4, if they are not, they don’t all like…

I: So he has like multiple ex-wives?

Z: Yes, yes. So that’s different than having multiple wives at a go, yah or two wives at a go.

I: yah, that makes sense. And what do you think about - in fact earlier we were talking about raising the children and that’s how we started talking about your ex-husband. Do you find that your children - the way you decided to raise your children now, living with them as a matter of necessity… - let me ask that clearer: So youre a single parent and your ex-husband is not showing up, and is that the only person that is available to raise your children or do you have a community around you that sustains you? What about your mother, is she involved in raising your children?

Z: My mother is 100% involved, my aunties are also 100% involved, my cousins are also 100% involved. With time, they came to realize that my husband was in the wrong and that because I – now that I just went head on and raised my kids on my own despite the sufferings, the many places that I have moved from A to Z. My family realized that I was on the right and that I really need their support and they´ve given me that support. I really appreciate that.

I: That’s really wonderful. What are youre thoughts on family planning and the matters that are available right now in the world. Is that something you apply in your own – as you were building your own family?

Z: its very important to have family planning, I would say its not unfortunate because I got both my last born and my second born when I was still on a family planning method. So id actually, right now through experience, Id advocate for family planning because times are tough. And you really need to give your child the best, and if you have more kids and youre a single parent, you tend to even forget yourself and try and concentrate on your kids, which also makes it a bit stressful. Because most of the time youre unable to take care of your kids. Yah so but id really advocate for family planning, it is really very important. To be able to raise kids, so that you can be able to raise them. With the little income that you have – than to raise several kids and youre unable to take care of them. Cause you see when you have more kids, you make them become adults at an earlier age than when they are supposed to be kids.

I: interesting. And part of that I guess is also a combination of responsibilities at home versus who they need to be in school and things like that. Are you finding that, because of your particular situation in life, youre making particular choices about what education they can have and what path that takes? What decision have you made about your children and what educational opportunities they can pursue?

Z: They can pursue – actually im really, they take the normal school routines and also I advocate for them to go for their talent. One of my sons is a soccer player and you see everything now that you do it consumes money. For you to take your child to play like soccer, he has to join an academy, there is a certain amount of money that you have to pay. But actually, to be very honest, I have not supported my son because I knew him joining a soccer academy would be – it’s an extra income for me and I would not be able to give it my own. So out of that he found his way to play like soccer, join an academy and everything and now im supporting him.

I: that’s really wonderful. And right now are your children studying 8 for 4 system, are they in a public school, are they in a private school, are they in a boarding school?

Z: When I left my husband I didn’t have a job and I enrolled them in a public school. Due to what they had seen, the pressure that was there when we were separating with their dad, they really didn’t perform well and they need extra coaching.

I: Alright, so we were talking about the education path of your children and you had mentioned the talents that your children have had and how they pursued that. Actually, can we take a step back, or rather can we redirect kidogo, because the fact that your children are in Boarding School or one of them is in Boarding School, so now that you choose that path, so we can take it from there, so my child is dadadada.

Z: My children are in the 8 for 4 system. Even when I was married they were still doing the 8 for 4 system and they were in a private school. But when I separated, after the separation, I actually left my kids with the dad and as I said earlier, my relatives - no, African perception is the husband is the head of the house. Im the one who used to pay the school fees for my kids, so it was a bad thing and then it ended up to be a good thing because you see sometimes you have to let people see for themselves what is really like kind of happening in that family institution. When I kept on saying im the one who does everything because now I used to do catering and all the money that I used to get and with the support of my relatives, even when I was married my relatives were still supportive. I would pay the school fees and he would not bring anything in the house. So every now and then people listen up because he was a journalist so he was getting money and everything, so everyone used to know he was the head of the house. And being now like the silent partner there, and being a woman, people never used to know that I was doing everything. So when I ran away I said I have had enough and now I let the world know what ive been going through. By that its not like talking to everyone, telling everyone what I had been through, just let nature take its course. And thank God it happened, I stopped paying the school fees, no at first I felt so bad cause I heard my kids are not going to school so I went back and paid it, for each child I paid half the school fees. Then they went to school then they were again being chased away, then I said im not going to do this, im not going to enable him. Hes a man he works, let him now spend his money on his kids. Unfortunately, he never did that. He let my kids stay at home for a whole term. Then I was still struggling cause I left his house and I didn’t have the support of my relatives. Funny enough when I went to my relatives and told them about my separation and that im not going back to that house, they told me the moment I leave that house im on my own. Yes, and I was like, where was I going to go? I didn’t have anywhere else to go and I said since they supported him, and they really like, my family really supported my husband. They realized his a sick person, hes an alcoholic, they took him to a rehab. He underwent all the programme. When he was in rehab, I went back to my matrimonial home and stayed with the kids, took care of them for all these 3 months without any assistance because now my relatives were helping him so I had to find a way how to raise my kids, feed them and then still I was jobless. But thank God, I still managed. Now the day that he finished his programme, my relatives were not there, so I had to go and pick him up. And you can imagine that situation that youre not with someone, you stepped in and stayed with the kids… that same day I went and picked him up from the rehab and brought him home, is the same day that he relapsed and went and drunk. When he came back he beat me so hard that he even broke my tooth. Thank God the day that we had that fight, the following day we had a family meeting, and I just had to look for a way to run away. And it was so bad that he almost stabbed me with a scissors and that’s when I realized – actually my daughter is the one who saved my life. She walked into the room when he almost stabbed me. And he just shook his head, picked her up and throw her out of the house and locked the door. I think that is when he came to his senses and say, woah I almost stabbed this woman. Then he stormed out. The moment he stormed out he had already torn my clothes, so I changed my top and took the torn top and the scissors – cause I was bleeding a little bit and I took of the heels and I ran away. What actually saved me, cause I couldn’t run that fast, hes a man and hes a fast runner, I got onto a bodaboda, and I told the boda, please take me straight to the police station. I reported, I put a statement and they told me I have to go, I had to go to get a P3, see a doctor and everything and that’s exactly what I did. Being on a weekend, after I finished everything, is when now I went for a family meeting and showed them the evidence and told them I had already filled a case against my husband. They sat me down and said, this is the father of your kids, you can not send him to jail. I listened to them but I followed my heart. I said im the only person that can end this and I cannot continue like this. So I never went back to my house till today.
I: five years later.

Z: five years later. Though you see, that’s now how we separated. Until today, I just go to him when I need something signed, like Ive given him court cases or I want him to sign something for the kids. That’s the only time that we talk, we don’t talk about anything else. 5 years down the line. Its really been a lesson for me whereby with my kids, I want them to get something good in life and for them not to feel like disadvantaged, especially my eldest son. My separation had really affected him, I had taken him to several counselling sessions and also that is one of the main things that made me take him to Boarding School. Because it had reached a point whereby im at home, im waiting for my son he never comes back. He had even been ditching school, he cutting classes and then he goes to his father. And his father just dealt with him, he would not call me to tell me that hes there. so I sat down and asked myself , what do I want for that kid and who is an adult in this relationship. Is it me or is it the kid. So I have to make tough decisions that would probably hurt him now but in future would be an advantage. So decided for my son to go to a Boarding School, even without the consent of his father. I took him to, first I took him to a Boarding School that was nearby. Unfortunately it didn’t work out, there was a teacher who like molested him and my son ran away with his friend from school. Since I had undergone a lot with my kids, I didn’t follow up on that so I just transferred my son to another, very furtherst, the furtherst Boarding School that I would get. So I took him all the way to Aberdares, Nyeri.

I: ok, we were talking about choosing to take your child to Boarding School.

Z: Because of the experience of my separation it really affected my son so I decided I have to make tough decisions for him so I had to take him to Boarding School for him to be disciplined and learn life the harder way.

I: are there particular rights of passage in your family, in your community, in your religion that you have explored with your children?

Z: Yes, the boys have to get circumcised and its usually at an early age, but unfortunately since I was married to a Christian, I had to follow the Christianity or tradition whereby when my boy becomes a teenager is when he can be circumcised. But after I separated with my husband it became my responsibility to make them pass, to undergo the knife. So yes, I took them through that passage of circumcision on my own.

I: How many times has your family moved?

Z: My family, my nuclear family, me and my kids, after my, I used to live in my own house in Kitengela, so when I left, I moved in with a relative. She was really supportive, but again when I realized now when I bring in my children after they had stayed for a whole term not going to school, I had to take them back. Pick them and then take them to school. I couldn’t overburden my sister, actually my cousin but I call her my sister because she has really been there for me. I decided to get a small house and move in with my kids. So from there we stayed for like one and a half months, because we used to share a toilet, my son got bilharzia. Things really got tough on me and I went back to my cousin´s place, but I still felt now her being single and I give her in my self and my kids, its was really, it was really unfair. So while I was there I stayed for like two three weeks while I searched for a house so that we could be able to move. So I managed to get a house and I moved with my kids. This time, cause I had a job, but it was not paying well, I actually got a house when I was paying more rent than my salary. When you have your kids, you want the best thing for your kids. When my son contracted bilharzia, I realized the importance of having your own toilet and not sharing. Sometimes you… ahm when you have kids, when my son got bilharzia, I realized the importance of living in a good house whereby you have your own toilet. And its actually made me, it’s a bad decision, but you just have to do everything to accommodate your situation. I moved in in a house whereby it was more than my – the rent was more than my income. And I managed, from there I moved to like 6 more houses, up to where now I am and were settled. As much as there is still a lot of struggle, its been a long journey, but God has been on our side.

I: How far do you have to travel to see the rest of your extended or immediate family? And how often can you visit each other?

Z: it only takes like an hour or sometimes 45 minutes. Most of my relatives live within Nairobi. Its only my mum who lives outside of Nairobi and then I have an auntie who lives very far. There is one who lives outside the country, she lives in Zaire. Her, shes the one that comes. Then we have our eldest auntie who lives in Malindi and most of the times its us who go visit her. And im very grateful to God that in a year I would be able to visit her twice or thrice, which is also very special to me.

I: And how about the older members within your extended family? How are they cared for? Is there kind of like cultural way, a family value way, how does your family, your immediate and extended family treat the older members of the family?

Z: well this has come from – it’s a generational thing that has been passed on. I never was able to meet my great grandfather, God rest his soul in peace. He was a chief, so he was a community, id say he was a community father. He helped everyone, and from the stories that ive heard from my aunties, from my cousins, from even people that I don’t know. When you mention the name of my great grandfather, his name was Mwalimu Ali Godoro, everyone talks good things about him. How he helped them, how he took the girlchild to school cause by then when our aunties were young the girlchild never was a priority to go to school. He like enforced everyone whether you were a muslim, a Christian, anyone across our community and you had girlchild, he emphasised you to take them to school. So its like a generation thing that has been passed cause our aunties helped each other, they helped the elderly, whether you were an eldery, or a relative , a friend, so I think from that culture that we´ve seen from our relatives is what now we are doing. I was in need, my sisters came and helped me, my friends also came and helped me. And I do the same to like other people in the community and also my relatives.

I: So the older generation, the grandmothers the grandfathers, that generation, are they taken care of in the city, are they taken care of upcountry, how are they perceived? Are there like homes that they go to or how are they taken care of?

Z: Actually how it is done, most of our – because most of our relatives are muslims and Christian, the way we usually tend to our elders, they still live with their relatives, there are those that live with their kids, there are those that still live with their grandparents, we go to them. We sometimes visit them and see. You know when you go to someone, its when you get to know whats the need of that person. It can be either monetary or maybe that person needs medical attention, this person maybe needs food or this person needs rent, youre able to, when youre on the ground that’s when now you see what’s the need of that person. That’s how we are able to cater for them. But we also have – is it like a monthly, or someone would like let me just do shopping for her, someone else would come up with something. Its just something that it just within us, we don’t sit down and talk about it. You just give it out of your will.

I: So theyre not forgotten.

Z: theyre not forgotten, theyre well taken care off.

I: So what makes your family special? And what you love about your personal clan?

Z: my family is very special. I even lack words to express how special they are. They are always go beyond the expectation and I really appreciate that and I thank God that im in this family.

I: Tell me, do you have special memories or a memory that you hold dear in your heart about your family?

Z: as I said my family is big. My extended family, we have a lot of special memories, but the most that are always in my heart – it’s about religion basically because we´ve intermarried, and most of my relatives are Christian and others are muslim. We always come together most of the time and you would never know who is a Christian and who is a muslim, that we interact and become one and we all believe in one God. That is always very special to me. That whenever we meet even people ask, you guys are relatives? I mean shes a muslim shes a Christian, there is that difference that doesn’t show in our family. That is one special thing that we have. And I would say, the way I said, it’s a chain of generation, its been passed on from our grandfathers to our parents and now to us. Im really praying that the other generation that is after us will continue with the same thing.