

PAMPERING ADULT CHILDREN IS DANGEROUS

Parents invest so much in raising children that we often struggle to know when to step back. We sacrifice, guide, protect, and provide. Yet one of the greatest gifts we can give our children, especially when they transition into adulthood, is the gift of independence.

Today, many families are grappling with adult sons and daughters who are working, earning, and even married, but still fully dependent on their parents for survival. If we do not challenge them to think outside the box, we risk raising adults who remain emotionally, financially, and mentally dependent long into their thirties and forties.

STOP THE SPOON-FEEDING

Many adults remain dependent because their parents never allow them to feel the weight of responsibility. A young man may be earning a nice monthly salary, yet he still calls home every time he needs rent. A married woman with a job may still run back to her parents for food, fuel, airtime or salon costs.

When you keep rescuing adults at every turn, you unconsciously teach them that someone else will always

THE LIFESTYLE TRAP

Many parents are quietly sponsoring lifestyles they themselves cannot afford. Some adult children earn decent salaries yet spend their evenings in costly restaurants, drive cars they can barely maintain, and rent in high-end apartments.

Their wardrobes, outings, and entertainment habits swallow their income before the month ends.

Meanwhile, the same child who enjoys a lavish lifestyle calls you for money to pay rent, eat, fuel the car, or clear debts. Because you love them, you send it without questioning their financial habits.

carry the burden for them, whether a parent, spouse, or friend. That dependency mindset is dangerous and it may not stop soon. It weakens discipline, disrupts their financial stability, and sets them up for disappointment in marriages and workplaces because they rely on borrowing and handouts to sustain a lifestyle they cannot afford.

COPY FROM NATURE

In nature, even the most nurturing animals know when to push their young away. The eagle, for instance, reaches a point when it releases its eaglets into the air and lets them fly or fall. That falling is not punishment; it is training. It is how strength is formed. Even a cat will sometimes

scare its kittens so they learn to survive beyond the nest.

If animals understand the importance of gradually withdrawing support, why do we humans struggle to apply the same principle? Why should your adult child be married yet you are still the one paying their rent and financing their meals?

TRAIN THEM TO MULTIPLY THEIR MONEY

Rather than being the solutions to their mishaps, train them that money grows when it is multiplied, not consumed. When adult children spend every coin and run back to you for more, it is equivalent to eating all their eggs at once, forgetting that hunger will return tomorrow.

Therefore, tell them the hard truth



**PARENTING
DICKSON
TUMURAME**

to use the little they have and save for tomorrow or ignore them to stay in that condition for them to appreciate and be on their own. After all, they won't die or fall sick... Sometimes, it is just manipulation of the opportunities.

LET THEM STRUGGLE!

Every independent adult has one thing in common: they struggled somewhere. They felt pressure. They made mistakes. They learned. Your adult children also need that experience. If they completed school but still have not yet got jobs, ask how many applications they have submitted online or job sites they have visited every week, and demand feedback. This is not harsh; it builds accountability.

If they are working but financially irresponsible, let them face the consequences. If rent is due, let them reorganise their salary. If they cannot afford their favourite restaurants, let

them cook at home. Growth begins when comfort ends.

CREATE HEALTHY PROBLEMS FOR THEM

Not all problems are negative. Some are stepping stones. "Good problems" push us to think harder, stretch further, and innovate. When you allow your adult children to face manageable challenges, you help them unlock capabilities they did not know they had.

Obstacles present opportunities. When young adults face difficulties, they learn to find solutions, to reflect, and to appreciate the sacrifices parents made. This is how creativity, responsibility, accountability and resilience are formed.

PRACTICAL STEPS TO INDEPENDENCE

Withdraw gradually, not abruptly, by reducing financial support step by step.

Assign realistic responsibilities and let them pay for groceries, utilities, data or fuel. Teach them budgeting and discipline as they learn to track their expenses and set boundaries. Challenge their comfort zones by allowing a period of time without parental rescue. Offer guidance not rescue. Advise them, but resist taking over their duties.

It is a parent's courage that shapes a child's future. Allowing your adult children to struggle is not abandonment but empowerment. Your goal should be to raise resilient, self-sufficient human beings who can thrive without leaning on others.

The writer is a parenting coach and marriage counsellor