

Life

Day Monitor
2017
www.monitor.co.ug

UGH

DIARY OF A KAMPALA BACHELOR > By Myles Mukisa

Suffering from foot in the mouth disease

Everybody has his or her Achilles heel and I am no different. One of the weak links in my otherwise robust character is the never failing ability to always say the wrong words when I am in the company of a female or females, especially at a moment when I am supposed to be registering high scores so as to secure a date or even a telephone number.

It is a disease suffered by men who are not apprenticed and refined in the mannerisms of handling themselves around women. You may not have noticed it yet but I am that type of man: awkward, un-composed and erratic. Make no mistake, I am usually very collected about myself. I do not miss steps as I walk; I do not stammer; I do

not forget words I meant to say. But suddenly throw me in the company of attractive strange women and the ship suddenly goes off its rails. The composure evaporates into thin air. My state of being is suddenly under attack, baraged by beauty from all corners.

My body responds to the scenario the way it responds to a police officer holding a teargas canister; it panics and descends into defensive mode. Then my mind goes blank and I cannot locate a single idea to drive conversation. Women like men who can steer good conversation, or at least that is what the self-styled dating websites say. They love men who just throw in the right jab, the right compliment, the right one-liner that will then get

them talking about their day, their aspirations, and all the nice things they would shop in Paris if they had the right man.

I never manage to stand up to that occasion. I always have all the wrong words to say, the wrong attempts at humour and lamest compliments that have ever existed. First I will fail to initiate conversation because there is a brain jam that has curtailed my ability to think and produce logical sentences, you know, with a complete thought. When the girl throws her hand at me and says, "Hi my name is Stephanie," my frozen brain replies with a "I am fine thank you."

Then, under pressure to say something and keep conversation moving,

my mouth will blurt out: "I think you need to hit the gym so you do not add more kilos." Even the most insane man out there knows you do not discuss a woman's weight on your first meeting, or ever. But I have done so severally. And then after that, especially after the initial comment is received with contempt and silence, my mind will be driven to add another weak attempt at a compliment. "Those are nice shoes you have right there. But they would have looked even nice if they were the same colour as your dress."

As you can imagine, that is not really what I intended to say. But life will rarely give you second chances in such situations, which is why I have not won a date or a phone number from such encounters.