

HER VISION

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POWER • RELATIONSHIPS • FAMILY • YOUR QUESTIONS

WHEN MOTHERS-IN-LAW STRUGGLE TO LET GO OF MARRIED SONS

FIGHT FOR CONTROL

IN MANY UGANDAN HOMES, THE ARRIVAL OF A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW MARKS A SUBTLE SHIFT IN FAMILY DYNAMICS, ONE THAT OFTEN GOES UNNOTICED UNTIL TENSIONS FLARE. SIMPLE DECISIONS, SUCH AS HOW CHILDREN ARE RAISED, WHAT MEALS ARE SERVED AND WHERE HOLIDAYS ARE SPENT, CAN BECOME POINTS OF CONFLICT BETWEEN THE MOTHER OF THE MAN AND HIS WIFE. **DALLEN NAMUGGA** DELVES INTO WHY UNDERSTANDING THESE TENSIONS IS ESSENTIAL FOR MAINTAINING HARMONY AND PROTECTING MARRIAGES.

Cynthia imagined marriage would mean building a peaceful home with her husband, Nicholas. Instead, tension grew because of his mother's constant involvement in their home. Nicholas' mother visited often without warning and always had something to criticise — the cooking, disciplining the children and even how Cynthia dressed. Sometimes she would rearrange things herself or invite relatives over without asking.

"In our home, we don't do things like this,"

she would often say.

Out of respect, Cynthia tried to stay quiet, but over time she began feeling like a visitor in her own house rather than the wife of the home.

What hurt most was Nicholas' silence. He knew his mother could be controlling, but he struggled to confront her because, in his culture, challenging one's mother is seen as being disrespectful. Instead, Nicholas kept trying to "keep the peace" between them.

However, the more he stayed neutral, the more unsupported Cynthia felt. Now the



Differences between in-laws and a spouse may begin quietly, but its effects often ripple far beyond occasional disagreements, reaching into the core of a marriage

home has become tense.

Cynthia resents the interference, Nicholas' mother believes she is only helping, and Nicholas feels trapped between loyalty to his mother and responsibility to his wife.

WHY MOTHERS-IN-LAW STRUGGLE TO LET GO

When a son gets married, the shift within a family is often deeper than it appears. Norah Namei Mirembe, a clinical counselling psychologist, says this transition can trigger emotional tension not because of hostility, but because of long-standing bonds that are being

redefined. She explains that the relationship between a mother and her son is built over years of nurturing, emotional investment and protection. These early attachments, she adds, play a significant role in shaping how individuals relate to others later in life.

When marriage introduces a new primary relationship, the emotional centre naturally shifts. For some mothers, that shift can feel unsettling.

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