



IDENTITY

TABITHA MWANGI

PROGRAMME MANAGER FOR THE CAMBRIDGE-AFRICA PROJECT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE AND HAILED AS ONE OF THE 'TOP 20 KENYAN BLOGGERS YOU SHOULD FOLLOW', TABITHA MWANGI REVEALS WHAT IT MEANS TO BE KENYAN AND WHY SHE WRITES ABOUT HEALTH MATTERS



How would you describe yourself in three words? Hardworking, kind and learning.

What does being Kenyan mean to you? Kenyans set a high bar for themselves and they work hard. We really do push ourselves, but what we have lacked is uplifting leadership.

What motivates you? I want to add to the stories from Africa by Africans that are full of hope, inspiration and challenge. To offer encouragement.

Why do you think it is important to blog about health issues? I bring my research training into blogging and believe scientific

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And read her blog, at:
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evidence should form the basis of a good article. There is a lot of misinformation out there, because anyone can pretend to be an expert. It's OK to write personal opinions as long as you say so. I do so in my blog and label it a 'rant' – very different from 'scientific evidence'. Misinformation has become a serious public health problem.

What advice do you have for professional women?

Create as much joy at home and work as life allows. You will make mistakes and it is impossible to please everybody – you are only human. So be kind and gentle with yourself. Don't beat yourself up and don't chase the wind – your path is unique.

Which person do you most admire, and why? Prof. Wangari Maathai [the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize]. When I was a little girl, I read of her exploits in the magazines my mother used to buy. Yet, politicians regularly slandered her. I only realised her power when I saw President Moi on TV protesting about a call he got from [the then Soviet Union's] President Gorbachev, who wanted him to let Wangari attend a meeting in Russia. She was shaking Moi up – that was impressive! Much later, I learned that although she was a professor of Veterinary Anatomy, she chose to focus on planting trees. How odd must that have looked then? Yet she believed in herself enough to pursue her heart – and look where that got her!

As a self-confessed bookworm, tell us about your reading tastes. This changes all the time. I am currently enjoying reading fiction from Africa, my favourites being *The Hairdresser of Harare* by Tendai Huchu and *The Lazarus Effect* by HJ Golakai. At the moment, my favourite non-fiction books are *The Choice* and *The Gift* by Dr Edith Eger.

How do you relax? Nothing beats chilling out with my kids (especially when they are not arguing). I enjoy listening to music or podcasts (I am one of those Brené Brownies), while I do household chores.

If you could fly anywhere tomorrow with KQ, where would you go, and why? I would gather my kids and husband on the next plane to Nairobi. I have not been home since 2019 and I miss my family and friends. 🇰🇪