

In support of cancer awareness and treatment

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2015 Celebrate Life!

Can you imagine a group of women singing, laughing and thoroughly enjoying each other's company from midday until nightfall?! Does it sound like sisters, or close cousins or best friends who have known each other for years and years? Well, you would be right...and wrong. Right - because we did feel like family, indeed as sisters who had held each other through very trying times, like deep friends who had stood by each other through valley and mountain experiences, but you would be wrong because many, in fact the majority, met each other, for the first time, just a few hours earlier on that same day - February 14, 2015. What is it that bonded us so deeply in such a short time? Our victory over cancer! For some it was breast cancer, others cervical, one or two throat, another non-Hodgkin's lymphoma but we were all united in wanting to support and encourage each other through the journey.

This was the scene of the 2015 Twakutukuza (Twa) *Celebrate Life!* Event.



The day had started with the usual setting up of the venue to make it beautiful and valentine-worthy, with our wonderful partners doing all they could to ensure the event was as joyous and memorable as could be. We were expecting 35 amazing women who had been touched by cancer through their personal journey, or through the journey of a special woman close to them. Thirty one of our guests showed up and the other four, unfortunately were not feeling well on the day and so could not attend.

The event, dubbed *Celebrate Life!* is a time to do just that: celebrate each woman because she is a warrior, a victor over cancer. She has chosen to fight this condition with everything she has. Others have chosen to stand by their sister, cousin, friend...through a very difficult time. She has chosen to be the hands and feet of Christ in a very practical way. These women are worth celebrating. Twa chooses to hold this annual event to celebrate, laugh, cry, eat, drink, play, and pamper each lady that attends. The cancer journey is a difficult one and for Twa, being able to give these lovely ladies a day off of being a patient or carer, is our greatest joy. It is a chance to remind them, and us, that we are more than patients. That cancer does not define us. That though things may look grim and we may feel sick to our stomachs - literally, this too shall pass and soon enough, we shall be in another season where it will be our turn to encourage someone else who is just beginning the journey.

This always turns out to be a safe place where we can share our deepest fears, or the most hilarious mishaps that have occurred during treatment. The warmth cannot be match. The closeness we feel cannot be feigned. By the end of the event,



it is always hard to say goodbye, so instead we say, see you.



Thank you to those who volunteered, to those who partnered with us, to those who provided support in one way or another. This event does not cost the guests anything other than time and so we are grateful to those who gave financially and in kind to truly make this a day to celebrate. Our thanks to Stella and Mwangangi of Kingdom Business Network, Pat of Party Lounges for the cute stools, Muthoni and her team for the amazing makeovers, Joy and her team from GeoJoy for the beautiful deco, Joanne and her team from Gourmet

Lynk for the sumptuous food and drink, Sheila and Antoinette Absoloms for the yummy juice, Tom Ogola of Beat Clef for sound, Carol Mandi of True Love for the magazines, Tony of Sports Station, Shiko Nderitu of Tuchas Wholesalers, Safaricom Dealers Association, Daykio, Naomi of Elf, Alison, Grace, Mercy and Anne



Nyamu for the gifts for each of our guests, Ida, Peris and Linda for the water, Terry and her team from Ashleys Beauty College for the manicures and pedicures, Esther and her team for massages, Black Swan Media for capturing our moments through photography, Assumpta, Anne, Waithera, Boka, Mshai, Vera, Alison and Angela for being our helpers on the day, Mildred for doing such a superb job of keeping the program flowing smoothly. We also received

beautiful roses – a stem for each woman present! And to those who gave financially, thank you for your generosity. If we had paid cash for everything, the event would have cost us Kshs 1,030,100 but because of the generous in kind gifts from those listed above, we paid out only Ksh 216,575 out of which we received Ksh. 95,000 from a number of you.

Thank you so much for your support and for giving thirty-one deserving women an amazing Valentine's Day! And to our guests, thank you for allowing us the privilege of pampering you.

