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I left home at half past eleven for I wanted to get a good time (twelve o'clock) so that I can have a chance of seeing my friend who is at Dziwe District Hospital for her daughter is admitted at the hospital. The daughter has been injured during a fight between her and her brother.

On my way I met a certain girl by the name Loveness who told me that she was going to Dziwe Secondary School where there are activities that are about HIV/AIDS.

She said that there will be different schools, secondary and even primary schools who are going to perform their activities and there will be also competition between the pupils and that there will be different gift to those who will do well.

She said that there will be questions about the disease of AIDS and other questions will be about sexually transmitted diseases and those who will be answering properly will be given gifts. The gifts include writing materials, T-shirts, money, and even sweets and biscuits.

I was interested and I told Loveness that I will also be there to see what was going to happen there so I told her to go together if she can be able to cycle so that we all go together and she stopped at Dziwe Secondary School while I continued my journey to the hospital.

At the secondary school we found a lot of people who were just making a lot of noise. The meeting was not yet started but it was about to because I saw pupils carrying chairs from classrooms, going to the ground so I hurried to the hospital so that I can be back in good time and have a chance of attending the meeting.

I arrived at the hospital and found that people have just started entering the hospital so I put my bicycle under a certain tree and went straight into the hospital to the female ward where my friend, Mrs. Thebulo was with her daughter. I found Mrs. Thebulo eating nsima with vegetables.

I sat beside the bed and we exchanged greetings then she said that she is happy due to my presence and this shows that I really love and care for her.

I told her not to worry for she is really my good friend and that I must help her during troubles so there is no reason for her to thank me. Then I asked her how Dagalasi is feeling nowadays and how she got injured.

So she explained that her daughter is getting better nowadays and if things went well they will be recovered and went back home within three or four days. She uncovered her daughter and showed me the wound, she had a big wound in the head and another one on the left hand and the other one at her back near the neck. She explained that she is not understanding why Binadamu her daughter is in this condition because Binadamu and her brother Justice who injured her were loving each other, for Binadamu cannot eat anything without sharing with Justice and the same with Justice and today those friends has injured she is wondering.

Binadamu called her mother and asked her mother that to whom did she talk and her mother told her that wake up and see her, she is your sister Mrs. Ngalande.

She woke up and sat up we shook hands and she told me that I really love her for I had remembered her while there are so many people/her friends whom she used to share smile but there is [not] anyone who have come to see her except her relatives and her brother.

She told her mother that she will explain herself what makes her to have these troubles but first she wants to eat so I told Binadamu's mother to give her the food I have brought (rice with eggs and chips).

Binadamu was given the food and she said that she had liked the food that she ate a lot. She was eating while explaining about the accident.

She said that she loved her brother more than any member of her family and her brother also loved her very much that there is no secret between them. She explained that she knew everything her brother did and she knew every partner of her brother and that her brother had two girlfriends who he wanted to choose a wife and he planned that he want to test his blood with his girlfriends so that he might have a good choice.

She said that she loved both the girls but she loved one more than the other and it was the opposite of her brother for he loved the other one whom she did not like very much and this is where problems began.

She explained that her brother was saying that both the girls are beautiful but one thing that makes a difference between Martha and Daina is that Daina's mother passed away with HIV/AIDS and her father is seriously ill so it might be that Daina is also HIV positive but he loved her because she cared a lot for him and she do everything that he can ask her to help while Martha is a cool girl but she is difficult. That one cannot force her to do anything but she liked her very much than Daina.

She continued explaining that her brother tested his blood with his girlfriend separately and the results was that he was found HIV negative, Daina is also negative while [Martha] was positive and Binadamu was laughing at his brother and this provoked him that he started beating her with a certain piece of metal that is why she had been injured severely.

Binadamu's mother said that she is thanking me for my presence for she had known the things that were hidden. She said that she is at the hospital but she only knew that Binadamu has been injured because of partners but she did not know about this story.

Binadamu told her mother that who could have explained to her while she is not fine and tell her that she must not punish her brother because he did not plan to do this but he did it due to the anger he had in his heart.

Her mother said that she will listen to everything she said but she was worried that her son might have the virus but it is not yet seen in his blood.

Binadamu said that she must not worry much because Justice uses condoms so she is sure that Justice is HIV negative.

Her mother asked her if one day she went to witness her brother having sex with any girl so that she can know that he always uses a condom.

Binadamu told her mother that she must speak as if she knew both of them and her mother said that one day she will have sexual intercourse with her brother.

Binadamu said that it cannot be like that because Justice is really her brother but she is very open to him that they chat and discuss anything without any problem with her brother that is why he even follows her when going to school and she also follows him at work that she even knew the salary of her brother.

I asked if Justice came to see his sister and what he said about the incident.

Binadamu's mother said that she does not understand their love because Binadamu said that her brother must not go to the police station for she loved him and Justice was just crying when people were busy searching transport to take her sister to the hospital and now he came to the hospital twice a day and he has started apologising to his sister and has promised to care for her.

The mother said that she is worrying that these two can marry each other but Binadamu laughed and laughed and told her mother that Justice will get married to Daina and she will also get married when her turn arrives after finishing her education.

Then comes two young men who brought some soft drinks and Binadamu introduced them as her boyfriend and his friend. She told her mother that she must be happy for today she has seen her son-in-law, the man who will marry her in future.

Her mother said nothing and the two men did not stay long and they left and Binadamu's mother laughed and told her that she is very clever that is why she feel no shy to introduce her partner while he is there.

Then we heard a bell ring and Binadamu said that the bell has rang early for she had a lot of things to tell me but I told her not to worry for she will be fine soon so we will have enough time to chat. Then I told her that I will visit her tomorrow then I stood up and said get well soon to her and she wished me a nice journey and her mother thanked me then I left.

I took my bicycle and started going back, with the intention of arriving in good time at the secondary school. I cycle very fast but I did not succeed because when I was some kilometres to arrive the road was full of people especially pupils who were going to the secondary school. They were making a lot of people. Others [some] were running while other were walking very fast.

I was disturbed together with other people on bicycle so I stopped and started walking.

I arrived at the secondary school and found that the meeting has already started that a certain man was talking about the disease of HIV/AIDS.

He was saying that the disease of AIDS has left no place or country and that it is killing many people of every race. He said that AIDS is a dangerous, bad disease for it has no cure or vaccine for once a person gets AIDS, he might know that one day he/she will die although he can be fat and healthy and strong. He explained that HIV/AIDS is a strong disease that cannot fight with any other disease and lose the game but it is always the winner for other diseases can be defeated for they have cure but AIDS has no cure.

He told the pupils that his advice is that they must try to avoid unprotected sexual intercourse before marriage or else they can avoid sex so that they can totally avoid getting the disease of HIV/AIDS and even other sexually transmitted diseases for they can help in easy spread AIDS. He said that once a person has suffered from syphilis, gonorrhoea, chancroid or candidiasis can easily get the disease of AIDS because all these diseases are transmitted sexually.

He continued saying that he wishes to see future leaders grew up get educated and get good jobs and stay a healthy life which will mean the country have health citizens who will have good development of the country.

He then sat down then another man stood up and introduced himself as the head teacher of Nkasoi Community Day Secondary School. He said that he had only a comment to what the other man said especially on sexually transmitted diseases. He said that it is very important to see a doctor once one has seen the signs of these diseases for this can help in proper and fast defeat of the disease. He said that nowadays there is no need to hide certain things like sexually transmitted diseases so that most of the children must know everything so that they can be able to avoid such diseases that is why he is talking on the open about sexual intercourse.

Other people clapped hands as the head teacher continued to explain that sexually transmitted diseases are diseases which are mostly passed from one person to another

through sexual intercourse. He said that there are common signs and symptoms of these sexually transmitted diseases that can easily be noticed and treated but apart from HIV/AIDS.

He sent a certain boy to collect a board from the staff room. As the boys went to collect the board, the head teacher apologised that he will consume a lot of time but he was doing that because he wants the boys and girls to understand well about the signs and symptoms so that they might know then very well.

He wrote the signs and symptoms on the board and said that everyone who wants can write then while he was explaining. I moved forward and get a good place that I was able to see what was written on the board and here is what was written on the board.

Gonorrhoea:

- Burning pain when urinating
- Lower abdominal pain
- Urethral constriction
- Discharge from vagina or penis

Chancroid:

- Redness and irritation of the glands and penis which may result in intense inflammation
- painful ulcers

Syphilis:

- Genital ulcers which is painless or lumps on the penis
- Bleeding from vagina
- Fever
- Pain in pelvic area

Candidiasis:

- Vulva irritation
- Soreness and itching of penis
- Painful sexual intercourse in female
- Vulva may be reddened and swollen

Many people especially the pupils wrote them down while the head teacher was busy explaining in Chichewa and many people were laughing but he was serious and went on explaining.

He continued explaining about HIV/AIDS that this is the most difficult disease for it is a killer. He said that when a person is infected with AIDS/HIV, the virus enters the blood stream and it starts destroying the body's defence, the white blood cells and when too many white blood cells are destroyed the body is unable to fight diseases.

He explained that during this time that the virus is fighting with the white cells a person can look fine/healthy but when too many white cells are destroyed a person can catch different diseases.

He said that HIV/AIDS signs and symptoms therefore depend on the illness which have attacked a person with AIDS. He said that he will stop there for there are a lot of people who want to explain more about AIDS so he left the other part to his friend.

Another man stood up and said that it was time to give gifts to those people who will answer certain questions that are going to be asked. He said that the first question is that he wanted to see if one pupil/student can openly tell his/her friend that he/she is HIV positive and he/she must have a letter from the hospital to be his/her witness.

Many people laughed other [some] were murmuring but the man tried to stop the noise and said that the one who will do that he/she will receive the expensive gift and she/he will have a chance of getting the ARV drug.

A certain man among the group shouted that he had something to say and he said that it is a difficult question because may be the student did not take the letters for they did not know about it.

The other man said that every student or pupil know it before today so that if they are ready they have already their letters so he was waiting to hear from them.

But nobody volunteered to tell people that he/she is HIV positive that a long time passed while people were just making a lot of noise. Then a man who was a teacher at Eliya Primary School asked for silence and he said that may be the pupils were feeling shy [shameful] or they are afraid of their parents may be their parents are not knowing about how their children health are going. He further said that it is good for them to say on public for people can help him/her once he get sick.

A certain man from the group said that it is very difficult for one to speak about HIV/AIDS in front of many people because most people can take that one as a bad person.

The teacher said that the man has said the truth but he said that it is not good to laugh at a person who have the disease of AIDS but that person must be cared and helped so that he/she must stay a better life.

He then asked a question and said that the one who will answer it will receive a nice gift and here is the question. In which year did the disease of HIV/AIDS was discovered here in Malawi?

He said that the answer must come from a standard five pupil at Chandiwira primary school whose name was Fainesi. The girl said that HIV/AIDS were discovered in 1985 and she was given Ten exercise books of 80 pages each.

Thereafter comes many questions going to different schools that every school received four questions and most of the pupils were able to answer correctly that most of them went with different gifts like soap, school bags, exercise books, pencils and many more.

There were different activities that took place and the activities that interested a lot of people received gifts which included balls, netball.

A certain girl sang a poem which had the heading "Ndiribe Bwenzi"(I have no friend) and here is the poem:

Ndiribe bwenzi  
Popeza onse andithawa  
Palibe uyo andilandila mnyumba mwake  
Popeza uyo andikonda  
Ndimukokera kuli chete  
Ndilibe bwenzi ine  
Popeza akonda ine akhala bwenzi la mphasa  
Ndiyenda mobisala  
Kuti anthu asandione  
Popeza akandiona  
Onse azindithawa  
Ndilibe bwenzi ine  
Popeza ndine oopsa zedi  
Umasiye ndibweretsadi  
Mavuto osatha ndidza nawo  
Umphawi njala umasiye  
Ndilibe bwenzi ine  
Wachiwerewere ndiye bwenzi langa  
Ndilowa mthupi mwake mwakachetechete  
Chenjerani abale nonse  
Dzina langa ndine Edzi.

There ended the poem which says that I have no friend for all run away and there is no one who welcome me his/her house for those who love me I will kill him/her. Those who love me they will turn to be a friend of mat (which means she will get sick and sick).

The poem continued explaining that I walk while hiding so that people must not see me. I have no friend for I am too dangerous for I bring difficulties like poverty, hunger and orphans. My friend is the one who like sexual intercourse, I enter his/her body without any noise so be careful my friend my name is AIDS.

Another activity that I put my attention was a certain group of six boys who sang their song about HIV/AIDS and one of their song was going like this.

Matenda a edzi

Anayamba kale zedi kukokera anthu kuli chete  
Vuto lili padziko pano  
Sitiopa chiwerewere! Sitiopa matendawaaaa  
Chifukwa chake chiyani  
Umphawi! Njala! Kudzikonda komanso taiwala Mulungu  
Mapeto ake  
Titha tonsee  
Anthuni  
Titha tonsee  
Dzikoli nanga  
Lidzasanduka chipululu nyanja nkhalangoo  
Chofunikira nchiyani  
Tileke chiwerewere komanso tipemphe kwa Mulungu  
Atichotsere edzi padziko lino.

The song ends there and it says that the disease of AIDS started killing people long ago but the problem here on earth is that people are not afraid of sexual intercourse and also the disease. This is because of poverty, hunger and also people have forgotten God.

The song continue saying that as the result we will all die and the world will turn to wilderness, lakes and forests. The important thing [is to] stop having sexual intercourse but also pray to God so that he must remove AIDS on the earth.

The song ended up while many people were laughing and clapping hands because of a certain boy among the choir members who was dancing in front of his friends while singing he was also singing through gestures for he was acting on what they were singing.

As I was still watching, a certain girl by the name Siana called me and told me that certain girls are searching for me that they have told her that if she saw me she must tell me that they are greatly wanting me.

So I started searching for her that I was just moving here and there while listening to what was going on.

A certain lady whom she introduced as a Primary Education Advisor (PEA) explained about how to care an HIV/AIDS patient so that one can avoid getting the disease. She explained that HIV/AIDS is a very dangerous disease that everyone can get it so a person who is suffering from AIDS must be separated from his/her friend for he/she needs to stay near a person so that he/she must not get worried due to suffering.

She said that AIDS is very bad disease that is why many patients get worried that one can decide to kill him/herself if he/she stays alone for a long time. This can be like that because the disease of AIDS takes a long time for a person to die. So if the patient is not cared enough he/she may think that his/her relatives are tired with him/her so he better die soon by killing him/herself.



She explained that we must be very careful because "moto umapita kumene kwatsala tchile" (fire goes where the bush remains) so we must care the AIDS patients with love for one day we can be found that we are also suffering from HIV/AIDS.

She also said that it is against [the] law to say that some has AIDS by just looking at his/her health for one can know that he/she is HIV/AIDS positive by testing only so we must be very careful when speaking.

She said that the patient of AIDS must eat food of different types which are delicious so that it must give the patient an appetite to eat. She said that if the patient is unable to eat the carer must feed him/her with love but he/she must not cover his/her hands with plastic bags for one can not take the virus of HIV/AIDS during feeding.

She said that the hands can be protected if the patient is vomiting and you are cleaning him/her and also hands can be protected when the carer washes the wounds of the patient and the wounds must be bandaged after cleaning them by clean bandages and the unwanted bandages must be thrown in a pit latrine or burnt.

She further explains that a person who washes clothes or beddings that has touched blood, faeces, or any other fluid from the patient's body, he must cover the hands with gloves if available or plastic bags to avoid the virus from spreading to him/her. She also explained that after washing the clothes and beddings they must be put on the sun to dry and then iron them before using them again.

She also said that the place where the patient sleeps must always be dry and warm so that the patient must always feel warm.

She also explained that the patient must not be given cold food like food that has been cooked yesterday e.g. nsima, but he must be given previously cooked food and the food must be covered after being cooked and served.

She said that for there is nothing to do for the AIDS patient other than waiting for death but the most important thing that we can do is to pray to God asking him to forgive the sins that the patient had and if possible the relatives must encourage the patient to repent so that he must have a better place in the kingdom of God for many people believe that there is life after death so everyone must prepare that life by doing good things.

She said that the relatives can have a chance of praying together with the patient and sing hymns so that the patient must forget about the worries/pain that he/she had in his/her body. She said that another good thing is that the relatives can call the church members to have a chance of praying together with the patient so that the patient must know that people are still loving him/her and that she/she is still important although he/she is seriously sick that fails to pray and chat together.

The lady concluded by saying that everyone must know that God will bless those who help other people (the sick, the poor) so it is better to help the needy/sick.

By the time the lady finished her speech I was about to leave for I had found two people who were looking for me, they were my in-laws from Chilimba in Blantyre. They arrived at home and they were told that I went to the hospital but on their way they met a certain girl who told them that I was at the secondary school that is why they had followed me.

So I decided to leave with my visitors but I waited for the lady's speech then I left while a certain group of young ladies were doing their activity called chitelela.

THE END.