

Dance is the story of my life.

Have you ever danced? We dance because we are celebrating or having fun. Each one of us has been blessed with a special dance. It's unique because no one else knows it unless we open ourselves and allow others to come and join us and dance with us. Please join me, watch the steps and movement and enjoy the dance, it's the story of my life.

It was in the afternoon on August 22, 1974 when I came to this world. My mom (Margaret Wambui) and dad (Patrick Mukundi) lived in a grass thatched house and mud built wall. This was the place I was born. After birth I was named Ngatia, which means a lion. According to our tradition I had to take my uncle's name. I was baptized four years later and named Samson. My aunt chose this name for me so that I can strong like Samson in the Old Testament. I am the fourth child of my parents who have 15 children. By then we lived in Kimuri, a small village of about 1000 families. Kimuri is located in Eldoret, Rift Valley province, Kenya. Yes, I'm a Kenyan by nationality, kikuyu by tribe. There are more than 30 tribes in Kenya which means there are more than 30 languages. Kenya was colonized by the British for many years and hence English has been our official language. We learn English from kindergarten all way through college. Kiswahili is the language that unites us as a nation and is required to be studied as well from kindergarten to high school. Every Kenyan speaks three languages at least: mother tongue (tribal language), English (official language) and Kiswahili (national language).

I took my primary education in Kimuri primary school for seven years. Most if not all the kids were kikuyu. Then in 8th grade I went to Ochemina Primary school where my uncle whom I'm named after was a teacher. Most kids there were Nandi by tribe and I had to learn some of the Nandi language and culture as well. In both of these places 90% of the people were farmers. My primary responsibility was taking care of the cattle of my parents. If I was not in school I had to take the animals to the field (cows, goats and sheep) and graze them. My parents had 20 cows, 35 sheep and goats. We had two dogs which we used for hunting for the protection of our animals and house at night from bad people. Dogs are not expected to be inside the house. We had two cats which lived inside the house mostly to hunt the rats. I kept some rabbits and chickens which I sold once in a while to get some money.

My dad had a big music system and neighbors used to come home on the weekend, play music and dance. If you danced very well my dad would give you a gift. This was how we had fun on the weekend, dancing in people's houses; we did not have a dance club in my village or any where near. TV was history in my village; no one had a TV when I was growing up as a boy. I had not seen a movie theater until I came to United States. Radio was the only means of communication by then.

My parents expected all us to participated in their farm life and enjoy every bit of it. Before going to school every day my brothers and I had to milk five cows or more by hand and on my way to school carry the milk in a big container with a wheelbarrow to the milk collection center, and then head to school. After school I had to make sure I fetched enough water from the well for family use, animals and sometimes even for the plants, in case it was very dry. One of the most fun times was working in the farm during harvesting period. Neighbors moved from one farm to the other helping each other to harvest corn. We were always singing and competing to see who will out harvest the others. For this reason I knew everybody in the village because we were very close