



Tips to Keep the Weight off

This Holiday

By Ayooluwa Uthman

As magical as the holidays are, for most people, especially the weight-conscious, it can be a dreadful time of the year because of all the mouthwatering treats available at home, events and family gatherings.

Panic not, help is nigh. We have fished out six tips, to give you victory by keeping the fat off your waistline!

1 NEVER GO BACK FOR SECONDS.
This is probably one of the hardest things you're going to do. But then truth is bitter: the more you eat the more weight you gain. To combat the demon of cravings, eat your meals slowly, enjoying every mouthful. With this, you will feel full faster and eat less.

2 DRINK LOTS OF WATER
Drinking water also makes you feel full and prevents you from eating more. As you go through your holiday activities, always carry a bottle of water in your bag.

3 BUY A LOT OF HEALTHY SNACKS
Fruits, nuts and other ready-made healthy snacks can be a life-saver, especially when the cravings-spirit descends. You can carry them around through the day, and they can prevent you from eating too much at events.

4 SET ASIDE 15 MINUTES EVERY DAY FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
Whether it's full blown exercise, or just taking a walk, activity is good for you; it gets your blood flowing and raises your metabolism.

5 HAVE A SET OF ACTIVITIES TO KEEP YOURSELF ENGAGED

For those who are prefer to spend the holidays at home, there is the temptation to eat out of boredom. To prevent this, have a set of activities that can engage you both physically and mentally. The best way to implement this is to plan your day; plan your meal times and your activities. Combined with having healthy snacks, this practice can really help keep your weight on track.

6 SLEEP WELL
Though your schedule may be cramped with many holiday activities, you have to make sure you get regular sleep; being sleep deprived reduces your brain's ability to absorb glucose from your blood. This leads to intense sugar cravings and since your brain is tired, it also leads to a reduction in its executive function (self-control). Get good, long, relaxed sleep sessions. The recommended number of hours is between 6-8 hours.

References

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Maraji

'King' (Queen) Of Skits

By Ayooluwa Uthman

She is on her third outfit - a red peplum dress. The set is designed to portray her as an elegantly dressed videographer. Being naturally playful, she enters fully into the role, and yells out of the blue, "Cut! We're good for the day! Everybody, go home!" causing everyone present to burst into laughter.

It's 4:15pm, which means we've been at the studio for 6 hours, trying to get perfect shots for the cover story of our December edition. And Gloria Oloruntobi, popularly known as Maraji - an Instagram celeb who rose to fame for her hilarious skits - has been a constant source of entertainment as well as our makeshift DJ.

PHOTOGRAPHY Felix Crown (@felixcrown); CREATIVE DIRECTION Elizabeth Enajero; STYLING Mag Payne (@magpayne);
HAIR Royce Samuel for Ceezysstyling (@ceezysstyling); MAKEUP Elizabeth for Zaron Cosmetics (@zaroncosmetics)



I've always given myself interviews... I didn't really have a destination per se, I just knew I wanted to have a camera to my face.

As I watch Gloria, Maraji to her instafans, my mind travels to the first of her videos I saw. It was a skit demonstrating how boys behave as a group versus individually, when they see a girl. The realism of the portrayed scenario was spot on. She was able to deliver the perfect blend of ridicule and reality, a feat most of the content on Instagram find difficult to match: either going overkill on the ridicule and making the video entirely un-relatable, or being plain un-funny. Maraji on the other hand, received over 263,000 views, and managed to make me – a person with the weirdest sense of humor - laugh, with that single video: A set of truly remarkable feats.

MARAJI: MAD HATTER OR MERRY MAKER

She carries on with her demonstrations; making funny faces at the camera, like those her 614,000 followers have come to love. They range from funny to downright hilarious. And as she breezes through these caricatures, A.O.'s initial question, which sounded quite unorthodox at the time, begins to seem more valid:

A.O: Are you mad?

Maraji: (Laughs) No I'm not! I'm not, I think I'm just creative, (more

laughter), I put on a show if you want me to. It is about bringing out the right personalities at the right time

A.O: So, what's the current personality?

Maraji: Right now, it's just... weird; people consider it weird, creative and entertaining."

It was a totally unexpected start to the interview, which held earlier in the day, shortly after Maraji arrived at the studio. Still, further reflection reveals that it was question that had been at the forefront of my thoughts as well, just not in that phrasing. It was more of a desire to know the mind behind the comic relief we all enjoy on a daily basis. And as an observer to the interaction that unfolded with our publisher, it wasn't hard to see how Maraji could be who she was as she cheekily imitated her mother in the course of the chat: "She loves the camera! Every time I'm shooting a video, she's always like, 'Should I show in this one? Do you think people will like it if I show in this video?'"

The official chat went for about half an hour, and in that brief period of conversation we learnt a lot about this surprisingly introverted, music addicted, talkative young lady.

She was born Gloria

Ofuje Oloruntobi, on the 6th of February 1997. The second child to Mr. Gbomi Oloruntobi, a customs officer and Mrs. Dupe Oloruntobi an entrepreneur in the fashion and jewelry business, Gloria came 16 years after the birth of their first child, they hail from Somorika, in Akoko Edo LGA of Edo State, Southern Nigeria.

MARAJI DRAMA (QUEEN) KING

Gloria, (AKA Maraji), grew up in Lagos loving the spotlight. As a child, she readily participated in performance related activities like dramas and cultural dances. And so, it wasn't surprising that her first reaction to boredom during a particular school holiday period was to post a video of herself lip-syncing, quite erratically, to Nikki Minaj's The Boys on Instagram. "I started it while I was in 300 level at Covenant [university], it was just for jokes. I filmed and uploaded it and I was so scared. I was like; 'oh my God, people are going to think I'm strange'. I decided that I was going to delete it after 2 hours."

She never did. The feedback she got was unexpected to say the least. Some people did think she was strange, but they turned out to be the minority. Speaking excitedly, she said: "At

first people were like: 'Gloria! What is this?!' (laughs), but eventually more people were like 'oh my God, she acts like a cartoon character' and then celebrities started reposting and somehow made it into a thing. So, it became that I was expected to upload more videos... and that's how it all started."

Yes... that's how our dear Maraji blew; what was intended to be a spoof video ended up birthing a wave of hilarious, musical.ly skits depicting equally hilarious moments from movies, and social media culture. The skits eventually evolved into original videos portraying the life of the everyday Nigerian millennial and raking in hundreds of thousands of views. Since then, life for her has taken quantum leaps thrusting her further and further towards her dream: creating and acting in movies that have unpredictable endings.

Apparently, the name "Maraji" is the Hindi word for "King", and Gloria loves India. It's an affection that originated in secondary school at Gwat College, Egbeda, as a spin-off from her love for history. The country drew her in, with its rich culture and fascinating history and it also played a huge part in her decision to study International Relations.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Still, neither International Relations nor Bollywood fantasies had anything on Maraji's dream of eventually owning the spotlight she had claimed since childhood as she let us know: "I just wanted to be famous (laughs), I've always talked to myself in front of the mirror, all my life. I've always given myself interviews, always asked myself questions and answered them. I didn't really have a destination per se, I just knew I wanted to have a camera to my face."

I eventually switched from observer to participant and in classic A.O style, dropped my own unorthodox question:

"Will you follow me on Instagram?"

She said no. Then she said yes.

The conversation flowed to her life currently, as Maraji. Like every artist, her inspiration comes from a cocktail of life experiences, her imagination and gist. She aims in every video to portray actual life as it is presented to her brain by the aforementioned ingredients. On the selection process for her musical.ly skits, she said: "it has to be something out of the ordinary, it has to sound really weird and

people have to listen to it and be like 'what?!'".

MUSICAL.LY EXPANDING

These one-minute videos take about 9 hours to make. First, she gets the idea and writes it down in order not to forget. Next, she writes a script to give the idea a structure. When all of that is done, she makes sure the environment is distraction free:

"Finally, I create space because I still stay with my parents, so it's like 'everybody, I'm making a video today! Please go inside!' (Laughs) and then they have to start spreading across Lagos, so my mom can be like, 'Ah I dey commot house for you oh' and then she goes out and everybody follows suit."

The actual recording then begins and that as well, comes with its share of struggles: "I need to caution myself when I'm recording, because I get so creative when I record, so I start to talk a lot, and it's so funny. So I'm like 'yeah! yeah! yeah! Let me just keep talking' and then when I'm editing I have to cut it all out, and I'm like 'ugh!'"

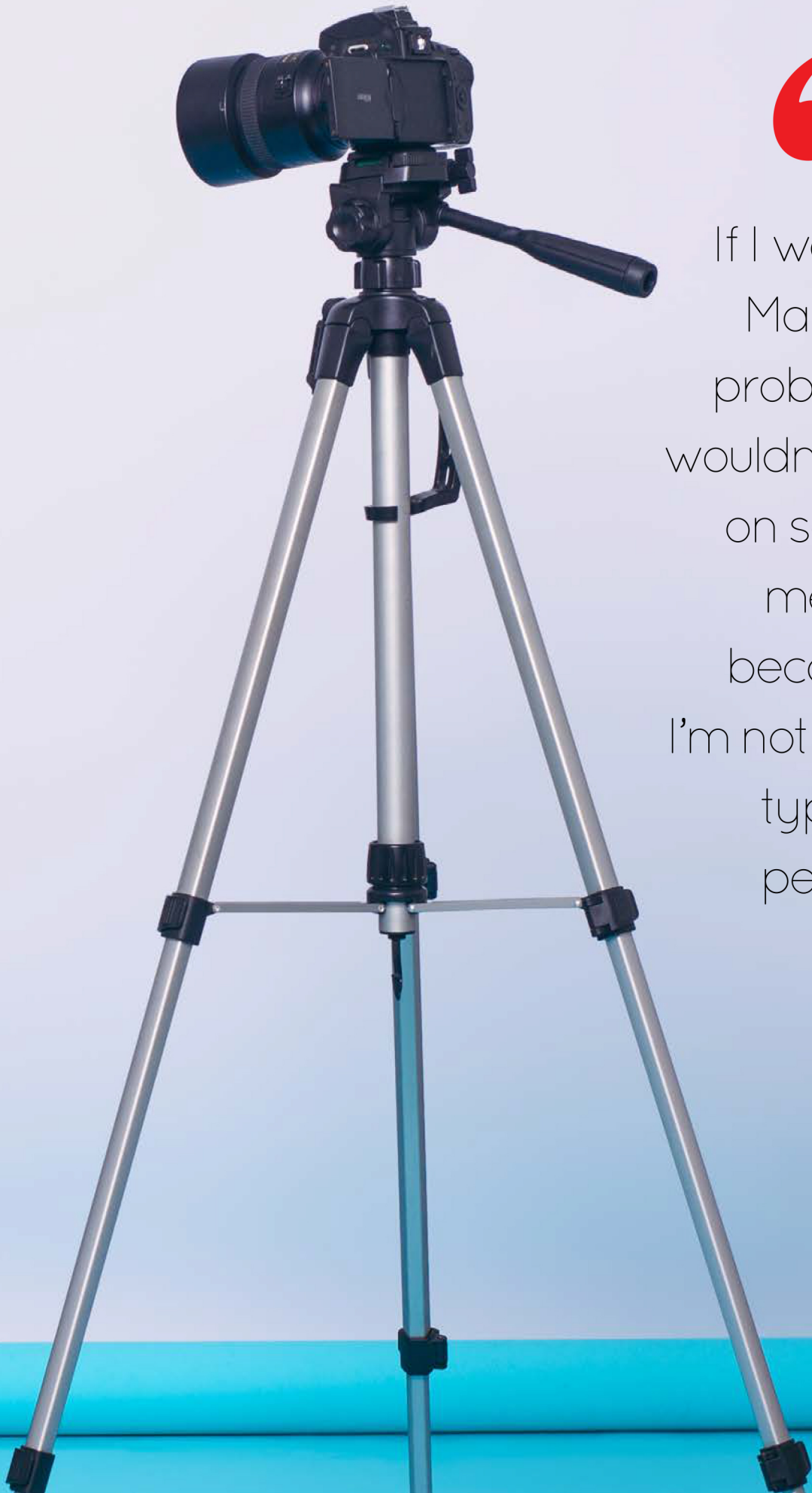
Anyone who has chased an interest or a curiosity down the rabbit hole and stuck with it, will attest to that moment, when he or she realizes that they've



my friends
are the
same
people
since my
100 level
days...
They know
me, they
understand
me."



JACKET, SHORTS & SHOES
Stylist's Closet



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If I wasn't
Maraji, I
probably
wouldn't be
on social
media,
because
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type of
person



My dad... keeps telling me... your mates now; them dey find job, you, you don establish, so make you just dey happy, dey give God glory'

gone further than they imagined, and the same set of skills that brought them to where they are can no longer suffice for the journey ahead.

Also, the game needs to be either be upped or dropped. Maraji, who started out posting musical.ly videos, got to that stage as well; she might not have been conscious of it, but she knew that point had come and "iPhone cameras and VivaVideo" wouldn't cut it anymore. She was a media personality now, and with daily views reaching the thousands, her content had to look as professional as possible. So, she got a camera and taught herself how to use it via YouTube videos. She also gave herself lessons on how to position the lights when shooting videos and how to edit these videos as well, inadvertently adding video producer to her already shiny resume, a clear case of success breeding more success.

FAME, FORTUNE, FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Speaking of which, we wanted to know how her family reacted to her success and how she handled the fact that she was now someone a lot of people wanted to be

friends with. Star status doesn't necessarily mean new friendships, she says. "Nah the gates of friendships are locked, my friends are the same people since my 100 level days, they're still my friends now. They know me, they understand me."

As for family, and their reaction to her viral status, she said, "My mom loves it! She loves the attention. Like when we stop or we're on the road or something and someone is looking at me, she'll be like 'e be like say the person know you' and I'll be like 'mummyyy!!!' and she'll persist 'e be like say e know you oh, smile, smile for am'. My dad, well he's fine, he's just happy I'm busy, he keeps telling me, 'ah, make you just happy, your mates now; them dey find job, you, you don establish, so make you just dey happy, dey give God glory'.

Though she earns more now, than she would have had she followed the conventional path (i.e. gotten a job), Maraji doesn't think she's established yet - not by a long shot. The hustle continues.

At this point, the conversation had taken a more personal direction, treading through topics like her interests -(drawing, online shopping, make up and dancing), her hobbies -

(sleeping and going out for ice cream with her friends), her relationship status - (single), and her opinion of social media, as someone who uses it as a platform for expression:

"Social Media right now is like business, everybody is trying to sell themselves, even if you're not selling a product, you're probably selling an attribute; like your looks, someone can be like, "oh I like the way you look, I have these clothes come and model for me". So social media has become this business platform, everybody is selling something".

MARAJI TOMORROW

While social media could be good for business, A.O pointed out that it is also choked up, which could lead to stiff competition, especially for someone like Maraji. Unfazed by the statement, she responded: "If I wasn't Maraji, I probably wouldn't be on social media, because I'm not that type of person, I barely take pictures. I know I'll be fine, creativity is about thinking outside the box, it doesn't always have to be online"

But Maraji is online now, and it seems she will be for a very long time to come.

TURTLE NECK Stylist's Closet
TROUSERS Tiatra



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