**Making it count while you count!**

Maraji was optimistic about the prospects of building a career in the UK/Canada after her program. She just gained admission into a Master of Management program in a renowned University. She heard a lot about how networking matters and was poised to make the most out of it. She set her first call with a project manager since she was looking to pursue a career in project management after her two-year program. She has qualifications as a project manager from a renowned institution in Ghana as well as 5 years of experience applying her skills in that field.

However, 30 minutes into the call, she began feeling alarmed. She panicked and wondered if she could continue with this conversation. She has heard stories of how UK/Canadian employers prefer to hire people who are personable and can make “small talk”, and as an introvert, she felt unsure about how to get past that hurdle. In comparison to the conversations people had back at home, in Ghana, this was a really different experience. Culturally, people from her country were more direct in their conversations, whether professionally or informally. She was hit with doubts from the stories she heard from other Africans she met since moving to the UK over a month ago. Some of the comments kept circling in her thoughts: “Our qualifications are not recognized by employers here, you need to doubly prove yourself”, “You'll need to get familiar with relevant Canadian culture and popular trends, so that you can talk to Canadians - otherwise you may be seen as anti-social”, “You have to code-switch”.

Maraji began wondering how she can maintain her true authentic self going into a conversation and even engaging with her course mates and professors. “I do not want to stand out as a sore thumb, I am already the only black person and this is daunting enough”. Moving to a place where she was the only African From after spending most of her life in a black dominated community, has felt like a very big leap and Maraji is still unsure if she was ready for this challenge.

**Case Issues:**

* Identity conversations
* Integrating into UK/Canadian culture and context
* Navigating networking and career conversations
* Code switching versus maintaining one’s true and authentic self

**Guiding Questions:**

How would you advise Maraji to approach her networking and career conversations without devaluing her experiences?

How would she market herself to a potential employer given her lack of work experience in the UK/Canada or a ‘’known brand’’ name on her resume?

How can she maintain her true authentic self without feeling inconvenienced to act in a way that doesn’t represent who she is as a person?

What actions can she take as a way to intentionally get more adapted into her new culture without the pressure of losing her identity?