

# ciMAG

*8th edition*



EMY **شباب  
متمكّن**  
Empowering Moroccan Youth



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# *Team*

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- Latefa Bella
- Marya Joudani
- Rachida Akdaich
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# Le sourire d'un étranger

Aujourd'hui, j'étais en route vers quelque part. Par hasard, j'ai vu une étrangère.

Française, je devinais car elle se renseignait sur la direction à prendre de la part d'un sub-saharien qui était là, assis dans la rue, seul, dans son propre univers.

Un univers qu'il a quitté pour quelques minutes pour aider la femme perdue.

Renseignements pris, la femme s'en va. Sur le visage de l'homme toujours assis, s'est dessiné un grand sourire.

Contagieux.

Car moi aussi, je ne pouvais pas m'empêcher de sourire.

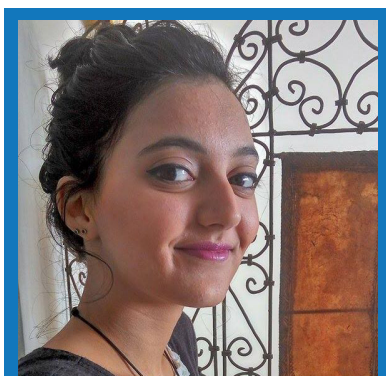
Souriante, mais avec un petit trou d'âme, je continuais ma route en me disant:

«Waaw !! Peut-être que ce sourire voulait dire que pour une fois, il s'est senti vu, remarqué, utile.

Il est sorti de son univers.

Il s'est senti moins étranger.

Il s'est senti vivant.»



Latefa Bella



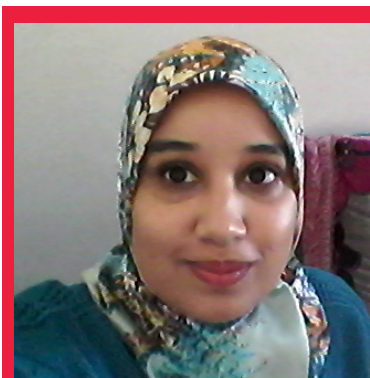
Saufiane Idladi

# Take time off to rewind and rethink!



**A**fter getting his baccalaureate degree, Adam had to choose a school where he could pursue his studies. The problem was that he didn't know what to choose, because he had no idea what he wanted. That is why he decided to take a year off and stay home: "At first, my family didn't approve of that and they told me that I had to choose some school to get into. So I decided to get into economics at the faculty."

Apparently, that was not a good idea, because: "Day after day I was convincing myself that it was what I really wanted and that I made the right decision. After three weeks, I had enough of that situation so I decided to stay home and take a break to decide what I really wanted". A week became two and then Adam lost track of time.



**Fatima Zahra El Hafa**

That was when he decided it was better he didn't resume his studies until the upcoming year.

Adam's decision is not a strange one. The year that he decided to take off is usually defined as a gap year. It is a year that a student takes either between high school and university or after graduating from university and before entering the workplace. This term first emerged in the United Kingdom, but today hundreds of students all over the world are taking gap years.

"And my family easily approved of my decision. Who am I kidding? Actually, I was living a nightmare. It was like whenever I crossed road with a family member, I would be granted those death looks. I am telling you, if looks could kill I would have died that year!"

But that did not put Adam down, on the contrary, it pushed him to do a lot of reflecting: "The first thing I did was questioning my beliefs and ideas. I found out that most of my thoughts and acts were just a form of imitation and that they weren't really mine. Most of the things I used to do had no objective and were aimless.

So to understand it all, I started doing a lot of reading and watching documentaries."

But that was just the beginning of Adam's exciting and fruitful journey: "I started discovering and learning a lot of new things. I wrote articles about different topics. I acquired new skills like Photoshop, montage, creating websites. I even started making videos and posting them on YouTube. Basically, no day would go by without me learning a new thing and this whole situation made me feel happy and relieved."

Time passed by and when summer came, Adam was able to find a job at a summer camp. Talking about his experience there he says: "What I liked most about that job was that I had the freedom to do whatever I liked. I started spending a lot of time with the kids there. I was able to see the differences between me and them which helped me find the answers to a lot of my questions"

At the end of that summer camp, Adam returned home. But after a while, he started feeling down, that was when he decided to go tripping for the first time in his life: "The idea came to me after watching a movie called "Into the wild". Tripping was the changing point in my life; each day was different. I was meeting different people and going to different places." He says that this experience not only helped him make peace with himself, but it also changed his outlook on life, that is why he considers the year that he took off by far as the best year of his life.

And to all of you out there who are thinking of taking a year off Adam says: "A gap year isn't just a year you take off to do nothing. To get something from the gap year you have to have reasons as to why you chose to do it in the first place. Not just to waste your time doing nothing and say that you did a gap year. It's a year that will bring you peace with yourself; you will learn and acquire a lot of new skills. It will allow you to understand a lot of things, yourself included"

As part of our LIFE workshop, our mentor, Rosalia Stamatakos, asked each one of us, the Connect Institute's participants, to keep a journal where we could write about anything we want. The following are the stories some of us wrote and that we wanted to share with you dear readers so enjoy!

## A complete waist



**D**o you know what the definition of a complete waist is? It's having a perfect pair of jean shorts, and not being able to wear them. I saw those shorts once in a shop and I decided that they had to be mine. Deep-down I knew I would never wear them, but I silenced the voices in my head and bought them anyway. Now, every time I think of getting

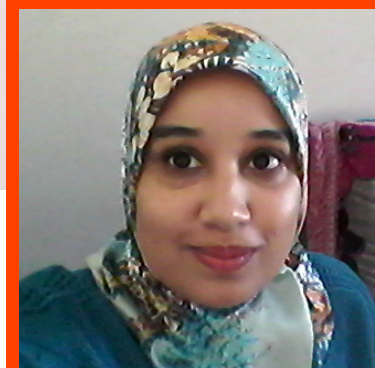
them out from that dark corner in my closet, I remember all the harassment I would have to deal with if I wore them. So I get in my plain black pants, daydreaming about a holiday in Borabora where my shorts will get the respect they deserve.



**Marya Joudani**

# The trash bucket experiment

Most of the accidents I had during my childhood occurred to me while playing with my big brother. For example, one day we were peacefully playing together and my brother had this theory, one that I couldn't grasp in my little 3 year old head. You see, my brother's theory was: If you put someone in a bucket and push them down the stairs, they will fly. So that day my brother dearest thought it was the perfect time to prove his theory in an experiment. He took me, the object of the experiment, and put me in a bucket, but not any bucket ladies and gentlemen; he put me in a trash bucket and then he pushed me down the stairs. Needless to say, I didn't fly. The results of the experiment were:



**Fatima Zahra El Hafa**

- A happy 3 year old me, because it turned out I was as crazy as my big brother and I liked being pushed down the stairs.
- Me with a head injury that wasn't that bad.
- A punished, not so happy, big brother. But that didn't stop him from doing other experiments on me.

# Late night reflections

**T**oday I've read an article about a 15 year old Moroccan entrepreneur, who signed a contract with the European Union to launch a non-profit initiative called E-cycling center, which is a project for recycling electronic waste. Then I thought, while a teenager already has a project that he's passionate about, I'm 24 years old and I still can't find mine. Suddenly, the good taste of the Toblerone chocolate bar I was enjoying turned to a bitter taste in my mouth. When someone asks me: what are your plans for the future? I always get this medley of feelings that includes disappointment, embarrassment and anger; then I answer: I have no idea. So what does this mean? Am I talentless and non-creative? Why can't I find that one thing in my life that I would love to do? Since I knew that I'll get myself once again through a difficult time trying to find an answer to these questions, I made some popcorn and watched a movie instead.



**Rachida Akdaich**



# Diary Invasion

Yesterday I experienced a sort of - Personal Space Invasion- ! Yes, it was mom who did that. I felt a strange combination of embarrassment and anger. My mother stepped in my room wearing a poker face, and said: " I would like you to tell me everything on what is written in your diaries."

I was shocked and struggled to speak. It took me about two minutes to get my thoughts together, and come up with a short speech in which my aim was to make her feel guilty for daring touch what is not hers. I said: " Mama, how dare you read what is in there? I would not have come to my daughter's room and ask her to explain her daily intimate pieces of writing to me, if I were in your shoes!" She stepped out of my room

and since then she kept giving me that suspicious look that melts my heart, and makes me burst into hysterical laughter



Ikbale Bouziane



# A call through life



Illustration is by Nikolay Tikhomirov

**T**oday was a very tiring and long day in the institute, it was also very productive. I got back home, took a shower and then got a text from a friend of mine who lives in another city telling me to video call him when possible, so I called him. He is a very special person, very dear to me, we talked about our past, our daily problems with life, our ambitions, our opinions on the world, our funny and embarrassing experiences, we gave each other advice and made few promises ... We kept talking and talking until we just slept without even thinking of hanging up. When I woke up I realized that the call was still going, a 4 hours call of 2 hours of talk and 2 hours of snoring ... Suddenly I heard, «Good morning girl», I said good morning too, and because each one had work to go to, we wished each other a good day and hang up. That morning was very joyful, it feels good to hear a dear person's voice before starting the day.



Latefa Bella

# The new Connect Institute



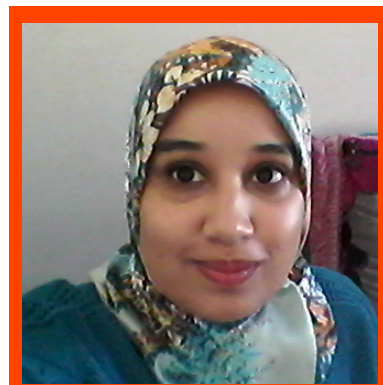
*Connect Institute's theater group, ciPLAY, in the new institute discussing the play they will perform during the 5th edition of AGORA, with their mentor Rosalia Stamatakos.*

If you have ever been to Connect Institute and you liked what you saw there, then I have got some exciting news for you: As part of its plan to launch the “École Supérieure Alternative Tech & Art”, Connect Institute is moving to new premises currently being decorated by the participants themselves!

Apart from the beautiful scenery it offers, the new site of the institute is set on a much larger piece of land than the previous location, which provides Connect Institute with the potential to grow its family and have enough space to house its diverse activities.

In their decoration process, the participants are playing by Connect Institute's rule “Learn, Build, Make” and giving free rein to their imagination; creative wall paint designs with lively colors, a range of handmade decorative items, and a garden with beautiful plants proposed by a Connect Institute participant.

Enough with the spoilers! But I can assure you dear reader that the “École Supérieure Alternative Tech & Art” would forever carry the current participants' touch that will witness its everlasting success.



Fatima Zahra El Hafa

