

Untitled eBook

Ng'ang'o

We talk about all kinds of -ships — friendships, partnerships, situationships — but have you ever tried a co-founding relationship? Let me be honest: That quote “If you want to go far, go with others. If you want to go fast, go alone”? I get it now. And I choose the second half — go alone. Because co-founding a startup is one of the most emotionally and mentally draining experiences in business. It's harder than marriage. And here's why. In marriage, you build a life together. You co-manage everything — emotions, family, finances — and (ideally) you're both in it for the same reasons. There's structure, there's social glue, and there's love. But in business? You come together for a goal — but you each have your own life, distractions, struggles. And let's be honest, sometimes co-founders start out aligned, then slowly begin to eat each other alive — decisions, credit, vision, ego. Even accelerators like MEST Africa and Jasiri saw this early on. They decided to test a new model: bring promising African entrepreneurs together under one roof, and have them focus on co-founding a startup from scratch. Years in, and co-founding challenges still persist. The dynamic is unpredictable. I've lived it. I co-founded Tooma, a blockchain-fintech startup, with a friend I'd known for a year. We lived in the same apartment, shared similar drive and business ambition. The startup's vision? Help content creators sell globally and get paid in local currency. Solid idea. We raised some funding. Four months later — silence. Startup dead. Accountability gone. That was the last time I heard from our “CEO.” Here's the truth: As builders, we crave collaboration. But co-founding can become a maze of mistrust, uneven effort, and lost direction. Thanks to modern tools — workflow automation, AI, remote collaboration — solo-founding is now more doable than ever. You can bootstrap, build lean, and grow with fewer people involved — and a lot less stress. I'll be hosting a 3-day webinar to talk real talk on: If you've ever been in business, thinking about starting one, or stuck in the chaos of building with someone else — this is for you. ■ [Here's the link to join the webinar program.] Let's have that unfiltered conversation most people aren't ready to have.

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