

ONE DAY LEADER

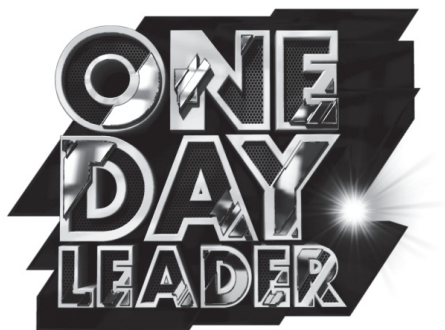
REFLECTIONS ON SOUTH AFRICA

RAISE
YOUR
HAND

SABC
EDUCATION



**ONE
DAY
LEADER**



REFLECTIONS ON SOUTH AFRICA

www.onedayleader.co.za

© Text, various contributors 2014
© Photographs, SABC Education 2014

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any information storage or retrieval system, without permission from the copyright holder.

ISBN: 978-1-920434-97-7

First edition, first impression 2014

Produced for SABC Education by Bookstorm (Pty) Ltd
SABC Education
Private Bag X1
Auckland Park 2006
South Africa

Edited by Tracey Hawthorne
Proofread by John Henderson
Cover design by René de Wet
Book design and typesetting by René de Wet
Printed by Creda Communications, Cape Town
www.onedayleader.co.za

Contents

Foreword *by President Jacob Zuma* 6

Foreword *by Danie Swart* 7

Introduction 8

Profile ANELE NZIMANDE 10

Creating a better us: Race and culture 12

Profile BONGEKILE RADEBE 30

Effecting change through love: Citizenship and patriotism 32

Profile NDUMISO HADEBE 50

South Africa's lifeline: Entrepreneurship 52

Profile JOHAN DU PISANIE 70

First things first: Education 72

Profile SEBENZILE NKAMBULE 90

The importance of talking about it: Gender equality 92

Profile LESLEY MASIBI 112

Unfulfilled expectations: Healthcare 114

Profile SANDA NCAMA 128

A matter of choice: Poverty 130

Profile AYANDA BANDLA 148

African solutions for African problems: Leadership 150

References 164

FOREWORD TO ONE DAY LEADER BY PRESIDENT JACOB ZUMA

South Africa, more than ever before, needs young people to join with government in ensuring that our National Development Plan and Vision 2030 are realised and that our country reaches its full potential.

We need young people to develop a strong culture of service to our country and to humanity to ensure that we build on the foundations that our first 20 years of South African democracy have created.

All the participants in the One Day Leader project embody the spirit of South Africa's youth and set a powerful example for other young people to follow. Through the television programme and now through this book we see young people seriously engaging with the issues that South Africa, and the world, grapples with. Through debate, education and a commitment to social change, these young people are forging themselves as the leaders of tomorrow. I commend them for their dedication to South Africa.



MR JACOB GEDLEYIHLEKISA ZUMA

President of the Republic of South Africa

August 2014

FOREWORD

We have closely observed the contributors to this book – they are young South Africans with passion and dedication. Their reflections in this book are based on taking action and they are not afraid to roll up their sleeves and get dirty. They are confident and inspire confidence in others and this brings out the trust of those around them to participate and complete tasks. We have seen people look to these young people to find reassurance when emotions run high during a crisis; they manage to stay focused and keep cool heads. These young people have high standards and are raising the bar to achieve excellence in all that they do. We appreciate the time our One Day Leader contestants took to share their reflections, and hope you enjoy reading them.

DANIE SWART

Head of SABC Education

INTRODUCTION

Where do leaders come from? Do you need to be born in Sandton or Bishopscourt, clutching a silver spoon to become a leader? Anyone who has watched One Day Leader knows the answer – new leaders are born all over South Africa in communities with and without resources. Leaders are determined individuals who are ready to defend their views in a debate, to take on new ideas and who will go out of their way to serve their communities.

In the quest to develop the leadership skills of young South Africans from every background the One Day Leader programme explores the elements that make for a new generation of leaders ready to take over the leadership role in the near future.

One Day Leader is a television series in which six young people showcase their leadership skills by tackling modern day South African social, economic and political issues in their quest for the coveted title of One Day Leader.

The show tells the story of the evolution of these six youngsters from ordinary young people into willing, influential, accountable, thoughtful, calculating and brave visionaries – the epitome of the future youth leaders of our country.

One Day Leader aims to create a Social Leader with a combination of both business and political sense in their campaign for social change.

For this book, we invited previous participants of the One Day Leader television show to share their views on critical elements of South African life, namely race and culture, citizenship, entrepreneurship, education, gender equality, healthcare, poverty and finally leadership itself. Read about the participants, read their opinions, read their reactions to each other's viewpoints, and finally take your own stand and prepare to debate it with family and friends to hone your own leadership skills. Engage with the writers of this book on Twitter and get ready for leadership. Maybe you are the next One Day Leader!



@Anele_Nzimande

Anele Nzimande

PROFILE

I hail from the sunny city of Durban in KwaZulu-Natal (KZN), where my father Sithembiso still lives. I'm a twin sister to Andile, and a younger sister to Mbalenhle and Langelihle.

I participated in One Day Leader in 2013. It was terrifying and exciting. I can't remember the entire experience with perfect clarity but I do remember the night I lay on my bed after having been eliminated. I'd never felt so accomplished and empowered, which was ironic because I'd exited in fourth place – but a weight had lifted off my shoulders. I'd gone through a lot to make it on to the show, and it had taken a lot of courage to defend issues that were important to me. In the process, I was even able to gain insight into issues I'd not been exposed to previously.

I'm now in my third year of law at the University of the Witwatersrand. Wits has afforded me a wonderful experience to grow and come into my own, and I wouldn't trade it for anything. I'm the vice-chair of the Law Students' Council. I'm also a tutor

for the South African Model United Nations programme for high-school students, which simulates the meetings of the UN General Assembly. The debates are run by a non-profit organisation called Education Africa.

I enjoy shopping online for vintage swimwear, travelling and trying out different types of spicy food. I always order the extra-hot chicken at Nando's and as a result have never had to share my chicken with the rest of the family! I also love trying out different tea blends, and most of my closest friends share my love for tea.

I dedicate this chapter to my late mother, who had a quiet grace and a fierce resilience. Anele means 'enough', and my parents couldn't have picked a better name. Thank you for instilling in me a sense of deep worth and always making me feel that I was more than enough, far greater than too much and far more phenomenal than my age suggests.

Creating a

CRITICAL THINKING A BETTER US: B

Race and culture

That seat on the bus

I recently spent a holiday in Cape Town visiting a very close friend. After spending a week swimming in the ice-cold Atlantic, marvelling at the cute African Penguins in Simon's Town, testing out different brews of tea at the Waterfront and touring Rondebosch, I was ready to head home.

On the way to the airport our Kenyan cab driver, Peter, commented jokingly about the driving on South African roads. Everything Peter said sounded funny because of the way he said it. He shared with us how he once took a taxi in Cape Town where an altercation almost ensued between the sliding-door operator and a commuter. The sliding-door operator (SDO) is the person who opens and closes the

BETTER US

by Anele Nzimande

door in the taxi and collects fares from the passengers. The commuter boarded the taxi while the SDO was collecting money from passengers in the back seat, and struggled to close the door behind him. The SDO decided to offer some advice on the technique to use when closing the door.

‘You mus’ e push,’ he said, kindly, the ‘h’ of the word ‘push’ disappearing between his teeth and producing a different word altogether: *poes*. ‘You mus’ e push,’ he said again.

Frustrated, the SDO closed the door himself and a very nasty battle ensued because the well-meaning ‘you mus’ e push’ had been interpreted as ‘*jou ma se poes*.’

We were in hysterics as Peter told us tale after tale of his experiences in the city. I began to think seriously

about why a commuter would interpret a well-intended statement or gesture as insulting. Are we all this way? Why do we believe that the default disposition of every person towards us is condescending and patronising, even when they've given us no reason to believe so?

Fast-forward a few minutes, and I was at Terminal C, waiting to board a bus to the plane. I walked into the empty bus and took a seat. The bus started filling up and in walked an old white lady who looked about 65. My immediate thought was to get up and offer her my seat.

This seemed simple enough to do at first, because I was raised to do so. I was taught that it was disrespectful to occupy a seat when there was someone older than you in the room; it was common practice to give up your seat for the elderly. Now, before I could do this, an odd thought entered my mind: I hope people don't think I'm standing up for her just because she's white.

Just like in the movies, this 'bad' voice was countered by a 'good' voice, the two opposing voices coming from ethereal beings perched on each shoulder.

The good voice said reassuringly, 'Don't worry, no one will think that. You're doing this out of respect; this is a young lady giving up her seat for an elderly woman. This is not a colour issue.'

The bad voice spoke up sternly this time: 'You know everyone's going to think you're a house negro, right?'

The 'house nigger' (let's use the word 'negro'; 'nigger' leaves such a bad taste in my mouth), as defined by Malcolm X and the ever-current Urban Dictionary, is the slave who imagines himself to be thought of as kin by his master because he lives in the same house. This is a very broad definition that can be adapted to any situation where a black person treats white people better than his own, based solely on the reason that he identifies better with white people or simply holds them in higher regard.

The currency of skin colour

We may have managed to rid ourselves of prejudicial laws but prejudicial mindsets are still prevalent, and unfortunately this is not something unique to South Africa. I've experienced this countless times before: you get appalling service and you complain, and no one takes you seriously; but when the complaint is lodged by someone with lighter skin, it holds more weight.

This isn't the fault of anyone except the person responsible for the prejudice, but the point is, if ever you find yourself on the receiving end of such treatment, it can be enough to make your blood boil and your eyes water.

My friend and I were once denied access at the popular Long Street Café because she had food in her hand that we'd had packed for us by a different restaurant where we'd eaten. We were there to watch football. Two African

girls with food in their hand trying to find a place to watch football and have a conversation – it was World Cup season, after all, and everyone watches football.

The bouncer at the door smugly told us that we couldn't enter the premises because we had food with us – which is probably reasonable, as Long Street Café is an eating establishment as well. However, none of the staff offered to take the food from us and leave it in the back to pick up on our way out.

The café was full of people laughing and enjoying themselves, and here we were involved in a very ugly brawl with the bouncer, who was tugging at us and pulling us out of the restaurant even when we'd decided to abandon our food. Naturally, my friend and I were angry and humiliated, and no one came to our rescue.

We both wondered, had it been two white girls in the very same situation, how things would have played out. Would they have met the same type of hostility and disrespect? Of course not, because white skin carries a different kind of currency and value. They can't get pulled out of a venue or denied access to one, because most times black people are reluctant to enforce rules to their full extent where white people are concerned, because they value their patronage more. This may not even be something they realise, but it's something that exists at a subconscious level, that we may not all be aware of. And when it happens, you're left

confused and humiliated, feeling like you've been betrayed by one of your own.

Over the summer holiday, when I was back home in Durban, my friend Veronica and I decided to spend one of our afternoons on the beach. It was a day filled with picture taking, Instagramming, pointing out odd-looking characters to each other and laughing, and taking turns to swim in the ocean because we had no one to look after our possessions.

We then decided we wanted to go swimming together, and scanned the beach for a group of people who looked trustworthy (which can be incredibly difficult to find, even for the most discerning eye). We approached a group about our age that had a baby with them. We figured no one who travelled to the beach with a baby was likely to run away with our stuff.

We introduced ourselves and asked if we could share the shade of their umbrella, and if they would look after our possessions when we went for a swim. They were friendly people who were excited to have us as company. Everyone treated Veronica as if she were a celebrity – and I wish I was exaggerating. She has a heavy Canadian accent and she's Asian, so it makes for a lot of very interesting questioning!

While she was taking pictures, one of the members of the group turned to me, and asked me in Zulu if she was really my friend or if I was just working for her. I laughed.

Veronica can't afford to employ anyone. We're both 20-year-old girls trying to read and learn as much as we can before adulthood catches up with us.

'We're friends,' I said.

I wasn't insulted, because I expected a question like that. I knew everyone was thinking it, although they didn't want to be rude by asking it. It's because of the currency lighter skin seems to carry; we almost immediately think that the relationship is contrived. I've had those thoughts myself before about other people whenever I see interracial interaction: I almost always question its authenticity.

Strangely enough, wherever I went with Veronica, I was opened to a whole new world I wouldn't have had access to had I been with anyone else. Veronica was a lucky charm. She was my gateway into a different world, and a different type of experience in that particular world.

Veronica and I provided a balance to whatever situation we were in. Because we were in an interracial friendship (although people didn't openly classify ours as an 'interracial friendship', we were viewed everywhere as something out of the ordinary), there was a rebuttable presumption that we were not prejudicial people. And so Veronica could, through me, have access to black people who would ordinarily be hesitant to interact with her, and the same was true for me where white people were concerned.

The irony is that Veronica and I are actually more similar than most people would believe. She's a first-generation Canadian whose parents grew up in South Korea and left in search of a better life. Veronica's grandparents grew up during a time when the Chinese had colonised South Korea and speaking anything but Mandarin was forbidden. This is always a sore point for her and something to which I can relate, and we often talk about how frightening and wonderful it is to be the first generation of women to be able to have so much freedom to 'become'.

Veronica often comments on how much tension is brewing beneath the surface in this country, and how superficial some of the engagement is. We would pour out our hearts to each other on how the world should be, as opposed to how it is.

So, while I was sitting on the bus on the tarmac, waiting to be driven to the plane, I felt overwhelmed by the decision I had to make, because it was very real to me, and I had to confront some very deep insecurities that I harboured deep within myself based on the treatment I had received over the years.

I thought back to something a friend of mine from Zimbabwe once shared with me about his experience on the Gautrain. He was in a coach packed to capacity, and when faced with the same choice I was faced with, his

first thought was to stay put. He wasn't giving up his seat; the people sharing this coach with him had had years of sitting in places where he could not. The people sharing this coach with him had had years of taking luxury trains, when he (well, his parents, but that really is the same thing to some of us) had had to take the taxi in very dingy places full of unsavoury characters who had no respect for property rights – what's yours was theirs if they wanted it.

Gwinyai and I are both African, and we were raised to be respectful. Africans are raised to call everyone their mother's age Ma, and their father's age Baba. 'Sawubona, Ma,' I say to the Ma selling mealies to me on the street corner. 'Ngiyabonga, Baba,' I say to the bus driver at Wits when I disembark.

Moreover, we both come from good schools steeped in culture and tradition.

African culture is hierarchical in nature, and in this situation the hierarchy is elderly first, youth last. The adults are served first, and often the youth have to clear the empty plates before they can eat. However, for some reason, when we're in the Gautrain or the airport, we divorce ourselves from culture.

I thought about the ways my well-meaning gesture could possibly be interpreted by onlookers: a young girl giving up her seat for an old lady; or a black girl giving up her seat for a white lady. And I decided to keep my seat.

You see, even simple decisions are complicated by race.

I wondered how many times my own mother had boarded a crowded bus and no one stood up to give her their seat. I don't just mean this in a literal sense; giving up your seat is something we can interpret as relinquishing your comfort to someone who needs it more. How often have we given up comfort for others?

Double standards, forked tongues

Having been born in Durban, KwaZulu-Natal, I fluently speak a total of two of the eleven South African official languages. This is met with a lot of scorn in Johannesburg, because this is a place where people who've been raised in Soweto speak no fewer than four languages by the time they're old enough to cross the street unchaperoned. Now, here's what I find interesting: I've met very many white people who were born in this country, and who then leave the country and learn very naturally to speak German or French, but who can only manage a 'hello', if that, in an indigenous South African language.

Whenever I buy from a Sotho cashier, she communicates with me in her language and I can sometimes make out what she's saying, and sometimes I can't. She never keeps it a secret how much of a let-down she thinks I am and how unacceptable it is that I can only speak my mother tongue – umuZulu? All you Zulus are the same. You think you're better!

I used to get very angry whenever I was at the receiving end of one of those interactions. Okay. I'm sorry I grew up in KZN!

Then I'd watch the same Sotho woman who'd just given me a lecture about my ignorance ring up a white man's items with a 'Hello, Sir!' without complaint.

Why does she not hold this man to the same standard she holds me? We're both in the same position. I grew up in KZN speaking Zulu, and I can only assume that he grew up in the suburbs of Johannesburg communicating only in English, but why should he be spared the tongue-lashing for his ignorance? It's just as bad as my own. He's as much of a South African as I am and he should at least know how to have a basic conversation in one language other than his own.

White privilege, you see: we don't even see it because it's so inherent in our society.

I'm not pointing fingers at anyone; I'm just gently pointing to the fact that lighter skin still has a greater currency. That Sotho cashier values that white man's patronage more than mine, so she's scared to confront him the same way she confronted me.

I often get a lot of backlash wherever I go for not being able to communicate effectively, and I've made a real effort to learn and understand other cultures in this country outside of my own. I get excited when I'm in a lift with

other people, and I can make out certain words that held no meaning for me before, and can measure the progress I'm making.

It's time now for the white people in our country, whom I love dearly (I have a lot of white friends – haha!) to start engaging in South African culture, not at a superficial level and as something that's far removed from them, but as something that's alive and a part of who they are. It's time to get to know the people who live in your country. It's time you knew what language the lady who irons your clothes and washes your dishes speaks, and the difference between the tribe from which she originates and the one your gardener is from.

There's so much to learn and experience in our country. Beyond race, there's so much more to unearth. There are tribes, clan names and family practices.

I believe that black people have tried so hard to accommodate and understand and be chameleons in certain environments. I can't be the only one who has to turn off the English when I go out of the city to visit my family in the countryside. My mom always gave my sister and me a stern warning for speaking English in the countryside; it was like wearing swimwear to a black-tie event – you're dressed for the wrong event. 'Take off the English with your school uniform and leave it in the wardrobe,' the adults would say. Being a chameleon was exhausting.

To be quite honest, I don't see enough white people giving up their seat – in a figurative sense – for my mother by starting up a meaningful conversation with her in our language. I know you're going to tell me about Johnny Clegg, the poster boy for the rainbow-nation ideal which we all hold so dear; and, in response, I'm going to tell you that Johnny Clegg is just one person – and one person is not enough. It shouldn't be an anomaly, it should be a norm.

Just the other day, I was surfing the 'net and passing time, and came across a wonderful story about Uzo Aduba, a Hollywood actress currently making waves in the series *Orange is the New Black*. She says, 'My family is from Nigeria, and my full name is Uzoamaka, which means "The road is good". Quick lesson: My tribe is Igbo, and you name your kid something that tells your history and hopefully predicts your future. So anyway, in grade school, because my last name started with an "A", I was the first in roll call, and nobody ever knew how to pronounce it. So I went home and asked my mother if I could be called Zoe.

'I remember she was cooking, and in her Nigerian accent she said, "Why?"

'I said, "Nobody can pronounce it."

'Without missing a beat, she said, "If they can learn to say Tchaikovsky and Michelangelo and Dostoyevsky, they can learn to say Uzoamaka.'"

This isn't unique to South Africa. We train ourselves to

say and do difficult things, and, let's be honest, white people really hold the record for doing difficult, near-impossible things – skydiving, water-rafting, mountain climbing, you name it! These are all high-energy activities that stretch and test your endurance, but you can't put together a simple sentence in Tswana? Or even learn how to pronounce names that require a little bit of practice and effort? That's condescending. Names are held in such high regard in African culture. A great degree of care and thought is given to the process; the name is prophetic, carrying all the hopes that the parent has for you, or stating the events of the day.

There's something we're not talking about enough in this country, and that's white people's disinterest in their country. By this I mean the people who live in it and who make South Africa what it is. I can tell a Sotho name from a Zulu one, and I think any other South African-born person, regardless of race, should be able to do the same. To live in a country means to immerse yourself completely in the cultures that exist there, to be curious and eager to learn.

Perhaps the national anthem would be a good place to start. The first step would be to find out which languages are in it, and what meaning the words hold – unless, of course, you're satisfied to sing something you don't understand at very important and prestigious gatherings for the rest of your life.

I believe it's time for a serious overhaul of values, because the honest truth is that none of us are doing enough to achieve the social integration we so desperately want. There's a lot of carelessness in the words we use when we communicate with each other. Perhaps it calls for us to stop being so accommodating and switching to English when everyone else in the room can understand the indigenous language being spoken.

I think the words of Arundhati Roy in *The God of Small Things* sum it up: 'There is a war that makes us adore our conquerors and despise ourselves.'

It's not about creating an 'us' and a 'them', and polarising our society. It's about creating a better 'us', one where we all understand each other and what makes each of us South African.

> SEBENZILE NKAMBULE SAYS: *Race will always be a sensitive subject to address in South Africa as long as one race is deemed better than other races. If we're unable to speak out honestly about the inequality and prejudices we experience, moving forward will be impossible. We don't have a universal definition or understanding of what respect is, but we find ourselves choosing one way of being over another because we think it's 'better'. Should we work on finding a universal definition of what one does when an elderly person needs a seat? As things are, choosing to keep your seat*



isn't a bad thing at all: you have the right to do as you will. It's interesting that someone applies different morals in the Gautrain than they would in rural Zimbabwe or KwaZulu-Natal. It should be the same, but sadly it isn't.

Class is critical to this discussion as well. Would a teenager these days give up their seat for an elderly domestic worker? I doubt it.

Do we know enough about each other and our cultures? No. Yet there's access to other cultures; if we're interested enough, we can learn about each other. Anele alludes to the idea that not everyone has come to the party to celebrate all aspects of what it means to be South African and embrace all cultures. I absolutely agree with this. We're all guilty of this, some more than others. Africans have been and continue to be too accommodating.

SANDA NCAMA SAYS: *I'm not a pessimist,*

> *I never have been. However, I don't think that racism will come to a complete end, not in this lifetime; it will take generations to change. The people who were the youth of the 1960s and 70s are our parents today, and we're constantly reminded of the pain and trauma of that era. Even if I wasn't oppressed by white people before, I could feel and relate to their anger and can't help but feel emotional at times. Back in 2011, it was a cool summer evening and my siblings and I were sitting outside appreciating the weather. Mom was in the*



kitchen, cooking. A white guy walked into our yard; he was my age. These were his exact words, without even greeting us first: 'Which one of you boys was sitting on my bike?' Perplexed, we quickly shifted into defence mode because this meant war. Our parents heard the raised voices and immediately came out. I was already on top of the guy, punching him, until the parents broke up the fight. As they were finding out what happened, the word 'boy' came into the picture. My mother was furious and said, 'Gone are the days where your kind will call our husbands, sons and brothers "boys".' I wasn't bothered by the term 'boy', as it could've been used by a black person coming to disrespect me in my own yard and I would still have beaten him up, but to our parents the word has another meaning. There and then, I thought to myself, we still have a long way to go as citizens.

I think we should reach a stage in life where we look beyond colour; where a white man and a black man enter into an argument over a hotdog and the racial element doesn't surface; where one will say, 'Gone are the days where you'd receive first preference in fresh baked bread and I have to eat yesterday's bread.' Whether racism does still exist or not, the pride, dignity and identity of both the victim and the perpetrator should be restored using culture consciousness, because beyond racism there's tribalism – where blacks are at each other's throats.

The existence and power of the apartheid era were about stripping away the black man's identity and making him feel inferior to the white man, who also lost his identity in the

process, so the only way to assist the fight against segregation of any kind is to instil pride and worth in a human being through early education of an individual's culture.



@BongZ_Radebe

Bongekile Radebe

PROFILE

I was raised in a small township called Mohlakeng in Randfontein, Gauteng. I'm currently completing a B.Com in Finance at the University of Johannesburg.

I find satisfaction in investing in myself, no matter how small the effort or unclear the road ahead may seem, as I know for sure it'll count for something greater than myself with time. This makes me love a combination of things: I love love, and believe it's the most empowering thing that can happen to and for all of us, no matter where it comes from. I love spending time with my loved ones but also being by myself, reading, laughing, great-tasting food, and people-watching, as well as tea (lots and lots of tea!).

I work on issues around youth development, social entrepreneurship and education.

I'm an ambassador for One Young World, a UK-based non-profit organisation that gathers together the brightest young people from around the world and empowers them to make lasting connections

to create positive change. I'm also a Brand South Africa Play Your Part ambassador. Play Your Part is an initiative that seeks to instil active citizenry and patriotism among South Africans as a key way of developing our country and increasing its competitiveness with other countries.

One Day Leader made me realise that I'm talented in being resourceful and creating strategies for producing things out of nothing. I have a passion for women leadership and am the Founder of Her Destiny, which aims to accelerate the economic participation of young women by using tea as our driver. Working with a proudly South African company, the Toni Glass Collection Tea, Her Destiny commits R1 of every bottle of iced tea sold towards our Young Women's Education Fund, which we use to ease the burden of young women's varsity living experiences.

I'm unapologetic and vocal about God's love for me and how it's through Him that I'm able to accomplish all that I have today, which far exceeds my own thoughts.

Effecting change **THROUGH LOVE:** **Citizenship and patriotism**

We say to one another: I cannot be without you; without you, this South African community is an incomplete community; without one single person, without one single group, without the region or the continent, we are not the best that we can be.

– NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2030

When I entered One Day Leader, it was one of the most courageous decisions I've ever made. Who was I to believe that I could help contribute to being on the solution side of our beautiful country plagued with various socioeconomic issues that burden us, the youth, on a daily basis?

I was a 21-year-old South African woman, sitting on her bed at home on 26 December, with her laptop, filling in her

GE THROUGH LOVE

by Bongekile Radebe

application. Why was a young person like me not enjoying the festivities of December like other youngsters? December isn't the time to be thinking about current affairs in our country and writing motivational essays on why I believe I have what it takes to be one of our leaders, right?

Wrong! Very wrong!

Had I not taken the time to enter, I wouldn't be sharing this with you right now. If I'd left my belief in that call for leadership and ownership of my country till the middle of January 2013, a Facebook note or underwhelming long status or an open letter to South Africans would have sufficed. That would have been my contribution as a simple social-networking thumb activist, as we've come to know the norm in our society today: having a strong opinion yet

providing no solution nor being a part of the action. I say this unapologetically because I too have been this kind of South African before.

The time came when the One Day Leader crew was finally selecting its Top 6, and visited our homes for background interviews and a final shot at being a part of such a prestigious platform. One of the questions asked of me was why I thought I deserved to be in the Top 6, and part of my answer was based on how I wanted to have an in-depth experience of my country. By 'experience' I didn't mean sightseeing, but rather gaining an informed understanding of my fellow South Africans beyond the comfort of my own surroundings or the influence of a privileged perspective, and to also get to know South Africa better.

Experiencing the One Day Leader journey meant moving from community to community, listening to the struggles young people face daily, providing sustainable solutions, being resourceful, working not just with strangers but also with like-minded young leaders with a passion for developing this country. It meant getting dirty, crying, extreme sacrifices, disagreeing, learning, and also possibly humiliating ourselves on national television.

All this and more was possible because, different and competitive as we were as contestants, we all shared one common goal, one common vision and one common drive: the love for our country and the desire to be active citizens.

It's only through love – love for ourselves, love for others and love for our country – that we can truly effect change and move our country forward. And this can be done by anyone, anywhere and at any time.

Love yourself: become an active citizen

I could ask you, 'Do you love being South African?'

The natural answer is usually, 'Yes, of course!'

I'd believe you, but I don't think you love it enough. Yes, I'm referring to you.

You, who in 2014 are experiencing 20 years of freedom.

You, who have the opportunity of being educated at any institution of higher learning at a subsidised cost, yet who still believe this country is awful and the government has done nothing at all for you.

You, who are excited by service delivery protests (and while I understand the need to fight for our basic human rights, it just doesn't make sense how you can be contributing to the violence and burning of what makes up our communities, such as our homes, local shops and libraries, and even harming your own people – yet when the community had engagement sessions, you weren't there).

You, whose timeline I can visit on Twitter and be guaranteed to find a disrespectful remark about our president and his cabinet, the ugliest opinions about how this country is going down or how black people are lazy

and stupid – yet you’ve never truly dedicated your time to uplift your own, nor have you been of service in any way to our country.

You, who have rated the standard of beauty according to how non-black black people should look, be it in the texture of their hair, the colour of their eyes or their skin tone (the yellower, the better).

You, who can’t tell me one thing about the National Development Plan – or you tell me that it’s something you’ve heard about which the government is taking care of.

All of the above are political statements that we express or experience on a daily basis. Whether we’re aware of it or not, we’re political beings. In other words, we’re all born into one big political society, and that makes us political individuals. We’re introduced to politics from birth: where we come from and how that was influenced by the Group Areas Act, the religions our families chose, the kind of schools we go to and how economic politics dictate their quality, the unemployment levels we’re plagued with (yet private companies make trillions in profit).

All of this and more affects our daily lives. If you won’t engage with these issues on an active level, who do you think will do it for you?

A powerful form of loving ourselves is through how we choose to educate ourselves about our country, and that requires us to be consciously politically interested. If we’re

politically apathetic (indifferent towards our country's politics and political activities), we do a disservice not only to our government but to ourselves too. If you as a citizen are disinterested in the politics of our country, then that means you're not participating in the development of government. An example of this was the 73.48% voter turnout for the 2014 elections – yet 100% of us will be wanting jobs or thriving businesses.

We can do better than that, and once we decide to do better, we also do more.

Take, for example, Candice Sehoma, a 21-year-old who lives in Alexandra township, right next to Sandton. For those of us who know both Alexandra and Sandton, we know that it's one of the most vividly contrasting areas in South Africa, starkly displaying harsh inequalities.

Living in Alex, Candice grew up with no toilet inside her home; she and her family shared the neighbourhood bucket toilets with 50 other people. When she started attending high school at Waverley Girls High, a former Model C school, in 2006, she was able to use flushing toilets and it inspired her to take action in her community. By having the experience of a decent toilet, then going back home where the dignity and hygiene of community members were heavily compromised, she realised that, like most kids from her high school, she also wanted her community and family to experience a better way of life.

She started an initiative called Building Blocks, an organisation that builds flushing toilets for the people of Alexandra. She began by going door to door and holding small meetings where community members would collectively take responsibility for the funding, construction and maintenance of the facilities.

Today, together with three of her friends, she works with government and other strategic partners in continuing her mission to eradicate the dehumanising bucket system in Alexandra and fulfil her organisation's vision of restoring the dignity of South Africans through sanitation, reaching out to all corners of Alexandra, as well as encouraging communities across South Africa to embrace a do-it-yourself attitude.

It's the service of active citizenry such as Candice Sehoma and the work they do at Building Blocks that any of us can emulate and use to meet the socioeconomic challenges in our communities. If other young people can be active within communities, what's stopping you? Decide to take up the role of an active citizen who engages with societal issues, understands the role local government plays in communities, thinks about solutions and moves from being a victim to a victory story.

You could be one of three kinds of citizen: the personally responsible citizen, the participatory citizen and the justice-oriented citizen.

The personally responsible citizen is someone who acts responsibly in their community, obeys laws such as stopping

at stop signs, wears a safety belt when travelling in the car or sitting in the front seat of a taxi, doesn't steal, works and pays taxes, donates blood, and volunteers to lend a hand in times of crisis within the community, such as contributing tinned food to a food drive. This is a citizen with good character, who's honest and responsible, and is a law-abiding member of the community.

The participatory citizen is an active member within community organisations, promoting economic development, cleaning up the environment, knowing how government agencies work and what strategies are required to accomplish collective tasks. This is a citizen who actively participates and takes leadership positions within established systems and community structures. For example, this citizen would be the one who helps to organise the entire food drive, sees to it that the objectives of the drive are achieved, and is available behind the scenes or taking care of the people receiving the food.

The justice-oriented citizen critically assesses social, political and economic structures to see beyond surface causes. These people seek out and address areas of injustice, and know about social movements and how to effect systemic change. They question and change established systems and structures when these systems and structures reproduce patterns of injustice over time. Continuing the example of the food drive, this citizen would be the one who explores

why people are hungry to begin with and who acts to solve the root causes in order to capacitate community members so that they can be self-sustaining individuals in the future.

It seems that in order for us to host a successful food drive or any other initiative in our society, all three types of citizens are needed. None is better than the other, yet there's a clear degree of leadership that differentiates them. Perhaps the more we work on our own leadership, the better the things around us will work?

This reminds me of a group of young leaders who are my fellow One Young World Ambassadors who call themselves United Twenty-13. They were selected by the Mayor of Johannesburg to be his delegates at the annual One Young World Summit in Johannesburg in 2013. Together, they decided to collaborate for a far greater reach, and their organisation now works on implementing sustainable solutions in disadvantaged communities. You can contact them on Twitter or Facebook, or Google them, and be a part of the work they do.

So, when others are doing great things with their lives and are successful, you may want to consider the fact that they have put in the work and chosen to be of service, and were consistent in those efforts. Rather than criticising your fellow young peers, start loving yourself enough by being of service not just to your own aspirations but to your community and country as well.

When we begin to exercise a love for ourselves, when we want to learn more about who we are, what's rooted in our identity, when we exercise compassion that seeks not only to understand the struggles of others, but also to provide solutions in making individuals and their lives better – then we thoroughly engage ourselves in dialogues that will progressively shape our thinking and lead us to action. This builds our confidence and self-esteem, and these are traits that are critical in knowing that you too can contribute to moving our country forward. The ownership of all that we are instils the kind of pride in us that fuels us with endurance in making our country work, no matter how tough the socioeconomic battle or slow the progress may appear to be.

And, because we're born in diversity, it can serve as a reminder that you don't have to work on something alone, that there's more power in sharing than there is in undermining.

Love others: embrace your fellow Africans.

Being active in making our country work is something we do, not just for and by ourselves, but for the good of others too, and we do it with them. It requires a love of service for humanity and dedication to the next generation.

For us as South Africans to love others, we first need to acknowledge the fact that we're Africans – a reality that some of us tend to forget or deliberately live against. This is particularly strange to me, because when we sing our

national anthem, the first line is 'Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika', not 'Nkosi sikelel' iSouth Africa'. The line is profound as it reflects deeply on our brothers and sisters on our continent who helped shape the South Africa we know today. A South Africa we share with them, the same way they allowed us onto their soils when South Africa was still operating under the apartheid system and black people who were working towards overthrowing that system needed places of safety.

So, when we sing the words 'Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika', it shouldn't just be a standard routine for prestigious occasions; it should reflect the understanding of the meaningful contributions made by Tanzania, Zambia and the Congo, who opened their country's doors to us and gave us support in the struggle to liberate our country. It should illuminate for us what President Nelson Mandela meant when he said we should show heartfelt gratitude to President Julius Nyerere, President Kenneth Kaunda and President Patrice Lumumba.

In my view, the only way we can begin to identify with other Africans is to first be able to truly identify ourselves as Africans.

Unfortunately, even with such powerful historic assistance from our African neighbours, some South Africans continue to participate in and condone acts of xenophobia. Xenophobia could be identified as a practice of active patriotism but this kind of patriotism shows no intelligence or sensitivity, and

becomes what is known as extreme patriotism. Whenever extreme patriotism is exercised, the paramount interests of one's country and one's citizenship override any moral consideration, and no attention is paid to injustice, cruelty and plain ignorance.

I once suggested to a good friend that she take a taxi to come and visit me. I had met her when we were at a student apprentice challenge at the University of the Witwatersrand. She was from Nairobi in Kenya and was temporarily living in South Africa to complete her studies at Monash University. She said she couldn't take a taxi – not because she didn't know how to use taxis, but because the minute some South Africans realised that she didn't speak like them, they treated her badly. Even more confusing for her, when it came to the texture of her hair or her accent, other South Africans told her that they wished they looked and sounded like her, as it would make them more 'exotic'.

From her experiences, my friend concluded that we South Africans don't really love other Africans, and that we don't seem to love ourselves much either.

Xenophobia not only reflects terribly on the kind of love we have for others, it also reflects a distasteful nature of an uneducated society and one that especially lacks ubuntu (compassion and humanity).

Love our country: move South Africa forward

Being born a South African is to be born in great diversity. In fact, we are so rich in our diversity that we're not limited to what we were born as. More love and unity can be experienced in our diversity, and our diversity could just be one of our most powerful resources if we let it. It means that none of us has to treat speaking English as a measure of intelligence; we can rather see it as an alternative choice of communication so we can all understand each other.

With South Africa celebrating its 20 years of democracy, you may hear 'moving South Africa forward' every so often, because that's the language we're all speaking now. And in order for us to effectively move South Africa forward, we're going to need to be more patriotic and active as citizens.

South Africans know how to be patriotic. We see this in the singing of our national anthem and how sport always unites us. One thing I noted throughout the 2010 FIFA World Cup and the tragic state of Bafana Bafana (which deserves a chapter on its own!) is how South Africans supported other African countries, giving them names similar to Bafana Bafana, such as Ghana's 'BaGhana BaGhana'.

Amazing as this is, it seems our love for our country is most felt in sports. How do we fix this?

We can constantly work on and tell the stories of South Africans who're doing their bit in and for our country, such as the Play Your Part campaign which airs on SABC2, which

you and I, ordinary as we are, can be a part of – as long as we're also playing our part.

The National Development Plan (NDP) is a proposed vision by the National Planning Commission to be achieved by the year 2030. The NDP has outlined nine challenges that need to be met:

1. Too few people work (unemployment).
2. The standard of education for black people continues to be of poor quality.
3. Infrastructure is poorly located, insufficient and under-maintained.
4. Many people still live in areas trapped by apartheid.
5. The economy isn't sustainable because we don't use our resources smartly.
6. There's a widespread burden of disease.
7. Public services are uneven and some are of poor quality.
8. Corruption is widespread.
9. South Africa remains a divided society.

For such a plan to work we must all contribute to it – which in my view is excellent, because why should you expect things to be done and achieved for you if you're not being of service yourself? I strongly believe in the principle that if you're going to do nothing, say nothing; and if you're going to say something, do something!

When we educate ourselves on developmental issues around our country, we're able to understand the issues

better, and know where and how to participate. It takes our own leadership, as citizens, to put pressure on our government to make sure it delivers. When we as citizens fail to be knowledgeable, present and active in environments of influence, then the government has no one to be accountable to, and agendas of corruption thrive.

Loving our country means more than just celebrating when things are good. It also inspires and builds active citizenry, a capable government and leadership throughout.

Ben Okri, one of my favourite African writers, shared powerful words when he delivered the 13th annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture at the University of Cape Town in September 2012. 'What is true is that no one will hand us the destiny that we want,' he said. 'No one will carry us to the future that our bones and our history crave for. We must do it ourselves. It seems that the courage and the ingenuity, and the toughness required for getting us out of the night, are indeed required much, much more for the ever-after day of the long after-years of sunlight.'

Okri said that we have something special to give the world: the gift of our genius, which, he said, will be revealed 'not long after we claim the right to be ourselves'.

'We grow and change in accordance with necessity and vision, and yet in some mysterious way will become more and more ourselves,' he said.

Okri closed his speech with these words: 'Effect the

world with your light. Press forward the human genius. Our future is greater than our past.'

May you continue to realise the unique genius that you are, and that he and she is too. Un-learn what you think you know about yourself, about others and about your country, and take the time to re-learn about all three from a place of love. Socioeconomic issues require a determined struggle and they can even break our spirits. But we're stronger in hope and braver in numbers.

Let us act. Let us act today. Let us act towards things that will live beyond our time.

Remember to use these three things: love yourself, love others and love our country. And for all three, use leadership!

> ANELE NZIMANDE SAYS: *The concept of citizenship can't be discussed in isolation.*

Citizenship and statesmanship need to be discussed in juxtaposition with each other. We need to ask ourselves, 'Is a decline in our levels of patriotism as citizens a reflection of our overall dissatisfaction with our current statesmen?' To what extent are citizens responsible for their own empowerment when they cede power to politicians through their democratic vote in the hope that they will initiate programmes that will be properly administered for the use of the general public? The National Youth Development Agency, for example, has been



criticised for not carrying out its mandate and being inaccessible to the general public. Who are such organisations accountable to? And in the discussion of South Africa's citizenry – how do we hold them accountable?

> JOHAN DU PISANIE SAYS: *Citizenship and patriotism are to a great extent what define us as a nation. We've come a long way, and from our history it's very evident that every race in this country loves South Africa dearly. I agree wholeheartedly that the only way we can exhibit more citizenry is by showing love, not only for others but also for ourselves. When we love ourselves and those around us, we can start taking responsibility for what's happening, and only then can things start to change.*



> SEBENZILE NKAMBULE SAYS: *If South Africans, all 50-odd million of us, had the option to live elsewhere and have other citizenships, would we still choose to be South African? If that answer is an unequivocal 'yes', then we can safely say we've fostered a healthy level of patriotism in the country. Patriotism without material impact is worthless. Pride in the state, without a vision and the will to implement it, is meaningless. At the risk of sounding pessimistic, I think many South Africans haven't an alternative. It's like not choosing your family. Patriotism is a very selfish act because it grows the more we recognise that a better country serves our*



own needs. If we're a safer country, we can move around freely and be ourselves. If we have great sporting teams, we have bragging rights over other people. If we have jobs, we can access material goods, and so on. Currently, this isn't the case. We have the Springboks and our tourism to thank for continuously reminding us of the country's greatness. But what happens when these aren't in place? We need more, and how do we create more? Twenty years into democracy, we've yet to do the hard work of defining what it means to be South African.



@Ndumiso_H22

Ndumiso Hadebe

PROFILE

I'm the middle son of three brothers born and raised in the Vaal Triangle. I'm a conscientious and passionate person who loves his country, its people and himself. I'm outspoken about my discontent with inequalities, corruption and violation of human rights globally.

I'm a firm believer that everything rises and falls on leadership, which is why I've committed most of my young life to being a highly active individual engaging in deliberate and purposeful dialogue and activities that seek to address some of these challenges.

I entered Season 1 of One Day Leader at the age of 18. I made the Top 8, and the experience confirmed for me my conviction in being an active and solution-oriented citizen.

I won Season 2 of One Day Leader. It was a journey filled with growth and self-discovery, to refine and direct my role and those of others in how we strengthen efforts for nation building.

One Day Leader came with a number of opportunities to extend my reach in making an impact, such as mentoring young people who seek to establish their own community projects to advance the

development of youth across the country. I was nominated to represent South Africa in the USA and France at the UNESCO education summit, and was also afforded the opportunity to go to China to learn how the fastest-growing economy in the world is making such progress.

My experience in the pursuit of social progress includes serving in community-based projects and providing training and support to high-school learners in public speaking, leadership, bullying and substance abuse. I served in provincial and institutional leadership throughout my schooling career, from secretary to presidency.

I'm often asked to comment in the media on issues relating to youth development, leadership and business development. In academia, I engage in panel discussions and deliver keynote addresses at private and public institutions of higher learning in strategy, leadership, business development, frontier and emerging markets, so as to develop our thinking in making strides in building South Africa.

I currently work in research, lobbying and advocacy at Shanduka Black Umbrellas, a non-profit company of the Shanduka Foundation which provides support to 100% black-owned businesses in South Africa. I research, engage and manage relations with organisations from every sector of society as means of establishing collaborative efforts in providing support to small black businesses, so that they can make a greater contribution to growth and creation of jobs in South Africa.

I hold a Bachelor of Economics and International Trade from North West University. I'm a sporting and cultural enthusiast. My faith is what grounds me, and it's from my faith that I get my confidence.

South Africa's

SOUTH AFRICA'S **LIFELINE:**

Entrepreneurship

I'm a proud son of South Africa.

I'm a 23-year-old young black male South African, living in a country that has a rich history, looked up to by the world for its ability to have transformed itself from an unjust, unequal and discriminatory society into a democratic society whose values stem from non-racialism, non-sexism and the rule of law. It's a country that holds a lot of promise and is viewed as an example to the rest of the world for being able to have made a peaceful transition to becoming the South Africa that we know and live in today.

Even with all these hopes and the promise that our country holds, we still face a number of key challenges that hinder our progress in moving forward as a nation. It's with these in mind that I've chosen to discuss a topic

LIFELINE

by Ndumiso Hadebe

recently identified as a possible key contributor to driving the prosperity of our nation and continent as a whole: entrepreneurship.

South Africa has made major advances in bettering the lives of our people in many areas. However, some of the challenges we face are symptoms of a post-apartheid nation and the inequalities because of that institutionalised system for 350-odd years. Unemployment, inequality and poverty continue to be significant challenges for many South Africans, and young people in particular.

Today, more than half of the world's population is young and it's no different in South Africa. Poverty comes largely as a result of people not having the opportunity to take advantage of available opportunities to sustain their lives,

or aren't willing to grab opportunities that are available to make a living for themselves and sustain their families, and break the cycle of inherent poverty.

Given the challenges we face, young people between the ages of 15 and 35 remain the hardest hit by the realities.

You may wonder why a country that holds so much promise is struggling. Surely there's a cure for these symptoms? What can we do to turn the situation around? Will it need another 350 years? And, being a young person, what does this mean for me and my future?

We can establish that, for any country to grow and develop, it needs a productive economy: one that better the living standards of its people, expands opportunities, reduces poverty, and builds capabilities and continued community development. But how do we achieve this?

The necessity of a 'warrior' economy

As a young person who has a strong sense of purpose, and who loves this country and its people, I've thought long and hard (and continue to do so) and have engaged with many of my peers and elders on their views regarding what a country really needs to be strong and prosperous. I've since developed a concept that I call the 'warrior' economy.

Consider this. You're an emperor of a nation and you seek to conquer many other nations to become a powerful force globally and compete with the best of the best in the

world. However, in order to achieve this, you need a strong army that will be able to hold its own in battle to guarantee victory. To achieve that, your men serve as your most precious machinery.

So, first, you would need to check the health of your men: are they fit and healthy, and do they have the endurance necessary for battle?

Second, you would need to ensure your men are adequately trained, skilled and innovative enough for the most intense of battles.

And last, you would need to ensure the standard of living of your men is adequate for them to perform on the battlefield, so they would have to have a decent means to sustain their lives and live longer.

By ensuring that those basic requirements are met, you would have gone a long way to ensuring that your army is fit for battle to conquer many nations and become a force to be reckoned with.

This analogy speaks to the basic indicators of economic development. That in order for a country to be prosperous, it has to consider the health of its people, as that determines whether they can be productive or not; it has to consider the education levels of its people, whether or not they're trained and skilled enough to respond to the needs of the country; and it has to consider the real income of its people, whether or not they have a decent income to sustain a decent

standard of living to be able to perform at the rate that the economy of the country needs them to – and longer.

I firmly believe that one of the instrumental ways in which we can achieve the indicators for a warrior economy is in inculcating a culture of entrepreneurship, particularly among young people.

‘Subsistence’ entrepreneurship – a South African reality

For many black Africans, entrepreneurship is a way of life, and often through necessity. For example, even though my late grandfather served as a pastor of the NG Kerk, one of the ways my maternal grandparents used to sustain themselves was from their vegetable garden, chickens and cows. Although times were tough, largely because of the socio-political climate of the day, they would walk with a spring in their step because their children would be fed. To make a living, they sold their excess vegetables, fattest chickens and the milk they got from the cows.

The income they received from those sales went a very long way in raising my mother and her siblings, and even though it wasn't necessarily enough to pay for them accessing higher education, it did go a long way in facilitating the process for all of them to be qualified educators today.

Although this type of 'subsistence' entrepreneurship is purely for survival and not necessarily profit-making, even

in this instance, jobs can easily be created.

This demonstrates how a small piece of land with a hint of innovation can easily create an opportunity for one to live, and to create other opportunities for others to sustain their livelihoods as well.

Richard Maponya: a case study

Richard Maponya is a respected businessman who's demonstrated how, through entrepreneurship, you can not only sustain yourself but also thrive and raise your standard of living in the process while creating jobs.

Richard, now 88 years old, started his career as a teacher, and then became a stock taker at a clothes manufacturing company. After being promoted for his outstanding work and commitment, he was afforded the opportunity to sell partially damaged goods, which he enthusiastically grabbed with both hands. He quickly made extra money, and it wasn't long before he'd made enough money to pursue and realise his dream.

Richard tried to open a clothing manufacturing plant of his own but the government of the time blocked it. Richard didn't let that get him down, and instead formed the Dube Hygienic company. He hired young people from the neighbourhood to deliver fresh milk daily to customers who didn't have a means to store fresh milk or couldn't get transport to shops.

Through its popularity, Richard was able to build a strong and loyal following that earned him a healthy profit. It wasn't long before he was opening businesses left, right and centre, including general stores, car dealerships and petrol stations.

Richard also played a large role on the political scene, including being a founding member and the inaugural president of the National African Federated Chamber of Commerce, as well as the founder member of the African Chamber of Commerce.

Quietly, over the years, he continued to grow his business empire, adding numerous businesses to his portfolio. Then, in 2007, he made his biggest business claim to fame to date: the R650-million Maponya Mall in Soweto was officially opened by South Africa's first democratically elected president, Nelson Mandela. It was a difficult build, and Richard succeeded in raising the shopping complex by entering a joint venture with Zenprop Property Holdings.

And if you think the 88-year-old business magnate is ready to sit back and rest on his laurels, think again. Since 2007, Richard has since created hundreds more jobs and has left a legacy for all South Africans to look up to.

BEE and our double economy

If people like Richard Maponya are able to become entrepreneurs, sustain themselves and have a broader

impact by creating sustainable jobs, why the need for legislation such as Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (BEE)? How has it assisted the majority of black South Africans and created an enabling environment for young people to thrive, make meaningful contributions and be rewarded for the risks they take? One may argue that all it has done has been to push the transformation agenda down the throats of South Africans and that no real growth has been realised from it; some even argue that it is standing in the way of real growth.

Consider this. There's a steamship on the ocean, and on this ship there are masters and slaves. The ship is about to encounter a heavy storm, and the masters need more manpower to shovel in more coal, faster, in order to move the ship out of the storm. The masters demand that the slaves assist in achieving this feat.

The slaves feel they have nothing much to lose. Whether they die in the storm or not doesn't make a difference to them, as they haven't been living the fullness of what life has to offer in any case.

One of the slaves tells the masters that they will only help under two conditions. One, that they, the slaves, become common owners of the ship; and, two, that the masters release the elderly.

The masters agree, so the slaves get to work shovelling coal until the ship is safely out of the storm. The masters

keep their end of the bargain, making the slaves common owners of the ship and releasing the elderly.

Three months later, one of the freed elderly poses this question: 'Dear friends, we have sailed through the dangerous storm, and have all come together to build a more inclusive and unified people on this ship, and we've since been sailing on the open sea for three months. But now I ask, where are we taking this ship?'

You see, the challenges of the people on the ship were different when there were still slaves and masters. When they all became common owners, they were building towards a better tomorrow together. They had inherited inequalities and injustices from their past but they now had the task to heal those wounds and address the inequalities together. They all had the opportunity to enjoy the fragrances of the open sea and the rays of the sun on their skin; to know and connect with one another, regardless of what their titles were previously, and to learn each other's names and the meaning behind those names. They were able to realise that, in all of their differences, they were not really so different. In deepening their understanding of the human condition, they were faced with the realities and challenges of their past. To ensure a prosperous future for themselves and generations to come, they had to bring together their thoughts, solutions and instruments to decide the destination of the ship.

Such is the case of South Africa today, isn't it? We've inherited a mix of diverse issues that exist in an unequal mix. So I ask, dear friends, where are we taking our ship called South Africa?

I believe that we seek to unite a people and build a nation. Part of that process would be to heal the wounds of our shameful past, address some of the symptoms we've inherited, and love one another while deepening our understanding of the human condition.

So where does BEE come in? BEE was identified as one of the instruments to be used to achieve the outcomes of building a more inclusive, united and strong warrior economy. However, it seems to be perceived as more of a negative thing.

I remember that, when the first few black beneficiaries of this legislation came out into the public eye, BEE became known for people with sharp shoes, silk shirts, fancy SUVs and big bellies. To most, that was the image of BEE. Personally, I wasn't comfortable with that view and how a few people would make use of it for self-enrichment.

The questions we should ask are: is BEE the correct instrument to use? If so, how can we ensure that it serves the majority of South Africans? And is the purpose behind this legislation serving our objectives of nation building and strengthening our warrior economy?

Whatever the answers, we need to adopt a more positive narrative around these issues.

The reality is, in order for a group of people to advance a cause, you need buy-in from other groups in society. Because, in as much as entrepreneurship may accelerate growth and better the standards of living of people, it still does not respond to the issue of the widening inequalities that exist in society today. Hence, even when growth does take place, it becomes a situation where the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. As a result, one is led to believe that there's an instrument needed to level the playing field.

However, there has to be a positive narrative where transformation – or, as some refer to it, 'diversity management' – is concerned. Regardless of the term we use, what we're trying to do is to build a nation.

The issue of BEE shouldn't be viewed as just as a policy that has seemingly benefited the few, or is shoved down our throats, but as an economic imperative. The majority of South Africans are unemployed and don't have the skills needed to respond to the needs of our country, and it just so happens that the majority of these South Africans are black.

Contrary to that, we have a minority grouping of white South Africans who have the best ratio of employment in comparison with other South African racial groups, and, relatively, they have the skills needed to respond to a need within the economy.

Race just so happens to be something that our history has imposed on us, but to build a unified and competitive nation, we need to view this as an economic imperative so we broaden our tax base as a means of increasing our budget to facilitate further growth and investment.

An economy won't grow, nor will it be sustained, if a minority group of the population possess the majority of a nation's wealth. We need to expand and transfer this to the majority of other South African racial groups. This is so that there is a larger budget to invest back into the economy for stimulation and to drive entrepreneurship with the purpose of creating sustainable jobs.

A time is coming when BEE will no longer exist, when growth will be viewed beyond a racial lens, because what we're trying to do is to better capacitate our warrior economy, our people, who are our most prized machinery if we are to make South Africa work.

The thing is, there are two economies at play here. The first economy is the one that produces the bulk of the country's wealth and is integrated with the international economy. The second economy is characterised by underdevelopment and is made up of a big chunk of our population.

Until we close this gap between the two economies, we'll never reach our full potential as a nation.

Knowledge vs wisdom: remaining relevant

Having identified entrepreneurship as one of the drivers, why are we not making strides? What aren't we getting right?

Those are important questions, and to a large extent I ask myself the very same things. However, I do think that there comes a time when we have to move from a knowledge-based approach to a more wisdom-based approach to building a prosperous warrior economy. Knowledge can tell us what the right thing is to do – but wisdom can tell us what the right thing is to do for you!

We need to be learners of life and seek meaning behind what we see with the naked eye, because the truth is that we live in a changing world. The challenges we face may become more complex, and when our ability and agility to learn become slower than the rate of change, then we'll become irrelevant.

Perhaps we already know what we need to do. We know that no one will carry us to the destiny that our bones crave, but in our humanness, in our truth and as human beings, together, driving entrepreneurship to tackle mass joblessness, can be but a minor task.

So it becomes a question of leadership. Is there enough leadership in all of us to make this happen? Is there will? Is there willingness to engage in dialogue, not to appease ourselves but to deepen our understanding of the human condition?

We're at a point in our history where the voices of young people need to be heard more than before, where our action or inaction will shape the realities of the future we seek to build.

Perhaps we need to learn from the lessons of our grandparents, who sustained their lives through subsistence entrepreneurship: self-reliance.

Perhaps we ought to consider some of the basics that an emperor would need to look at in order to ensure that he has a global competitive army to conquer other nations: health, skills and income.

Perhaps we need to look at the story of Richard Maponya and how he took his destiny into his own hands, made something out of nothing, and created jobs that allowed many mothers and fathers to return home at 6 p.m. in the evening and put a loaf of bread and milk on the table for their families.

An emperor would know that in order to have the best army, you need to create an environment that will enable them to thrive, where training and skills, health and financial wellbeing are provided.

In South Africa, we need to do the same. We need to create an environment that will make it easier to start up and do business.

Where do we start and how do we go on?

It all starts with education. Just as in the case of the soldiers in the warrior analogy, there has to be sufficient training, skills and innovation to be responsive to the needs of our communities. Those who have these skills may choose to start their own businesses, and those who have the ability may choose to work for those businesses. At this point, we need a balanced mix of those who start their own businesses, and those who have the necessary skills to work for those businesses.

Let's look at a young woman we shall call Thembi. First, for Thembi to start up and run her own sustainable business, we'd need to ensure that from a young age she's trained, skilled and innovative enough to be able to respond to current and future needs. This will give her a greater possibility of pursuing entrepreneurship as a career of choice and offering labour to other people.

The creation of a regulatory environment that would not be a constraint to Thembi doing business would also be pertinent.

In order for her to work productively for longer, Thembi's health is important, so we'd have to ensure that we continue the fight against HIV/Aids and other preventable diseases.

Her standard of living would be important for ensuring that she's able to take care of herself and continue spending and creating jobs, as that drives economic growth.

While there are many other factors that come into play in achieving a productive, competitive, inclusive and equitable economy, if we were to have 500 000 Thembis who create 10 jobs each, we would have 5 million sustainable jobs in key sectors of our economy.

Dear friend, what I am saying is that it's possible to overcome this challenge that is stifling us from moving forward. But it's important that we acknowledge our past, reflect on our realities, and work together for victory as a nation to become one of the most competitive in the world.

Richard Maponya put it beautifully in a speech at the University of Johannesburg in October 2010: 'If we want to learn about our past, we should look at our present conditions; and if we want to know about our future, we should look at our present actions.'

We all have great responsibility: the responsibility to create, to build and to act; the responsibility to never dishonour the cause of our freedom. We must co-create this beautiful nation by continuously asking ourselves where we're taking it and if we're still on that path. We must strengthen our prized machinery, our Thembis, to have a stronger warrior economy, one that will epitomise the legacies of the warrior women and men that Hintsa and Sekhukhune led, the patriots that Cetshwayo and Mphephu took to battle, and the soldiers that Moshoeshoe and Ngungunyane taught to value the precious gift of life and leading from within.

When all is said and done, our future won't be dependent on a lifeline but more on our ability to learn and work together as a people – because when our ability and agility to learn becomes slower than the rate of change, it is then that we become irrelevant.

> JOHAN DU PISANIE SAYS: *Entrepreneurship*

is often described as the answer to many of South Africa's problems – especially those relating to poverty and unemployment. Though the idea seems great, I'm not too convinced. Being an entrepreneur myself, I've seen first-hand how difficult it can be to start and run even the smallest of enterprises. Without proper backing and infrastructure to support entrepreneurship every step of the way, this will always be just an idea. I believe that the better answer to unemployment and poverty sits with better labour laws that serve to protect employers and not only employees. This will lead to more companies investing in South Africa and more jobs being created.



> ANELE NZIMANDE SAYS: *What set Richard*

Maponya apart from all those who're in the same line of business as him, and how can others replicate his success in their own small businesses? South Africa is currently facing a mindset issue. In the past, colonialism created a barrier for a majority of South Africans in their pursuit to access



quality education. In modern South Africa, the barrier to quality education is poverty. A greater focus should be put on creating entrepreneurs who can create employment not just for themselves but for their communities.



@Johan_duPisanie

Johan du Pisanie

I grew up in Vryburg in the North West province, the eldest of three brothers. My father is a journalist and my mother is a nurse. I matriculated in 2005, and in 2006 enrolled in business mathematics and IT at the Potchefstroom campus of North West University. In 2010, at the age of 22, I received my Master's in data mining.

From a young age I always had an interest in leadership and leading others. At school and university I read many books and attended a number of seminars and talks on the subject. I'm a proud Afrikaner and I believe that all Afrikaners, just like any other group in South Africa, have important roles to play in taking our country forward. Without knowing who we are ourselves, we'll never have the courage to understand each other.

In 2011 I was one of the participants in the first season of One Day Leader. It was a magnificent experience that taught me the value of standing up for myself and knowing what I want in life. During the course of the show, I had to do a number of things I'd never done

before, the most memorable of which was a site visit and sleepover at the house of a sangoma in Diepsloot. Although I recognise I still have much to learn on the topic of leadership, One Day Leader was one of my most profound learning experiences in leadership so far.

I live in Pretoria and work as a risk analyst. I'm a Christian who aims to build my Christian values into my everyday life.

First things

FIRST THINGS

Education

Wherever we want progress, we must first seek to understand where we're at. Education is our most important task as the youth of South Africa. Before we can take the country forward, we'll need to educate ourselves.

In April 2010, John Tapene, the principal of Northland College in New Zealand, included in his school newsletter some words of wisdom for teenagers, adapted from a letter by Judge Phillip B Gilliam of Denver, Colorado, published on 17 December 1959 in the *South Bend Tribune*.

'Always we hear the cry from teenagers, "What can we do? Where can we go?"' he wrote.

'My answer is this: Go home, mow the lawn, wash the windows, learn to cook, build a raft, get a job, visit the sick

FIRST

by Johan du Pisanie

and elderly, study your lessons and after you've finished, read a book.

'Your town doesn't owe you recreational facilities and your parents do not owe you fun. The world does not owe you a living, you owe the world something. You owe it your time, energy and talent so that no one will be at war, in sickness and lonely again.

'In other words, grow up, stop being a cry baby, get out of your dream world and develop a backbone, not a wishbone. Start behaving like a responsible person. You are important and you are needed.

'It's too late to sit around and wait for somebody to do something someday. Someday is now and that somebody is you!'

These are some harsh words indeed, especially for us as the youth. Why can't we just sit back and let the government do their thing? Or perhaps blame our lack of opportunities on our parents or our surroundings? Why do we need to do more than our part? It's not our fault if our schools are in a terrible condition. It's not our problem if our teachers strike for lengthy periods for better salaries. I didn't choose to grow up in the house that I did. And even if I look past all this and still do my part, what are the odds of actually getting a job in a country where unemployment and inequality are so rife?

These are all really valid statements. They strike at the very heart of the youth today. But unfortunately, as is so often the case, they are only half-truths, and if we're not careful will lead us to believe complete lies.

But what, then, is the truth? Why do we need to value any form of education?

Clarence's story

Like so many young people, Clarence grew up in a home with limited opportunities. His father worked on the mines in the Rustenburg area. Clarence and his mother lived in the southern Free State, and he saw his father only once or sometimes twice a year.

Clarence's father was a hard-working man, but, due to the nature of his work, he could only provide Clarence

with a very basic upbringing. Clarence usually had to wear second-hand clothes and often had to go to school hungry.

His mother was a secretary who worked for a terrible boss who always reminded her of how useless she was. Every day she would come home and complain about her day and the stuff she'd had to put up with.

Things at school were not much better. Clarence's teachers disliked him and would pick on him and humiliate him in front of his classmates.

All of this made Clarence very rebellious from a young age. At school he would always do the bare minimum – he never bothered to learn for a test and didn't ever do any homework, and by the time he got to Grade 10 he'd decided not to continue with school.

He tried looking for a job but this was more difficult than he'd thought. In a job market with so many unemployed young people, he didn't stand out enough to be given a job.

It took him more than two years to land his first job as a factory worker. During that time he'd had to stay with friends and family, and borrow money from any place he could just to survive.

Today, eight years later, Clarence is still working in the factory earning a minimum wage. He's unable to find a better job because of his limited education. He has a daughter for whom he can't provide any better than was provided for him. Because of the poor decisions he made as

a young man, the terrible cycle of scraping together a living continues, and will influence his children's lives too.

Although Clarence might have had good reasons to become rebellious and give up school, he will forever be a victim of his circumstances.

Rebecca's story

Rebecca also came from a very difficult background. In fact, she had even fewer opportunities than Clarence. Rebecca's father had left them when she was very young and she never knew him. Her mother worked very hard as a cleaning lady at a nursing college in her home town. She wanted the best for Rebecca but couldn't support her financially.

Rebecca saw the hardship that her mother had to endure on a daily basis. To save money, Rebecca's mother walked to work rather than taking a taxi, although their house was more than an hour's walk from the college.

Although her mother never complained about any of this, it still made Rebecca feel very sorry for her – and it made Rebecca decide that she wanted a better life for herself and her children.

She studied as hard as she possibly could. Whenever her friends went out, Rebecca would stay in, studying for all her subjects. Sometimes her friends would mock her and call her names because she wouldn't go out with them. Rebecca decided that she wouldn't let this bother her.

When she was in Grade 10, her teachers staged a strike for better wages and stayed away from school for more than three weeks. This didn't deter her either. While her classmates enjoyed the 'free holiday', Rebecca went home and self-studied her work.

Rebecca wasn't sure what her next step would be after she finished school. Fortunately, her mother spoke to some of the lecturers at the nursing college where she worked, and they agreed to give Rebecca a bursary if she performed well in her subjects. Rebecca was well prepared for all her Grade 12 exams and performed better than anyone in her school ever had.

Today Rebecca is a nurse at a hospital in her community. She earns a good salary and has been able to buy herself a car to drive to work. She's also saving up to buy a house one day. Because of the decisions she made as a young girl, she can now provide well for herself and her daughter. Her daughter now has many more opportunities and wants to become an engineer.

Rebecca is also seen as a leader in her community. She helps out with many community projects and tries to give back wherever she can. Everywhere she goes, people look up to her and always wants to ask her for advice and guidance.

Planning our future: our main task

Both Clarence and Rebecca came from very humble beginnings. Both had to overcome a number of obstacles in life. Unfortunately, only one of them took their education seriously and is now no longer a victim of her circumstances and can dictate where she wants her life to go.

Being part of the youth of today, I understand that the only thing we have on our side is time. Time to learn. Time to be truly educated. Time to set the course for the rest of our lives.

What can we do for our families, our communities or even our country? We can use every little opportunity to educate ourselves, because, as the youth in South Africa, this is our main task.

The old saying goes: 'A goal without a plan is just a dream'. You'll never achieve anything if you don't plan to achieve it. Every journey we take in our lives starts somewhere, and we can only go as far as we tell ourselves we can go. The biggest limitations we can ever place on ourselves are the ones we have in our heads.

You might think that you're already someone like Rebecca. You're studying hard. You make time to work whenever you can and you've given everything up until this point. But now you're unsure about the future. You don't know if you'll get the opportunities you think you deserve. You worry that all your efforts might be worthless.

No effort is ever worthless! Education is something that no one can ever take away from you. You may lose your job or your money or even a family member who acted as a role model for you. But anything you learn can never be taken away. It will affect the rest of your life and you'll carry it to your grave.

So where do you start to plan your future?

Have a dream and a plan

Everyone has dreams. Some people dream of becoming lawyers or doctors or engineers. Some dream of going to faraway places and exploring the great beyond. Others want to become musicians or artists. Many people dream of having a family that they can care and provide for. Whatever your dream, you need to be bold about it – but also have a plan.

One of my great mentors taught me that it is always important to be very clear about your 'next step'. One of my friends is a great example of this. I met Peter a few years ago at a camp. We were sitting around the fire talking when he got up and disappeared into his tent. After a few moments he reappeared with a guitar and started playing for us. Soon everyone was singing songs and having a great time.

While we were singing, I realised that Peter was a very good guitar player. He also had a strong singing voice,

but I could tell that his voice wasn't yet well developed. I decided that I'd talk to him about his musical talents.

The next morning we were both up early and, while drinking coffee, I asked what Peter wanted to do with his life. He told me that he wanted to be a musician and perform in front of people. He also told me that he'd never performed before and that he was a bit scared to do so. He felt that his voice wasn't good enough and that he lacked experience.

So we decided to make a plan for him. The first step he had to take was to go for singing lessons. Because he's very talented, the singing lessons were quite easy for him, but he still learned a lot about how to control his voice properly.

After taking lessons for 18 months, he was confident that he could perform in front of people. I encouraged him to organise a small concert and only invite his friends. At first he was sceptical but eventually he organised the concert. It was a great event and everybody was thoroughly surprised at the progress he'd made.

Peter went on to organise more concerts for more people, until he was really comfortable on stage. At one of these concerts he met a manager for a band who asked if he'd play one or two songs at the band's next concert.

This was the opportunity that Peter had worked so hard for, but it wouldn't have happened if he hadn't taken that first step towards making his dream a reality.

Be realistic about your constraints

Often we see people who rise above their circumstances. They take on the odds and win. Unfortunately, what we don't always see is the obstacles that they had to overcome and the time it took them to overcome these obstacles.

Becoming an educated person is never easy. If it were, there would be no point in talking about it. No, getting a good education and educating yourself is mostly quite hard. It requires that you sacrifice something – time, luxuries and sometimes even friendship.

Each person also has a unique path in getting to the goals that they've set for themselves.

It's very important to be realistic about your specific obstacles or constraints. Any obstacle in your way can be overcome, but some might take much more time and effort than others. If I want to run a marathon, for example, I need to start training. I'll start by running for 10 minutes, until I'm comfortable with that. Then I can run farther. After lots of practice and preparation over a long period of time, I might be able to run a marathon. If I'm a natural runner, this might come easily to me, but if I'm not, I'll need to work much harder at it than the next person.

Any dream can be achieved, but, you must be prepared to work hard for it. Nothing in life that's worthwhile will come easy.

Work hard and be flexible

Education isn't a destination. It is a journey that starts when you're very young and will continue until the day you breathe your last breath. Sometimes you'll start out with one dream and plan, and finish with something completely different. Whenever you ask little children what they want to be when they're all grown up, they'll say they want to be a policeman or a fireman or some other interesting job. No five-year-old will say that they want to be a lawyer. Most children start out their education journey in one direction but then end up with something else.

In your journey to become educated, you should always keep that in mind. The end product of your education might be different from the dream you started with, but this isn't wrong. It only means that you've grown into other dreams and are now ready to take on other types of challenges.

Always work hard at what you're busy with, but when an opportunity comes along that you didn't anticipate, be flexible enough to consider it.

The most important thing to recognise here is that you don't have time to waste. If you want to be a self-sufficient adult with the skills to make a proper living, you need to start right now. Direct your focus to what's important and make sure that you put all your energy into that.

Don't be a victim of your circumstances

South Africa is in desperate need of well-educated individuals. As a country we've come a long way in bringing better education to more people. The challenge now is to take this process further. Unfortunately, we don't get support from the people around us.

Take your community, for example. In so many communities you'll find that the teachers lack discipline. They're not prepared for their classes and hence the learners don't get any value out of going to school.

I've also been to school where the learners come an hour late for school, sometimes even more. This means that out of the six hours spent at school every day, they miss the first hour, and before long they fall behind and can never really recover.

We also hear of schools where they don't get their textbooks on time. These learners then need to go for months without any guidance on the subjects they're trying to study and often need to write exams on subjects for which they didn't even have a textbook.

In many townships you'll find nice schools that are broken down because of rebellious learners who didn't want to take their education seriously. They'd rather spend their energy in destroying things than in building them. By breaking down your own school, you're hurting yourself the most. You're letting yourself become a victim

of your circumstance and you'll never have control over your own life.

The education picture in our country isn't too bright, unfortunately. When we look at this, together with issues like poverty, unemployment and a general lack of proper leadership, we start to realise that our country needs us to be part of the 'elite group' of youths.

What is the elite group? These are young people who take their education seriously. They understand the value of a good education. They also understand that the responsibility for their education doesn't live with the government, their parents or their teachers, but with themselves. The elite group of learners are the ones we need to take this country forward and to prosper.

So how do you become a learner who doesn't rely on your country to look after you, but rather contributes to it? How do you make yourself stand out and be seen as a leader?

Start by taking a deep look at yourself and your circumstances. You might have certain problems that only you can understand. Maybe you're in one of the schools without textbooks. Perhaps your parents are unable to provide for you financially and you need to work as well as study to make ends meet. These are your obstacles that you need to overcome. I can't tell you how to overcome them, but I do know that, if you apply your mind and energy, you'll be able to figure out a way.

Don't ignore your obstacles, because they won't just go away. Also don't be discouraged by them. Even the biggest problem can be broken down into smaller problems that can be fixed one by one.

Aside from your problems, you'll also have opportunities. The fact that you're in a school is an opportunity. Your friends might give you the opportunity to study with them. Make sure you grab every one of these opportunities with both hands.

Every time an opportunity arises, you have the chance to take it or let it go. The more you take opportunities, the easier it becomes, and the better off you'll be. If you don't focus on taking those opportunities, you'll start to miss them.

Always have a plan that includes what your next step will be. If you're still at school, your next step might be to increase your marks in the next test or exam. You might think of a next step as going to the teacher for help with the work that you don't yet fully understand.

If you're done with school, your next step might be to start looking for a job where you can educate yourself further. Education doesn't always mean a degree or diploma. By working for someone who can train you in a specific set of skills, you'll also be educating yourself.

We as the South African youth live in a country with endless possibilities. We can become anything we want if we put our minds to it.

We need to realise that it's not yet our time to lead the country. Yes, we can influence our surroundings. Yes, we can make a difference in our communities. But the leadership of our country doesn't yet belong to us.

Our most important task as the youth is to educate ourselves so that, when our time comes, we're ready for it.

➤ **ANELE NZIMANDE SAYS:** *Our Constitution enshrines the right to basic education, including adult basic education, of every South African. Should it be compulsory for all statesmen to utilise state facilities – including the public schooling system for their own children? This could be a step towards ensuring that the basic education spoken of in the Bill of Rights in our Constitution is a quality education that every South African can afford.*



➤ **SANDA NCAMA SAYS:** *Education is more than just sitting in a classroom obtaining knowledge that can be objectively tested. Many of our political activists are world renowned for the knowledge they received in prison rather than a formal institution. In this world there are many ways to get educated: reading newspapers, magazines and our very own Constitution are just a few simple ideas. Many people want to be educated because they want to*



acquire a skill that they can utilise to get wealthy and become the best in their field. How many people want to get educated simply because they want to serve humanity? You can't claim to be developed and educated when the person next door to you barely knows how to write and read. It's up to every individual to uplift this country's education system; the duty, mandate and responsibilities are not only on government but on every proud and active citizen. Together we can move this country forward.

I must note that the best education or knowledge out there is knowledge of self. Before having the ambition and desire to study the world and its processes, you need to study and know yourself. As a young person, make every effort using every resource to develop yourself and grow as an individual. As much as you have the right to education, which no one can take away from you, you also have the responsibility to achieve.

> **AYANDA BANDLA SAYS:** *If we are to understand a world of ideas and influences, which shape the thought processes and ideologies of mankind, we need to read. If we are to know, understand and uphold, as a society, the values and legacies of history, tradition, culture and religion, we can never do that without reading. Reading is the simplest and most practical way of educating ourselves. Reading is more than just a leisure activity. It's a character-building, knowledge-gaining, intellect-sustaining, society-building, country, continental and world growth agent.*



Literacy plays an important role in the development of a people and the sustainability of a nation. There's a strong association between income and illiteracy levels. High levels of literacy can diminish poverty and contribute to economic growth. More importantly, literacy brings about improvement in the quality of lives of those who pursue it. With 4.7 million South Africans being illiterate, it's imperative that we as a society be proactive as opposed to being reactive in reversing the trend. We need to start the process as early as possible through establishing a culture of reading, for this country can't afford to have a generation of children who can't read. As Richard Steele (1672–1729), co-founder of The Spectator magazine put it, 'Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.' That's the attitude we should adopt and instil in our children so as to birth a generation of readers.

Invest in yourself, invest in knowledge, invest in your development, invest in your future – read a book.



@SebeNkambule

Sebenzile Nkambule

PROFILE

I'm a thought leader, broadcaster and writer with a passion for Africa. I'm the go-to girl for engaging debate, insightful conversation, crazy ideas and a good laugh!

A self-appointed ambassador for all things African, I believe that it's through the power of the media that the continent will change for the better. I joined One Day Leader because issues of leadership and governance as they relate to young people fascinate me. It was a life-changing experience.

I'm currently a presenter on Talk Radio 702/567 Cape Talk. I also do work in television production.

As a McKinsey & Company alumnus, I have the desire to fix the world's biggest and most challenging problems using whatever tools are available. Mine are my abilities as a broadcaster, my knowledge of business and my keen love and interest for media as a tool for social change. With strategy, energy, a pursuit of excellence and an ability to make sense of

complex ideas and simplify them for all to understand, impact is guaranteed.

My aspiration is to bridge the gap between business fundamentals and development work. I'm looking to further my interests in doing work on the African continent that contributes to the development and upliftment of disadvantaged and marginalised groups. The development of girls and women is particularly close to my heart.

The importance of **TALKING ABOUT IT:** **Gender equality**

Appearances count

When you walk into a room, you're not perceived as just another human being. Your race, your weight, your hairstyle, and whether you're confident or not, determine how people treat you and what they think of you.

We choose between saying 'hi' and 'good afternoon' based on whether someone is dressed in a suit or wearing a pair of shorts. We make choices based on the beliefs we have about ourselves, and the communities we represent.

As these communities we belong to change, how we show up also changes. The choice between wearing Converse sneakers and high heels is a political statement that highlights individual and collective identity. It gives those around you an idea about where you've been, what

TALKING ABOUT IT

by Sebenzile Nkambule

you represent and how people should approach and address you.

The fashion industry globally continues to contribute significantly to the economy because brands are powerful, and they're an extension of who we are. The British fashion industry is worth £26 billion, according to recent reports from the British Fashion Council. The tourism associated with big labels, the process of manufacturing and the impact of retail stores are all incorporated in this number.

At the heart of fashion and the industry is identity. Identity is important in the politics of leadership and representation as much as it's central to culture. My dreadlocks aren't just hair; they're a loaded symbol of who I am. I've been received differently based on whether I'm

wearing them up or down, and I make the choice depending on the context.

Perceptions of identity are critical in how we shape society. We must interrogate identity in post-apartheid South Africa as we figure out how to build a nation with a painful past, where racial identity was used to foster hate and divide the country.

Black people were treated as inferior to white people in this country, because of the colour of our skin. We were segregated geographically, pushed far away from developed areas to townships while being kept close enough to provide labour. Black people received substandard education in the form of Bantu Education, limiting our prospects and our potential and condemning us to lives of subservience.

The worst thing to be during apartheid was black, because of this oppression. We're still healing from this racial division.

Gender equality is a secondary focus

When we talk about transformation, we often focus on black empowerment and equality between the races. Even after 20 years of democracy, issues of race are a challenge in South Africa. This challenge means that other issues, such as the state of women in the country and the inadequate levels of female representation in positions of leadership, are not engaged as robustly in public.

Gender-based violence is all too 'normal' in our communities and there is yet to be leadership that is dedicated to dealing with it effectively.

What does 'effectively' mean? It means a national campaign where dialogue is central, a campaign aimed at supporting women towards equality, and using resources to push hard on the campaign.

Our Constitution says that we have the right to be treated fairly, to have equal opportunity without being discriminated against based on our race, gender or sexuality. As long as I don't violate the rights of others, my rights are upheld. But what we're seeing on a daily basis isn't what the Constitution promises about life in South Africa. When walking outside on your own as a woman, during the day or night, is a risk, your right to freedom of movement and safety is prevented.

There are a number of factors to blame for the challenges women experience in South Africa. We're a complex society and transformation will take longer than 20 years. We're a patriarchal society. Loosely explained, patriarchy is a system of belief where men rule and women are excluded. It teaches boys and girls that men are heads of households and that they are the authority in the home. It teaches women to be mere supporters of men, and not take the lead in defining their own destiny. Patriarchy has taken differences between women and men and used them

to keep women at a certain level, often beneath titles and positions occupied by men.

Patriarchy has made women proud of statements such as ‘behind every successful man is a woman’ and has reduced women to having qualities that serve only to look after the home. This doesn’t encourage girls and women to seek independence, to strive to grow and develop in ways that will allow them to be successful and self-sufficient, with or without a male companion. They influence and limit how young girls grow up and what they believe is possible for them. We must have a national conversation about these aspects of our society.

There’s nothing wrong with nurturing feminine qualities, but there’s everything wrong with suggesting that they’re only valuable in the home and that only women possess these qualities. It’s also damaging to women who don’t possess these qualities, because they’re seen as odd, different from the norm, as though something is wrong with them.

Patriarchy is also negative for men: while this social system was designed to take care of the interests of men, it fails men all the time as well. All the evidence we need is seen in the thousands of incarcerated men the globe over. We see it in the high rates of substance abuse and bad behaviour when men struggle with achievement, ambition, strength, intellect and leadership ability. If patriarchy

served men, we wouldn't see men struggling as much with their own ideas of masculinity. The expectations of men by patriarchy are unbearable for those men who're 'different' from the norm.

Patriarchy has deemed feminine qualities to be weak, and characteristics associated with men are seen as better, thus justifying why men are the so-called 'natural' decision-makers and occupy leadership positions. This is a challenge for our society. It means that women empowerment won't be easy, and neither will the process of changing backward perceptions held about women and our contribution in society.

The lack of representation in the highest position of leadership is a significant issue. After the country's fifth democratic elections, we find ourselves with only two female premiers. This suggests that we aren't making the strides we should be making towards full gender representation at all levels of leadership.

We celebrate leaders in these positions: they make the headlines, they're profiled on various platforms. These male leaders are quoted everywhere. It's necessary to start seeing women in these positions, so as to drive home the point that women can occupy these positions and do well in them.

Diversity is an everyday experience; beauty comes in different packages

When presented with new ideas or introduced to different people from what we're used to, we're required to think about ourselves in a new way. We're challenged to reconfigure our understanding of what we know. A continuously changing world demands that we imagine an alternative way of doing things.

As a part of the process of transition as a nation, we're constantly searching for new ways of being and new ways of doing things. This is true for culture, thought leadership, innovation and our personal lives. Through dialogue and debate about where we are as a country, we should be able to address issues around difference. When the space for dialogue or the opportunity to be educated about difference doesn't exist, difference is terrifying.

Heritage Day celebrations are wonderful, but they create the idea that the celebration of our diversity is a one-day event, once a year, and not an everyday experience.

Where there's an obvious power inequality, either in numbers or as a result of historical events, difference is used to oppress smaller and less powerful groups.

An example of how people have dealt with difference in a damaging way is the story of Sarah Baartman. She was exhibited as a freak in Europe in the early 1800s because of her 'unusual' features – her large buttocks, which were in

fact not unusual in Khoisan women. She was displayed in London and Paris for people to stare at and objectify, and in the process completely dehumanise. After her death in 1815 at the age of just 25, her remains were displayed for another 160 years, until 1974, when they were finally removed from public view. Sarah was returned to South Africa and laid to rest in 2002.

This is an extreme example of what can happen when we're unable to tolerate and reconcile our minds with difference. It also highlights that abuse of power shows up in a number of ways, sometimes disguised as entertainment or art.

We have more subtle forms of discrimination in the media. Although not as extreme as in the case of Sarah Baartman, the definition of beauty is nonetheless limited to a particular look: light skinned, tall and thin, with straight hair. The message is that everyone who has features outside of this list is not considered beautiful.

When Hollywood movies have limited depictions of black people, portraying us only as slaves or criminals, or people with dysfunctional families, it's discrimination in a subtle – but widely accepted – form.

When kwaito artist Mshoza makes headlines for bleaching her skin, it can't just be seen as attention-seeking or a trend. It comes from an inferiority complex that many black people have, because there's yet to be a strong enough message in mainstream media that says 'black is beautiful'.

Celebrating diversity is critical to healing a nation

In diversity, we become comfortable with the knowledge that our sense of self and security aren't threatened by the presence and existence of something or someone different. We're able to live together, and allow each other to be who we are without fighting.

Central to conflict in many parts of the world is a lack of appreciation for diversity. There are too many religious fundamentalists who're determined to rid their worlds of groups who believe differently from what they believe true for them. There's a war for land and resources that fuels these religious conflicts as well. They believe they're threatened to the core of who they are, and the means used to handle the perceived threat is justified.

South Africa is learning how to deal with several forms of difference within its borders. We come from a past where there was no room for difference in the form of identity, culture and political ideology.

Traditional practices and forms of healing were secondary to Western beliefs and healing practices. We've made progress in dispelling these beliefs about authentically African practices. We have a progressive Constitution and a relatively non-volatile society. By any measure, difference is managed and the celebration of diversity is encouraged.

If you're black, female, gay, lesbian, intersex, transgender or disabled, you're considered a 'diversity candidate'. This

means that, historically in society, you were overlooked for employment, and systematically excluded or discriminated against in different forms.

We're doing a much better job of ensuring representation of all people in places of leadership – but all of these groups of people must make sure that they're represented and spoken for in efforts to build a nation that celebrates diversity. It goes beyond a mention in a speech by the president or ministers, acknowledging the presence of particular groups. It must result in material and tangible changes. Where there's inadequate representation, the members of those diverse groups should speak up, speak out and take the lead. If they don't take the lead, they are to blame for the challenges they experience if they find themselves overlooked.

The same goes for women: we're partly responsible for our inadequate levels of representation.

Transforming South Africa requires an aggressive and dynamic diversity project. This diversity project's sole purpose must be to ensure that all spheres of society are representative of all the people of this land – although the term 'project' is misleading because it suggests that there's a clear beginning and end to this effort.

It should be one that speaks to the lived experiences of the people of South Africa. It must focus on both the private and public spaces.

In the South African context, diversity means that all 11 official languages and cultures are recognised, that all genders and races are represented, and that we don't prioritise the historical events of particular groups of people over others. It means that our ideas and chosen ways of living and being are valid, as long as they don't infringe on the choices and wellbeing of others.

Our diversity also requires that we actively seek to unify through tolerating and celebrating our differences. This is a tough ask. Our past forced us to be distrusting of difference. Twenty years after democracy we're still learning how to find each other in order to learn about who we are, and perhaps find parts of ourselves in each of our stories. It's easier said than done.

Women empowerment should also be an everyday experience

There are opportunities denied to women simply because they are women. They're unable to endeavour to become the best they can be through means afforded to men because they are women.

The concept of women empowerment speaks to the process through which women are equipped and afforded opportunities that will ensure that they're treated equally to men.

The approach to women empowerment varies from public and professional needs, to very private and personal

circumstances. 'Glass ceilings', the inability to move up as high as men do in organisations, and representation of women in parliament are as much women empowerment issues as are the drives to provide sanitary towels in schools and fighting the scourge of rape in South Africa. These should matter whether you're a 14-year-old girl or a 30-year-old woman.

However, these conversations seem to be limited to certain days of the year, such as Women's Day in August and International Women's Day in March. Discussions and debates aren't found in mainstream media – one has to search for extensive work and debate around these issues.

When incidents of the worst kind of rape and abuse arise, there isn't an outcry from big organisations such as the ANC Women's League. Perhaps these are not reported, but I maintain that, if these groups demand attention relentlessly, they would get it. We're failing ourselves as women.

Critical to our diversity project is gender equality. The struggle for freedom took centre stage and required that all oppressed people of South Africa unite in order to bring down apartheid. And they did.

As all energies focused on building a country for all the people of South Africa for the first time in our country's history, other struggles weren't a priority. The struggle for gender equality was continued, and continues still, but with very little success to speak of, compared with the successes

in the quest for equality between the races. We're short of where we should be as a country in achieving gender equality.

Gender diversity refers to the equal representation and equality of women, men, girls and boys. This can only be achieved through the empowerment of women – a mission that women should lead and fight for. I'm not convinced that we women are well on our way to successfully achieving this. A media that isn't committed to reporting strides made is partly to blame, but again, if women aren't making a noise about gender equality, these matters will not make headlines.

An injury to women is an injury to all

Gender-based violence eats at our communities daily. Tragedies in recent years result in the deepest sadness when we speak of Anene Booysen and Reeva Steenkamp – both women who died at the hands of men. They highlight the issues of misogyny and intimate-partner violence.

There are many other women we'll never know by name who've been beaten, abused or killed at the hands of loved ones. We must ask whether these women were unable to find a way out of these relationships. Were they unable to choose an alternative reality for themselves? How did the people they trusted and chose to love become the very people who hurt them in the most unimaginable ways?

These incidents are an indictment on our constitutional democracy for its failure to protect the victims of gender-based violence, to institute justice, and also to support men who're unable to express themselves, unable to be men without violently relating to their partners. Their own battles are not adequately addressed.

South African societies have high expectations of men. However, should women fall short of succeeding or leading effectively, this isn't necessarily frowned on; at times, it seems to be expected. Dr Mamphela Ramphele entered politics in style, making grand promises about her party being a game changer. Almost a year later, the party disintegrated after embarrassing moves on her part. I read several opinion pieces that felt the need to remind everyone that Ramphele is a woman. It's fair, because when celebrating her achievements, the woman card was also punted.

But the undertones are that women can't lead. Ramphele embarrassed women in South Africa – but so have many men, but their gender isn't a focus.

Cultures develop from the continuous practice of and attitudes to the same thing. In many communities, men are expected to provide for families, and women remain in the home. This is the norm, and different approaches aren't encouraged. This may be unconscious at times, but it's often deliberate.

There's incongruence between the lived experiences of South Africans, and what is outlined in the Constitution of the country in terms of what's expected of diversity efforts. The social ills we see across the country occur because we're struggling with celebrating diversity.

There's yet to be a prominent voice in our current leadership that has made this his or her project, the liberation of women in post-apartheid South Africa. If we had this voice, conversations about rape would never include suggestions that the victim 'should have known better'. They would speak out against perspectives that hold the victims responsible for their pain, accountable for their shame.

Women may be vocal enough about this but the mainstream media is uninterested. Is it fair to say that we've failed ourselves? That the last 20 years have resulted in very few accomplishments for women?

My heart swells at the mention of Dr Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma, Lindiwe Mazibuko and Khanyi Dhlomo. These are pioneering women, who on a daily basis remind us that it's possible for women of colour to lead and to do so as well as, if not better than, the next person. Often, though, the pessimist in me quickly reminds me that for every female name there are five men that come to mind without any hesitation. There are just not enough Khanyis and Lindiwes in our story.

Finding role models, changing stereotypes

Gender diversity is important in discussions about leadership in South Africa because representation is still challenging. Many call for a system where merit is the primary method of deciding who should lead, who should occupy certain positions. This type of system is possible only in equal societies, where people have equal access and opportunity regarding skills development and training. We're not one such country as yet. We're a society that still wants to see people who look like us make our aspirations possible. As the girl-child comes into her own, she needs more Lindiwe Mazibukos to counter the negative messaging around what's possible for her. She'll need stories of these women to persuade her and affirm to her that her dreams are possible.

It will take an integrated approach to check the boxes, and move us closer to becoming a truly equal society.

The media is a powerful tool to change the narrative for women in South Africa. A consciousness from consumers to choose to support brands that are committed to ending stereotypes about women, and don't rely on those to sell their products, will change the quality and content of what we're fed through media.

When we no longer find entertainment in a tea advert that shows a black woman shaking her backside while cleaning the floor, we'll be well on our way. When we

don't need women to be half-naked in order to sell juice or cars, we'll change ideas about women. (Maybe if global musicians blessed with the talent for music trust their talent a bit more and stop feeling the need to be half-naked to sell their music, then we'd be closer to changing the manner in which we perceive women in the world.)

If we boycott publications that feel the need to compare the weave of the country's public protector with that of the official opposition parliamentary leader, the media will realise that they too must commit to change, as all South Africans must.

We easily run the risk of never escaping the difference when there's a continuous call for special treatment. The quest for 'normalcy' requires that we focus on difference, and, through that, make it normal.

If we apply the philosophy of 'what you focus on expands', then perhaps we need to overlook the difference and focus instead on aspects of equality alone – so no special focus on substantive gender equality, but rather substantive equality broadly. It would mean that, for instance, access to health and reproductive health should be according to the needs of all people, regardless of gender.

Dealing with the exploitation of women in the labour market should be treated as a broad case of labour-market dynamics. (We're never too young to think about the labour market; sooner or later, the issues there will control our

lives.) This is impossible to do as long as the perceptions held regarding women persist. As long as tradition and culture don't make room for the personal and professional growth of women, these inequalities and underlying beliefs must be highlighted.

In the words of late Nelson Mandela, 'Our endeavours must be about the liberation of the woman, the emancipation of the man and the liberty of the child... Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression.'

When we refuse to talk about gender equality, we fail ourselves as a nation.

> **JOHAN DU PISANIE SAYS:** *I strongly disagree with Sebenzile on many of her points.*



I don't believe that men and women are alike or created the same. There are many areas in which men are better, as there are areas in which women are better. We're not created the same, but we are created equal. That being said, as a Christian I believe the man should be the head of the household. Quite often we find that when the man hasn't taken this role, it leads to problems. When a man takes his place as the head of the home, it doesn't give him free rein to treat his wife and family with disrespect. A true form of leadership is when an individual can lead others without the need to show his or her power in a condescending way.

> **ANELE NZIMANDE SAYS:** *There's a misconception that gender equality is having an equal ratio of men to women in leadership positions in the workplace. This is only part of what gender equality means, and it only deals with gender equality at a procedural and policy level. It doesn't address the substantive equality that remains absent in the workplace and leadership spaces. It doesn't matter whether there are 30 female managers in a company if, collectively, they don't yield as much influence as the one male manager. To state the obvious, this isn't merely a numbers game; it's about creating real change about how we view women who lead in our society and the influence they hold.*



> **SANDA NCAMA SAYS:** *Allow me to use Ms Nkambule's introduction to her chapter. I walk into a room full of people, men and women, with a female colleague. Naturally here's what will happen. I'll directly go to the gentlemen in their corner, whether I know them or not, and engage in whatever topic is at hand – politics, women, sports, etcetera. I would blend in in an instant, regardless of religion, culture, race or age.*



Women, on the other hand, find it very difficult to acknowledge the presence of another woman in the room such that they will stand in isolation or rather join any men. When I interrogate some of my female friends as to why it's difficult

for women to be friendly and civil to each other, they'll say that women are at times moody and have unnecessary competition with one another, and that they'd rather befriend men.

Men dominate in leadership positions in church, civil society, politics, the entertainment industry, etcetera, because it's the very same women who directly or indirectly nominate and vote them into power, and who in the long run complain that they're not granted the opportunities to prove themselves.



@ODL_Lesley

Lesley Masibi

PROFILE

I hail from the small North West province town of Wolmaransstad. I believe I was born to change the world, and my purpose in life is to empower the youth to become better people who can contribute to making their societies a better place to live in.

I'm an advocate for youth development, and am involved in various youth-development initiatives, including the Education Africa-MTN Model United Nations for South African high schools, where I serve as an adjudicator, workshop facilitator and tutor. I'm also hands-on in an Aggrey Klaaste nation-building project called the Anglo American Young Communicator Awards. I serve as a provincial manager for a Department of Science and Technology project called the South African Agency for Science and Technology Advancement (SAASTA) National Schools Debate.

I'm also a speaker in my own right. I represented South Africa as part of a 12-person delegation to the United Nations headquarters in New York in 2005, and subsequently as an official delegate to the

UN to celebrate the Year of Youth in 2012, and was invited to speak at the Education Africa–Education UK gala dinner in London in 2009.

As the winner of the first One Day Leader, I've interned in the office of the chairperson of the National Youth Development Agency (YDA), and visited BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China) on a youth-development expedition. I look forward to the opportunity of shadowing the president of South Africa.

I recently earned my private pilot licence and am now in pursuit of my commercial licence.

I hold a B.Sc (Hons) in chemical engineering from the University of the Witwatersrand.

Unfulfilled **EXPECTATIONS:**

Healthcare

The year 1994 marked the beginning of an exciting era for South Africa, a democratic era. With the euphoria that accompanied the first-ever free and fair elections came expectations for a prosperous nation where every citizen would have equal opportunities; would, so to say, live ‘happily ever after’.

The elections marked the first step into the land of milk and honey. The poor and oppressed were ready to possess the Promised Land and inherit the riches that awaited them. Among these riches was a healthcare system that would cater to their health needs; that would not unduly sentence many to premature death or a life of ailment because of their race, how much money they had or where they came from.

EXPECTATIONS

by Lesley Masibi

Little did they know that the more things would change, the more they would stay the same.

Prior to the democratic dispensation, if you were turned away from a hospital, or told to use only certain clinics, or were limited to the kind and type of healthcare you could receive, it could be understood as there were laws in place that sought to segregate people based on their race, and healthcare was part of that unjust system. But post apartheid, the story shouldn't be the same. People like Merriam from Diepsloot, who had to wait for hours on end at a public hospital before she could be assisted when she was going into labour, should be stories of before 1994.

Unfortunately, we're hearing more and more stories like that of Merriam, widespread across the nation. And not

every person is fortunate enough to go through such turmoil and come out intact on the other side. Merriam was finally attended to by nurses and gave birth to a healthy baby boy, so she has the opportunity to live and tell her story, about how a day that was supposed to be joyous was probably one of her worst. Many cannot say the same about their experiences.

I could argue about the right for all to have access to a functional healthcare system, but it's not always as simple as it looks. Attempts have been made by various ministers responsible for health to address the issue. Some have dismally failed, while others have made a dent that will go a long way towards turning around the healthcare system of South Africa.

In the new South Africa, the 'rainbow nation', as we call it, poverty and healthcare are closely linked. It goes without saying that those who are poor don't have adequate provision for their healthcare. So the question is where, or rather to whom, do the majority of the poor and those who can't afford decent healthcare turn?

South Africa's current healthcare system

South Africa's healthcare system is peculiar in that, although South Africa is a middle-income nation, its healthcare expenditure (in terms of government spending) is equivalent to that of First World nations (high-income economies). What's more perplexing is that, although there've been some strides

made to balance the healthcare scale between the rich, the poor and the middle class, the contradictions couldn't be more striking.

The disparities in the private/public healthcare mix make for interesting debate; in the South African context this can literally mean the difference between life and death.

To put it bluntly, the private system is well advanced. It has more than enough resources, from facilities and healthcare workers to the best technology in the world. This costly private healthcare for the privileged few provides for just 16% of the population, according to Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi.

In contrast, the public system is overcrowded, with little to no resources, and overworked and underpaid staff. Continuous demands on this system are made by 84% of the population. To add insult to injury, the bulk of health expenditure goes to the private system.

This is a recipe for failure, and indeed it has failed.

This is not about numbers or percentages. It's about putting a price on human life. It's about a warped system that continues to further entrench the poor while serving the rich, the elite and the educated. Health, and consequently healthcare, should never be about profit-making, but a right for every citizen.

To this day, South Africa mirrors a system where medical scheme companies are raking in thousands of rand, while those who really need the care are left to their own devices. Most if not all public hospitals are run down, are overcrowded

with patients and have overworked healthcare providers. Be it Helen Joseph or Baragwanath Hospital, the story is the same.

The family of the deceased Mr Molapo can attest to this. For a week after Mr Molapo had been admitted to Helen Joseph Hospital in Johannesburg, the family never received any medical information whatsoever concerning his diagnosis, and nurses could never provide them with any concrete answers. Finally, one day, the family arrived to find that Mr Molapo had been moved from this bed. After some time of searching for him in vain, they heard him screaming his daughter's name. They found him laid out on a bed in a cold room with no blanket and with the windows open. Five metres away from him sat three nurses, chatting as though they couldn't be bothered. It was the last time the family saw Mr Molapo alive.

Such atrocities are a common story of South Africans who can't afford a private hospital, and who rely on government hospitals as their last hope, and who often leave those hospitals in a far worse state than before.

The question is: what must happen for things to really change? Our healthcare system is discriminatory and inhumane; it's a violation of human rights and should be regarded as such.

Kota Nomfanelo's story: mothers and babies

'I received a distressing call from a resident of one of the 700 villages around Cofimvaba [in the Eastern Cape] reporting that his teenage sister, who was in early labour, had to wait hours to access an ambulance,' says Kota Nomfanelo. 'While experiencing birth-related complications at six months, she called for an ambulance and was told, after a lengthy wait, that none was available.'

'The family drove with her in a relative's car to Cofimvaba Hospital, where they found five ambulances parked outside. The family had to use a trolley to ferry her into the hospital. The expectant teenager was having seizures as they rushed her into the hospital. Upon arrival, the health official ridiculed the family by saying why rush for someone who is having seizures?'

'The hospital finally transferred her into the ambulance and she eventually made it to East London Hospital.'

This and other similar cases go unreported daily, and those on the receiving end of this cruelty are the poor.

Maternal and infant mortality rates are good starting points to assess any healthcare system, coupled with citizens' life expectancy. While there's some uncertainty around mortality figures, according to 'Every Death Counts', a data supplement published by the Child Healthcare Problem Identification Programme, it's clear that maternal and child mortality rates have increased since 1990.

South Africa also has the highest number of people living with HIV/Aids in the world, and, according to Statistics SA, life expectancy is a not-very-promising 57.7 years for males and 61.4 years for females.

This level of dysfunction can't be conducive to sustainable development, and a democracy that's alive and working. It points to a bigger problem that extends far beyond healthcare; it can be argued that the disparities evidenced in the healthcare system are also present in education and income.

The legacy of apartheid: unequal access to healthcare

Most of us agree that the apartheid system focused on advancing the interests of whites over those of black people, and that the quality of healthcare you received depended very much on the colour of your skin.

This has had a long-term impact on how the healthcare system is structured, in that the current administration is inadvertently continuing the very same system that prevailed during apartheid. The backlog and intricacies in the foundation of the system remain difficult to change.

The government might argue that, because of the effects of such systems, the backlog in the process that has been designed to work against the black majority is the reason why, 20 years later, our healthcare system is still in a shambles. There may be some truth to this, but it's no

excuse, as political will must prevail to change the living and health conditions of many South Africans. It boils down to some of the simplest building blocks of health: nutrition, living conditions, access to health facilities and leading an active life. These, as insignificant as they might seem, make a tremendous difference, and are some aspects of healthcare that the government can zoom in on and use to start addressing health issues at a grassroots level.

It does, of course, go beyond health awareness. People who are sick need functioning hospitals, with competent and hard-working healthcare professionals whose working conditions are decent. They need to have the confidence in the system, irrespective of whether they fall within the private or public healthcare spectrum.

The simple fact is that one life lost is one too many. Every human being who has to endure sickness that can easily be treated, who dies prematurely because the ambulance didn't arrive on time or the hospital medical team wasn't big enough to attend to all emergencies, is someone's parent or child, and should never be excusable.

True, South Africa is no different from many nations, and healthcare is a contentious issue globally, in both affluent and Third World nations. That's why some of the Millennium Development Goals speak directly to healthcare issues: maternal and infant mortality, nutrition, and HIV/Aids treatment.

What we cannot run away from is the fact that, in South Africa, there's an inherited healthcare structure that's inherently unequal, and which has defeated the efforts of post-apartheid administrations.

According to an article on health disparities in South Africa in the *South African Medical Journal*, 'In the UK... the annual mortality rate from tuberculosis in the early 1940s, before anti-tuberculosis medications were discovered, fell from 500/100 000 people in the early 1700s to 50/100 000. The social circumstances influencing health begin with the physical, mental and nutritional states of women during pregnancy and childbirth and continue throughout life.'

The striking difference is that we're seeing improvements in these other nations, but can the same be said for South Africa? According to the same article, the annual mortality rate from tuberculosis in South Africa in 2009 was similar to that in the UK in 1945.

The issue of healthcare is one shaping policy that plays a critical role in who gets elected in the United States, and presidents continue to grapple with it throughout their terms. Maybe this doesn't happen here at home because we haven't elevated healthcare to its rightful place. Political leaders speak of it as though it's one of their projects to undertake during their term.

Yes, though much spending goes towards health, we need to see more concerted effort, in legislation and

communication, to ensure it becomes topical, and that the unjust system that favours the well-off instead of those who really need it – the poor – is toppled. More stringent legislation that balances out the disparities must be drafted, adopted and implemented speedily.

I maintain that government, working with the private sector, must regulate and create a conducive environment that will enable both the public and private sectors to respond effectively to the needs of the citizenry without exploitation.

What needs to be done: national healthcare insurance

The people of South Africa are what makes this nation what it is. Their lives, livelihoods and health should count for something.

The first question you are asked at an accident scene is, 'Are you on medical aid?' Your answer will determine the kind of medical assistance you'll receive and it may determine whether you'll live or not. These are the realities many deal with.

The paradox is that, in the private sector, you have access to the best medical teams, the infrastructure is world-class, and the emotional and physical burden on the patient's family is significantly reduced because they know their loved ones are in good care. And there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. I might even suggest that, for the amounts

of money paid by recipients of medical care from the private sector, they're well within their rights to receive such first-class healthcare.

But that's exactly how the public sector should be. It should take lessons from the private sector and mirror these across all spectrums of society.

The only real hope for the majority of those who don't have access to private healthcare is if, by sheer luck, they migrate into a higher-income bracket to become middle class. It's not an impossibility; we've seen a lot of black people move into that bracket. But it's not happening as quickly as it should be, and if socioeconomic dynamics are anything to go by, it's very difficult to break out of the cycle of poverty.

While the government continues doing its best to upgrade the public sector, with the kind of resources they have, and the legislation and systems in place, they're probably fighting a losing battle. The real step forward would be to look at national coverage. It's what the government is attempting to do with the National Healthcare Insurance (NHI).

The objective of the NHI is to redress the imbalances in the system. It realises how inequitable the system is, and as such this financing model is aimed at providing universal coverage to all legal citizens, by phasing it in over 14 years, with the intention of getting proper medical facilities, healthcare professionals and a system overhaul of the current status quo.

The argument has been: where does the government intend to get financing from? And are they the right custodians of such a system, especially taking into account their failure to deliver basic services, and with corruption being a major issue?

The spirit behind the proposed plan is admirable and shows that the government is making strides in heeding the plea of South Africans. If it will be successful remains to be seen.

South Africa needs one healthcare system that will respond equally to the needs of all citizens. The current two-pronged system is widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots.

The private system is a model that can be used as a template to build a new foundation for quality healthcare, where the expenditure will be distributed proportionately, based on ability to afford, with the financial commitment that individuals make to the system based on their income bracket.

As a nation we have much to celebrate: pockets of excellence and the great work that's been done in the infancy of our democracy. It's of paramount importance that we constantly re-evaluate where we are as a nation and where we want to be. This can't and has never been a one-man show. The government, although custodians of democracy, can't do it alone. It will take our communities, civil society and the private sector to come to the party and play their part.

> ANELE NZIMANDE SAYS: *To improve the healthcare system in South Africa, the state needs to impose stricter standards of care on the nurses and doctors in public hospitals. A notion exists that state healthcare workers don't need to take as much care with the lives of patients as private healthcare workers do. Although National Healthcare Insurance seeks to subsidise health costs in the country, it fails to deal with the attitude of indifference with which patients in public hospitals are met.*



> BONGEKILE RADEBE SAYS: *With health being such a commodity to any economy, thinking more innovatively where National Healthcare Insurance is concerned could be addressing the economic culture of burial societies among those who don't have access to quality health services. It's clear that our white counterparts invest more in 'life' whereas we've done so excellently for death. Perhaps the redress of financial literacy in how we prioritise our investments as black communities could assist in ensuring that our families are taken care of, especially for something that could possibly delay the deaths we prepare for. Tapping into the concept of burial societies – an economic market that's already there – could be effective not only for government but for us as citizens as well.*



> NDUMISO HADEBE SAYS: *I could not agree more. Access to healthcare and the quality of healthcare that South Africans receive are burning issues, particularly for the overwhelming many who don't have the financial muscle for medical aid and receive quality care. It's not only a human right, it's also an economic imperative. I personally believe that public health insurance is needed sooner rather than later.*





@SandaNcama

Sanda Ncama

PROFILE

I'm a 24-year-old young South African who's passionate about God, his people and music. I was born in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape, the youngest of four. I'm a father of a lovely four-year-old boy.

I'm a motivational speaker, a musician, a social activist, a family man and, most importantly, a child of God. My motto and life's purpose come from the book of Matthew, 'For the Son of Man came to serve, not to be served, and to sacrifice His own life to save the lives of others'. This is why I refer to myself as a 'servant leader' or (better yet) an 'altruistic servant leader'.

I entered Season 2 of One Day Leader and made it into the top three. Being eliminated on the same day as I won one debate was a humbling experience. One Day Leader showed me what I didn't know, more than what I did know, about myself and this country. It put a stamp and a mark on my leadership, and affirmed the love and passion I have for South Africa.

Inspired by my experiences on One Day Leader, I'm currently studying a BA in Human Social Sciences through Unisa. I also run a consulting company that seeks to provide leadership and life skills to citizens between 16 and 40 years of age.

With my chapter I'd like to awaken South Africans to instil an attitude of hard work, patience and persistence (which are the very things I learned the most in 2014), and try to eradicate the mentality of laziness.

I'd like to thank the following people for supporting me with this project: the Lord God I praise and worship; my family (my mom, brother, sister and son Owethu); Mphumezi Mapasa and the rest of the One Day Leader crew; Louise Grantham of Bookstorm; Reverend Musi Losaba, the Bishop of the Grahamstown District of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa; Ndimphiwe Mbatyoti (Stebba, Mahlaba); the Eastern Cape Rural Development Agency; my business partners, Maliviwe Junior Bata and Lerato Thipa; and last, but not least, Anele Siswana and Anda Nyondla.

I dedicate my chapter to Chief Vuyisile Qothongo of the Mabomvana tribe in the former Transkei.

A matter of

A MATTER OF CHOICE: OF

Poverty

I was sitting at home the other day, watching a movie called *Life of Pi*. It's about a young boy named Pi whose family sailed on a ship from India to England. Right in the middle of the ocean their ship experienced the same tragedy as the Titanic and it went down at sea. Pi's father owned a zoo, so they were sailing with wild animals as well. To cut a long story short, Pi found himself on a small boat with a wild tiger.

One thing that caught my attention about the movie was the line, 'Poverty can change everything you thought you knew about yourself.'

Very true, I testify. It gives you the privilege of knowing more about yourself and facing reality. It gives you an opportunity to find a solution to your problem.

CHOICE

by Sanda Ncama

What gave me more courage to write this chapter was the life Pi had in the middle of nowhere in the ocean. He survived for 21 days using whatever materials and resources he was exposed to, and he didn't spend even a single day without food or water; he fed both himself and the tiger.

Poverty is more than just going to bed on an empty stomach and waking up in the morning still not having something to eat. It's more than using newspaper as toilet paper. (I've experienced that many times at home and in varsity, and today I'm a graduate.) I believe poverty is a state of mind.

When I speak of poverty, I speak of poverty of the mind. We constantly tell people to never be victims of their circumstances, that they should mentally emancipate

themselves and walk out triumphantly in whatever situation they find themselves.

Even if you disagree with me that poverty is a choice, you'll agree with me on one thing at least: that those circumstances have everything to do with poverty, that they are poverty. Furthermore, poverty is the state of being extremely poor – not financially or in material wealth, but in mental bankruptcy or inadequacy.

In her 1992 book *A Return to Love*, spiritual teacher Marianne Williamson wrote, 'Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we're liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.'

It's high time that we take charge, full control and responsibility for our own paths and endeavours, that we admit being architects of our own misery and that it's we and

only we who are holding ourselves back from succeeding.

We've told ourselves that we're poor and that's final. We haven't exercised our full potential in eradicating this demon that promises to threaten and haunt us till kingdom come. All we've spent our time and energy on is excuses, excuses.

You may be born into poverty but it's your choice to die in it. It may not be your fault that you've found yourself in your situation but it is your problem to stay in it. It's your choice to let that stand in your way of victory. If you're constantly reminded by your community that there's no graduate in your family, so going to varsity and trying to obtain a qualification will be a waste of time, it will be your choice to let that negatively affect you. All that pessimism may seem true, for it can be a reflection of the current situation, but always keep in mind that the trials and tribulations of today can never be compared with what is yet to come. The divides of light and darkness in your life lie within the choices you make: 'Get rich or die trying', according to the movie about Curtis Jackson (50 Cent).

Lungelo Jongile's story

A dear friend of mine, Lungelo Jongile, told me the very sad story of how he was raised. He lived with his uncles, siblings and cousins, a family of nine people, in a shack that could barely be called a house in a rural area 60 kilometres outside King William's Town. His mother was a domestic

worker and made most of her money through taking care of children in the community; from Lungelo's tone of voice I could sense that their earnings and standard of living were an everlasting pain.

They lived the best way they could. Lungelo had to walk quite a distance to school and at times barefoot. When he was a teenager he got involved in a car accident and lost his eyesight. The doctors at Cecilia Makiwane Hospital near East London told him that he would never see again.

He struggled to adapt to his situation but as time went by, by God's grace, he started regaining his eyesight till he could see again. What gave Lungelo hope was that, despite what the doctors had told him and regardless of the situation at hand, he believed he would make a living for himself.

Years went by, and Lungelo's standard of living barely changed, till he decided to move to Cape Town in pursuit of trying to make a living for himself and his family. Fortunately, he'd finished high school. All he had in his mind was one dream, one vision and one goal of becoming a film editor. He enrolled at City Varsity to do a short course in basic video editing and television directing.

To make money, he and his friends would buy sheep feet and heads, place them on a fire, let the wool burn and brush it off, then put them in a pot to cook and sell. Lungelo's monthly train ticket costs, groceries and money to send back home were all made from this small business of sheep feet

and heads. He was laughed at in the beginning, but he was determined to make his dream a reality, and that's the only thing that kept him going.

For six years this was an ongoing process. Lungelo even struggled to find a place to stay and at times he had to sleep at a friend's place and sometimes in a car. But his hard work and persistence paid off, and he's now the CEO of a very successful production company in Johannesburg.

Above everything else, Lungelo learned that life is what you make of it.

The secrets of self-made millionaires

According to the 2001 book *The 21 Success Secrets of Self-Made Millionaires* by entrepreneur and development trainer Brian Tracy, most millionaires out there are self-made. They've created their wealth using God-given talents and skills which many of us choose to shy away from. If you know you're talented in the arts, why would you want to pursue engineering?

We have made it okay for a black person to sit in their dumpster and regard themselves as poor and worthless. We make it feel okay for the next person to be lazy because we're 'marginalised'. That the black skin is cursed is seen by some as a repercussion of the apartheid era; but others of us who are black are persistent and hard-working in chasing our dreams.

Of course, we come from a very conflicted past but that was more than 20 years ago, and we can't be using the same excuses as our forefathers used. To them it was acceptable because the system was oppressive and they couldn't reach their infinite potential just because of the colour of their skin.

That was then, this is now. We live in different times. They may not be the best but they are surely better.

Saying that poverty is a choice is my way of awakening and empowering whoever is black – and not black, for that matter. For those for whom this statement is an insult, I'd like to remind you that people do not give offence; rather, they take offence. This means that whatever words and deeds are thrown at you, good or bad, you will decide whether they build or destroy you.

Yes, we can blame our people for not wanting to make a decent living for themselves. Institutions are not the only place to receive an education. Nowadays, public libraries are at our disposal. Books of every kind are accessible at any given time. Get yourself educated by informing yourself with fruitful knowledge.

The paradox of our youth filling up pubs, bars and social gatherings instead of churches and libraries has been part of our society norm. We've learnt to live with it. We've accommodated it. According to the Department of Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), transformation has happened since 1994. The government has

done an impeccable job in making sure that the basic needs of health, education, infrastructure, etc., have reached those who are less advantaged. On the GCIS website there's a newsletter called My District Today, 'which shares information from the coalface and shows with pride what is happening in the districts in terms of government's delivery on its Programme of Action. It offers a platform to celebrate daily events detailing how government and communities are making headway in eradicating poverty and underdevelopment; and highlights areas where acts of service excellence and achievements against many odds are realised.'

Nomonde Patience Ncama's story

In 1990, a 36-year-old woman by the name of Nomonde Patience Ncama – my mother – found herself in a situation she'd never anticipated. Her husband, the Reverend Thomas Edward Velile Ncama, passed away on 19 February – his birthday, and just eight days after Nelson Mandela's release. This happened in a tragic car accident 30 kilometres from Bloemfontein on his way to a ministers' retreat in Welkom.

Due to limited communication (there were no cellphones then), my mother spent a period of two weeks not knowing that her husband had passed away.

My mother was living in Mthatha in the Eastern Cape at the time. She was totally dependent on her husband, and had three children: 17-year-old Lindiwe (who passed away in

1991), 6-year-old Siphokazi, who was in Grade 1, and 4-year-old Sikhumbuzo. She was also five months pregnant with a boy whom she would later name Sanda Phillip Timothy Ncama – me.

Due to church politics at the time and the passing away of her husband, my mother had to leave the mission house and go look for her own place to stay – and, most importantly, a job, because she now had five stomachs to feed (one was eating whatever she ate).

From February to June (her due date), you can imagine the life she lived. When she knocked on doors, some would be generous and open but only to a certain extent because she had nothing she could offer. The little she had, she distributed among us to eat. We would sleep where she slept, ate whatever she ate.

Times were so rough that, had she been mentally and spiritually poor, she might have killed her kids and committed suicide. But she held on and kept pushing even though circumstances were advising that she should give up, and even though the most obvious solution seemed to be to quit.

The month of June came. My mother had no place to stay, no food to eat and few clothes to wear. She was at least looking for a place to give birth. She finally found a place in Kwezi in Mthatha, where she met up with Chief Qothongo, who had known my father. On a cold windy Wednesday, she

was welcomed with warmth and compassion by the Good Samaritan. I was born on Saturday, 9 June 1990.

In 2014, that very same woman who was homeless in rags is now soon to be a master's graduate in theology from Fort Hare University. And I thank her today that she never looked for an easy way out, otherwise I wouldn't be where I am today. Hard work, faith and persistence were her strong pillars.

Where are the youth?

My sister Siphokazi once told me a shocking fact: that when she was at Rhodes University in Grahamstown from 2003 to 2006, students whom came from the nearby Rhini townships of KwaThatha and Joza comprised less than three percent of the settlement's youth. The majority of them could be found in taverns and drinking pubs. Of course, they would make an excuse of no funds and no resources, but how many of them had a burning passion to study? The youth has found comfort in social activities and get-rich-quick schemes.

This isn't unique to Grahamstown; it's a national problem. Proverbs 17:16 says, 'It is senseless to pay tuition to educate a fool, since he has no heart for learning.' We can't try and assist a person to walk out triumphantly from poverty if they don't have the keenness to advance themselves. It's like trying to assist an addict with whatever problem they're facing while they continue to dwell comfortably within their addiction.

Either you have a mind that's adventurous and is keen to attempt, or a mind that performs an arrest on your own progress as a person.

If you have an adventurous mind, you'll dream big and think of ways you can make these dreams come true as a person. In so doing, you'll constantly surround yourself with opportunities and ideas.

A problem with our youth today is that they have a mindset that says the government will do everything for us; the government will make our dreams a reality because we voted. Meanwhile, as a youth, I will fill up taverns, clubs, drinking pubs and social events. I'll agitate for my family to buy me expensive garments and gadgets, and every time they tell me about education and prosperity, I'll pretend I'm listening and prepare for the next party.

The black youth are so stuck in entertainment; they value it more than their own lives. Even media and nowadays music will continue selling and enriching the producers because the youth are their target audience. Entertainment is good but we end up being entertainers of nonsense. We deteriorate as a society for believing that material things are the crux of living.

There has been good growth and development on the education side of things made by the government in terms of building new schools, universities and further education and training (FET) colleges. I'd like to believe that, thanks to the growth of FET colleges, there's a new breed of artisans,

making the youth self-dependent and able to open small business enterprises and become entrepreneurs, as I want to believe that education and entrepreneurship are the best tools to use in alleviating poverty.

Provision can be made for all those who're financially needy and academically deserving. Financial assistance is available in any institution of higher learning.

Government can only facilitate a space for you to exist and to stabilise your social standards. We need to shift the mindset of the young from dependence to self-belief and claiming prominence. We need to be active architects because if we aren't, poverty will continue being an irritating nuisance.

Laziness can never bring prosperity. If you want to achieve anything in life, there must be a great effort in hard work and persistence. There must be great sacrifice. Again, the divides of light and darkness in our lives lie within the choices we make.

The power of choice

When I was at a primary-school camp in East London in 2000, I heard the words, 'You win or lose by the way you choose. Decide to decide right.' They've stuck with me for 14 years, and I've applied them every now and then in real-life situations. I still do so today.

I want to stress that choice is a very powerful commodity that we have been blessed with by God. It determines our fate.

There are three things that happen before a person takes a decision. First is reorientation. New information enters your mind, and that information can be harmful or contrary to your faith and belief. It may try to instil doubt, fear and disbelief. It may distort your thinking and mindset.

Next is attraction. You'll eventually get attracted by a side that yields 'good' benefits. At the back of your mind you know very well what's right or wrong, what will work and what won't. Many times people get attracted by the negatives because they see an easy way out.

The final state is conviction, when you finally give in and decide. Whether the choice you make is profitable or not, you have cast your vote. It may not be clear at the time that the choice was the right one but its fruits will tell; the results and repercussions will be the proof.

These are the same principles to apply whenever we find ourselves having to practise choice. It was Adam and Eve's choice to eat the fruit; the serpent just spoke. The serpent could have forced the fruit down their throats but he decided to just present a flip side and let Adam and Eve do the damage themselves.

The greatest weaknesses of man are doubt, fear and disbelief. The greatest events of history were a result of choice. Whether they were great falls or great uprisings, they were a result of choice. The Soweto Uprising on 16 June

1976 was a result of choice, the choice to march in protest at being forced to learn in Afrikaans.

Even if you are physically impeded, as long as you have your mind functioning, you can be in any state of achieving goals. At my former university, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in Port Elizabeth, there were a number of people who were physically challenged but had an ability to change and impact the lives of those within their circles. They studied till postgrad because they chose success rather than poverty. Their minds and attitudes carried them through.

Learning from your mistakes

When you lose, make sure that there's some profound learning out of your loss because if you do not do that, even your gains become nothing. Our weaknesses should be our strengths; our strengths should be something we're able to control.

I wrote this chapter at a time when I found myself back at square one, stuck in one place. From all the fame and fortune I'd made in 2013, I was back in the Eastern Cape, with a bank balance of zero, although at least I had graduated (in absentia) from NMMU. I wasn't shocked because I'd known that One Day Leader and Future Leaders were temporary. I never regretted the journey I'd travelled and I'd made sure that I'd capitalised on the opportunity I'd got. I learned from my mistakes and cherished my good deeds. If I was less of a leader, I would have

struggled to even lead myself. I would have felt the pressure of slowly becoming worthless and irrelevant.

What kept me going were the words of Nelson Mandela in his 2010 book *Conversations with Myself*. In a letter to his then wife, Winnie Mandela, on 1 February 1975 in Kroonstad Prison, he wrote, 'The cell is an ideal place to learn to know yourself, to search realistically and regularly the process of your own mind and feelings. In judging our progress as individuals we tend to concentrate on the external factors such as one's social position, influence and popularity, wealth and standard of education. These are, of course, important in measuring one's success in material matters and it is perfectly understandable if many people exert themselves mainly to achieve all these.

'But internal factors may be even more crucial in assessing one's development as a human being. Honesty, sincerity, simplicity, humility, pure generosity, absence of vanity, readiness to serve others – qualities which are within easy reach of every soul – are the foundation of one's spiritual life. Development in matters of this nature is inconceivable without serious introspection, without knowing yourself, your weaknesses and mistakes. At least, if for nothing else, the cell gives you the opportunity to look daily into your entire conduct, to overcome the bad and develop whatever is good in you.

'Regular meditation, say about 15 minutes before you turn in, can be very fruitful in this regard. You may find it

difficult at first to pinpoint the negative features in your life, but the 10th attempt may yield rich rewards. Never forget that a saint is a sinner who keeps on trying.'

Today I'm happy to say that I survived that phase. Sanda Ncama is a brand, an everlasting brand that's here to stay even for centuries to come. I'm back on my feet, stronger than before. During my birth month I registered a company, Uwezo Consultants, together with friends Maliviwe Junior Bata and Lerato Thipa. Our motto is 'Reach your infinite potential' and that's what we're basically trying to achieve, to assist people to become what they're destined to be in providing services such as public speaking, leadership, entrepreneurial, technology and life skills to high schools, varsities, the government and private sector. This is our way of championing ways out of poverty, not only in our province (which is regarded as the poorest) but in our country as a whole.

Some of the greatest names of the apartheid era came from the Eastern Cape and yet this province was and still is the poorest in the country. Nelson Mandela, OR Tambo, Govan Mbeki, Thabo Mbeki, Chris Hani, Walter Sisulu, Robert Sobukwe and Steve Biko – why are these great names of our black oppressed history? It's simple: the day they decided to mentally emancipate themselves from oppression and mental poverty was the day they became stronger than their strongest excuse.

I'd like to challenge and invite every South African citizen out there to be part of this national dialogue on poverty elevation. Let us engage.

➤ **NDUMISO HADEBE SAYS:** *The issue of poverty in South Africa is both a complex and a sensitive one. However, I believe that if we work together and have focused efforts, the reduction of poverty is something that can be achieved, from a food security perspective but also for the enrichment of the human experience.*



➤ **LESLEY MASIBI SAYS:** *The way we think dictates a lot of our life circumstances. However, fundamentally, we can't think our way out of poverty. It takes far more than that. Though I agree that poverty has to do partly with the mind, that's not all it's about. Those who are trapped in a perpetual cycle of poverty would attest to that. The real issues and difficulty they're faced with can't be reduced to just the way they think. What they experience is a reality that's been shaped by many other factors: socioeconomic realities, the environment they find themselves in, the kind of policies promulgated by their respective governments. Success stories of those who made it against all the odds are few and far between, and not the norm.*



> AYANDA BANDLA SAYS: *There's a strong*

correlation between literacy rates and income levels. It's of grave importance that we as a nation be a reading nation. We need to prioritise developing our literacy levels for the simple reason that high levels of literacy can diminish poverty and contribute to economic growth.



There's something quite profound in Sanda saying that poverty is a state of mind. I do, however, hasten to add that we can never discount the realities and challenges that the 25.5% of unemployed South Africans face on a daily basis. Many South Africans find themselves in disadvantaged circumstances not by their own choosing but by virtue of the country's history.

Having said that, we as a society have to and can be proactive in changing those circumstances. Poverty alleviation starts with you. It starts with freeing your mind from the psychological scars created by poverty, scars of hopelessness. You've been blessed with a brain that enables you to think. Apply your mind: assess your surroundings, identify the challenges and needs, and think of solutions that could address them.

In all this, the most important thing to remember is that who you are or where you're from has no bearing on your ability to change a course and destiny. It's more about your contribution to society and the difference it makes. So take charge – play your part.



@lady_mandi



Ayanda Bandla

PROFILE

*B*orn in Johannesburg and raised in Protea North, Soweto, I'm a 25-year-old political science graduate from the University of Pretoria (Tuks). My interest in politics and international relations grew from my experience at the Model United Nations Conference in New York in 2007. There, I formed part of a group of six matric learners representing South Africa. Teams were required to research and debate from the policy point of view of an assigned country; we got Jamaica and received an honorary mention for our performance in the competition.

In my final year at university I served as an executive committee member of the South African Students Congress (Tuks branch).

After completing my studies in 2010, at the age of 21, I was selected to be part of Season 1 of SABC Educations' One Day Leader reality competition. I believe my zeal, strength and debating skills earned me the position of second runner-up.

The experience was a fulfilling one on every level. It revealed and released the leader in me, and I'm now a stronger, self-assured

and purpose-driven person. It taught me to trust myself more and be unapologetic about who I am, where I'm from, where I'm going and what I want. It also pushed me to be more in tune with my surroundings. It motivated me to constantly challenge myself to do something meaningful, no matter how little, for my communities and my country. I play my part through broad-based volunteer movement Cheesekids.

I now ply my trade at eTV as the subeditor of morning breakfast show Sunrise. I also research, write, field report, produce inserts, do voice-overs and anchor the show as a stand-in from time to time.

In my leisure time, I travel, play and watch sport, relax and watch movies, and spend time with family and friends. I have a long-standing love affair with music that will never die!

I owe my character to the foundations of the Seventh Day Adventist Church and the teachings of my family. I draw strength and inspiration from my mother, Nomathemba Roseline 'mamBhele' Bandla, a true soldier and veteran of life, and the queen of my heart.

I dedicate my chapter to my late grandparents, Ps David Themba 'Bhele' Bandla and Mirriam 'Magaba' Bandla; my late aunt, Phumla Monica Bandla; my late best friend, Bontle Tsele, and my late father, Thamsanqa Bradley Mthethwa.

Also to my schools – Cliffoview Primary School, Metropolitan Raucall and the University of Pretoria – and my community of Protea North in Soweto; and, last but not least, to every young South African who will read this chapter and this book: I hope that you'll be inspired to be better and do better. Be the master of your own destiny, not a victim and slave to circumstance.

African solutions for **AFRICAN PROBLEMS:** **Leadership**

Harry S Truman, the president of the United States of America from 1945 to 1953, said, 'Men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still. Progress occurs when courageous, skilful leaders seize the opportunity to change things for the better.'

In essence, Truman articulates the value and the importance of leadership in establishing and building societies across the world. In accomplishing any goal, whether it be in business, politics or personal growth, leadership is the mainstay.

The development of Africa requires effective leadership that will connect the challenges and concerns of the continent with solutions that will be beneficial for the societies on the receiving end. Without vision, without leadership, Africa

OR AFRICAN PROBLEMS

by Ayanda Bandla

can't realise its own potential and thus rid itself of poverty.

The 'African Renaissance' was first mentioned by Senegalese historian, anthropologist and politician Cheikh Anta Diop in 1946, in a series of essays charting the development of the continent. This concept, further popularised from 1994 by former South African president Thabo Mbeki, promoted the ideals of African solutions for African problems. The African Renaissance endorses the reawakening of African pride in addressing all social, economic, political and religious challenges faced by Africa.

I believe the same should be said about leadership on the African continent. If we're to find African solutions for African problems, then African-style leadership should be utilised in achieving this goal.

African-style vs Western-style leadership

In research conducted on the social study of leadership by Robert J House and Ram N Aditya, the authors found that ‘almost all the prevailing theories of leadership, and about 98% of the evidence at hand, are distinctly of American character. This means that leadership thinking and behaviour is largely individualistic and stresses more on the concept of a leader and a follower.’

History bears testimony to this. The likes of Fidel Castro and Adolf Hitler are perfect examples of individualistic thinking and behaviour, and a dominant structure of one leader to many followers. Western-style leadership stresses the importance of individual popularity as opposed to collective decision-making.

For a continent that’s culturally inclined, the concept of ubuntu (compassion and humanity) discourages us from thinking in an individualistic and self-aggrandising manner. In Africa, leadership isn’t a matter of a sheep following a shepherd; rather, a leader is a servant to the people and decision-making doesn’t usually occur in the absence of community engagement.

However, at some point, a leader will have to and should make difficult decisions that will deem him or her unpopular. This can be said of leaders such as Nelson Mandela and Robert Mugabe. Were some of the individualistic decisions they made for the greater benefit of the people they served?

That's a question we'll debate as this chapter unfolds. But this ultimately leads us back to the Western concept of leadership, where the leader must, as an individual, make a decision, and the sheep will be left with very little choice but to follow.

So which leadership style is most effective in achieving set goals, particularly in the African context? Rosalynn Carter, wife of American president Jimmy Carter (in office from 1977–1981), put it this way: 'A leader takes people where they want to go. A great leader takes people where they don't necessarily want to go, but ought to be.'

What is Western-style leadership?

President FW de Klerk, who led South Africa during the apartheid years of 1989 to 1994, rallied his cabinet to debate the legalising of the long-banned ANC and discuss the release of Nelson Mandela who'd been imprisoned since 1964. His endeavours were met with great opposition, but he nonetheless met with Mandela to discuss his position and the possibility of his release. Mandela was subsequently released unconditionally and all political parties were unbanned.

These decisions by De Klerk are what eventually led to the abolition of the apartheid regime and the birth of the democratic South Africa we enjoy today.

To make these decisions, De Klerk had to disregard his government, a collective that believed in a particular system, and chart a way that he believed was appropriate

and beneficial for all, irrespective of the opposition he faced. Essentially, FW de Klerk took apartheid South Africa and some of its people (particularly the white Afrikaans community) where they didn't necessarily want to go but where they ought to have been.

Did De Klerk's decision serve the purpose he intended? If we consider the fact that in the late 1980s the cracks were beginning to show in the apartheid system as it became more and more unstable, I believe that De Klerk hoped to bring about some level of stability, control and peace. The best way he knew how to do that was to give the South African majority what they wanted and ultimately needed: political and social emancipation, and of course their leader, Nelson Mandela.

De Klerk could have followed the directive of his government and continued to uphold the belief and practical systems of the apartheid regime. What result would that have birthed? In my view, possibly a civil war. So, in this case, which would you have preferred? The individualistic or the collective style of leadership? I would hope you selected the former.

In the words of businessman and political figure James Crook (1778–1860), 'A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.' In practical terms this means that as an individual, government or business, if you are to champion a cause or drive a particular agenda, you

have to suspend the ideologies of the people you lead to achieve the goals set within that agenda or cause. This isn't to say that the views of others are incorrect or inappropriate; it simply means that those views are just not necessary at that particular point.

However, there are two sides to a coin and many may argue that the approach of Western-style leadership is not only selfish, but uncondusive to growth and development.

Scottish-American industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) said, 'No man will make a great leader who wants to do it all himself or get all the credit for doing it.' What he was communicating through this was that leadership isn't and can never be about one person.

What is African-style leadership?

The Convention for a Democratic South Africa (Codesa) was a crucial element in the country's transition from the apartheid regime to a democratic state. On 25 October 1991, 92 organisations that had stood against the apartheid regime gathered to deliberate over the mechanism and technicalities of the transition process and the changeover of government. For the next few years negotiations over an inclusive, equally beneficial and fair South Africa were undertaken by numerous representative organisations.

The collective efforts of all parties that participated in Codesa enabled South Africa to develop a Constitution that's

considered to be one of the most inclusive, fair and advanced pieces of democratic legislation throughout the world. Codesa enabled the establishment of an electoral system that ultimately gave a voice to oppressed South Africans, and gave them the opportunity to be part of the decision-making process of how to take South Africa forward. It's the very same electoral system that South Africa relies on to this day, to drive the democratic, all-inclusive and fair agenda of the country.

Codesa is a clear indication of how none of what we see and experience in democratic South Africa today would have been possible had it not been for the collective efforts of the parties that were present.

'The greatest leaders mobilise others by coalescing people around a shared vision,' writes American management expert and bestselling author Ken Blanchard in his 2011 book *The Essential Ken Blanchard Collection*. This is exactly what Codesa was about: mobilising a collective around a common goal.

Did Codesa fulfil the purpose it was intended to? It was set to assist in the smooth and successful transition of South Africa from an apartheid regime to a democratic state. By virtue of the fact that South Africa hosts democratic elections every five years, and the country is still governed by the Constitution – a document that upholds the rights and responsibilities of its citizens – it's safe to say that Codesa did

serve its purpose. It would not have been successful had it been a one-man show.

As the African proverb goes, 'Umuntu ungumuntu ngabantu' ('A person is a person through other people'). This basically means that nothing can be achieved in communities or societies if it doesn't involve and engage the collective of people that makes up that society or community.

In African culture, lobola (bride price) negotiations are done through a collective of elders who collaborate and negotiate for a common and beneficial outcome. Conflict resolution (ebuhlanti, or at a kraal) is achieved when elders – usually men – engage and discuss until a mutually beneficial decision is arrived at.

This is African-style leadership, where decision-making isn't an individualistic and 'selfish' act, but a collective effort by those who'll be at the receiving end of the final decision made.

In reality, which of the two styles of leadership, African and Western, is sustainable and practical? Can we constantly apply African-style leadership where decision-making doesn't happen unless it's a collective effort?

Applying leadership styles as circumstances demand

The 1994 Rwandan genocide was the mass murder of Tutsis and moderate Hutus by the dominating Hutu tribe majority.

At the end of the 100-day slaughter, the genocide had claimed the lives of over 500 000 Tutsis.

Rwanda was in a state of emergency and relied on bodies such as the United Nations and the African Union to come to its rescue. These are bodies designed to give world leaders the opportunity to deliberate over concerning issues and come to a final decision – a collective decision that’s beneficial for all.

But neither the United Nations nor the African Union came to the rescue of Rwanda. It took Tutsi rebels of the Rwandan Patriotic Front to ‘selfishly’ reclaim the capital city of Kigali and then the rest of the country.

Though a company is run by a board of directors, that board is led by a chief executive officer or chairperson who has executive authority and the power to overrule decisions made by the board.

Though South Africa is a democratic state and is ruled through democratic principles, the government of the state and ultimately the president – not the South African public – have the final say as to the functioning and the running of the state. Yes, you may vote – but the final decisions on policy and the direction of the state are not made by the collective South African population, sadly.

Leadership requires difficult decisions to be made that may not be approved by others, ultimately putting the leader in a position that will make him or her unpopular. The truth

of the matter is that you can never make everyone happy.

Leadership isn't about conforming; it's about taking the road less travelled. This isn't to say that opinions of individuals shouldn't be considered; collective deliberation is required for the bigger picture to be seen and understood. However, decision-making needs to take the same route. So whether you're leading yourself, a community or a business, for there to be progress and success, you have to be individualistic to achieve your goal. Selfish as this may sound, it's entirely necessary.

Applying leadership principles in your own life

In all that we do in life, we have to make choices and decisions. That in essence is exercising some form of leadership. We can't, however, make an informed choice or decision without some vision to back it up. So your first step in applying leadership principles in your own life is to formulate a clear vision. Clearly establish what you want to achieve and what your desired outcome is.

The second step is to assess your options – weigh up your pros and cons. Decisions or choices bear expected outcomes, whether they be consequences or (more positively) benefits. This is what weighing your options is about. You need to pre-judge the results of your decisions and assess whether the outcome is one that you're willing to take full responsibility for with no reservations.

Let's look at a scenario of buying a car. Your vision and desired outcome is to buy a car. The process of weighing your options would include, for instance, deciding on whether you'll buy the car outright for cash, pay the car off in instalments or buy the car on residual. Each of these options carries consequences and benefits.

Buying a car for cash is beneficial in the sense that you don't have to worry about monthly instalments or concern yourself with interest. But who's likely to have R150 000-plus waiting to be used?

Paying off the car benefits you in the sense that you can fit the costs of your desired car into your monthly budget. However, depending on interest rates, you could end up paying more than you would've hoped.

The main benefit of buying a car on residual is that it significantly reduces your monthly instalments – but at the end of your payment contract you'll have to make a 'balloon payment', which is whatever the outstanding cost is, and it's usually a very large lump-sum figure.

This concept of assessing your options applies with any decision you have to make as a leader. You have to weigh the pros and cons before you can make a decision that should be beneficial for all. This, coupled with your vision, may very well yield your desired results.

The last step is to make that final decision. You may go through a consultation phase, where you enlist the thoughts

and opinions of others who may have some insight, but having completed steps one and two, you should now be fully equipped to make a decision.

For argument's sake, when buying that car, you may consult a salesperson who'll share their opinions on the option that would best suit you, as they have the expertise and are trained to do so, but essentially the decision remains with you and only you.

Note that buying the car you desire doesn't require there to be an assembly, in which all in favour of you getting the car you want, vote on the matter. It's essentially your decision to make. That follows through with every element in life, whether it be a business venture, love relationship, political debate or life-changing decision. The decision is yours, and yours alone to make. So take the bull by the horns, exercise your leadership and make that decision.

I leave you with some advice from American entrepreneur and motivational speaker Jim Rohn (1930–2009). The challenge of leadership is to be strong, but not rude; to be kind, but not weak; to be bold, but not a bully; to be humble, but not timid; to be proud, but not arrogant; to have humour without folly; and to deal in realities.

> ANELE NZIMANDE SAYS: *The word 'leadership' seems to be an all-encompassing one used to describe any person who's hierarchically at the head of a group of people, regardless of whether that person uses their influence effectively and for the good of their electorate. Perhaps it's time for Africans to demand more from their leaders and to punish them harshly at the ballots for lack of service delivery. Currently we can't dissociate African leaders from corruption and this is due largely to the fact that, in my opinion, some of our African leaders lack the integrity it requires to lead a nation.*



> BONGEKILE RADEBE SAYS: *I find it interesting that your choice of quotes throughout the chapter are largely from American leaders. While the words are great and useful, is this not contradictory and counter-effective? Perhaps a deliberate education of African history among ourselves as Africans is needed, so that we can boldly speak of and quote our own leaders as a way of showing confidence in our own capabilities.*



> JOHAN DU PISANIE SAYS: *This chapter is very well put. The world that we're living in today requires of us to evaluate the way we do and perceive things. Yes, a Western leadership style might not be the best fit for South Africa, but an African leadership style is also not*



necessarily the best. As a country and as a nation we need to constantly evolve in the way we see leadership. Our country poses a set of unique problems and obstacles that we'll only be able to overcome if we find creative new solutions to them. A strong vision, however, can never be underestimated. Without vision there will be no action or outcome, and when we define the vision for South Africa, we can guide our leaders towards a common goal.

➤ **LESLEY MASIBI SAYS:** *Leadership is at the heart of many great human achievements. It's what propels people to become their best, to give up mediocrity for excellence. Indeed, it's in leadership that a nation rises or falls. And this chapter captures that. The essence of advances yet to come, in science, politics, philanthropy, etc., are buried under the crowns of great leaders and leadership strategies. Though I might not agree entirely with the author on her take about Western- and African-style leadership, what I can agree with wholeheartedly is that leadership has delivered to us what we enjoy today.*



REFERENCES

National Development Plan 2030: Our Future – Make It Work
<http://www.gov.za/documents/detail.php?cid=348761> accessed 22 July 2014

Play Your Part (SABC2) by Brand South Africa
<http://www.playyourpart.co.za/> accessed 22 July 2014

Speech delivered by Professor Ben Okri at the 13th Annual Steve Biko Memorial Lecture at the University of Cape Town on 12 September 2012
http://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/full-speech-ben-okri-honours-biko-1.1382746#U84TzIK_nIU accessed 22 July 2014

Acceptance speech by Dr Richard Maponya on the conferring of his Honorary Doctorate by the Faculty of Management at the University of Johannesburg on Monday, 4 October 2010
<http://www.uj.ac.za/EN/Newsroom/News/Pages/AcceptanceSpeechbyDrRichardMaponya.aspx> accessed 23 July 2014

New Zealand principal John Tapene sends teen message viral
http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10827786 accessed 24 July 2014 and http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/14/words-for-teenagers-judge-advice_n_1776337.html accessed 24 July 2014

Nelson Mandela's State of the Nation address, Houses of Parliament, Cape Town, May 1994
<http://www.nelsonmandela.org/omalley/index.php/site/q/03lv02424/04lv03370/05lv03427.htm> accessed 25 July 2014

News24 report on business briefing on healthcare given by Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi in September 2013
<http://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/84-of-South-Africans-get-2nd-rate-healthcare-Motsoaledi-20130912>
accessed 1 August 2014

'Every Death Counts: Saving the lives of mothers, babies and children in South Africa' published by the Child Healthcare Problem Identification Programme
http://www.ispotauthenticate.co.za/Joomla/documents/EDC_data_supplement.pdf accessed 1 August 2014

'The challenges of health disparities in South Africa', South African Medical Journal, Vol 103, No. 3, March 2013
<http://www.samj.org.za/index.php/samj/article/view/6622/4918> accessed 1 August 2014

Statistics South Africa Mid-year Population Estimates 2013
<http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0302/P03022013.pdf>
accessed 29 July 2014

Website of the Department of Government Communication and Information System
<http://www.gcis.gov.za/content/about-us> accessed 13 August 2014

Nelson Mandela, *Conversations with Myself*. Pan Macmillan, Johannesburg 2010

Harry S Truman on leadership
<http://www.nationalcoldwarexhibition.org/the-cold-war/biographies/harry-truman/> accessed 30 July 2014

Ram N Aditya and Robert J House. 'The Social Scientific Study of Leadership: Quo Vadis?' *Journal of Management*, Volume 23, No. 3, 1997
<http://tppserver.mit.edu/esd801/readings/scientific.pdf>
accessed 30 July 2014

Rosalynn Carter on leadership
<http://www.biography.com/people/rosalynn-carter-9240052#synopsis> accessed 30 July 2014

James Crook on leadership
<http://thoughts.forbes.com/thoughts/leadership-james-crook-a-man-who> accessed 30 July 2014

Andrew Carnegie on leadership
<http://www.leadership-with-you.com/andrew-carnegie-leadership.html> accessed 30 July 2014

Ken Blanchard on leadership
http://books.google.co.za/books?id=VIK4HqklgOEC&pg=PT226&lpg=PT226&dq=Ken+Blanchard+greatest+leaders+coalescing&source=bl&ots=2TpoqTz9Rv&sig=B77KidoM1boTq9MgUi8jqU7m3hE&hl=en&sa=X&ei=7n_YU-nnB_Te7Aa2zIGYBg&ved=0CD0Q6AEwBQ#v=onepage&q=Ken%20Blanchard%20greatest%20leaders%20coalescing&f=false accessed 30 July 2014

Jim Rohn on leadership
<http://www.appleseeds.org/rohn-leadership.htm> accessed 30 July 2014



Where do leaders come from? Do you need to be born in Sandton or Bishopscourt, clutching a silver spoon to become a leader? Anyone who has watched One Day Leader knows the answer – new leaders are born all over South Africa in communities with and without resources. Leaders are determined individuals who are ready to defend their views in a debate, to take on new ideas and who will go out of their way to serve their communities.

In this book you'll find essays and debates from participants of the One Day Leader television shows who share their views on critical elements of South African life. Find out more about where the contestants came from, their opinions on diverse topics like race and culture, citizenship, entrepreneurship, education, gender equality, healthcare, poverty – and leadership itself. Read their reactions to each other's viewpoints, and finally take your own stand and prepare to debate with family and friends. Could you be the next One Day Leader?

REFLECTIONS

SABC
EDUCATION



SABC **1**

ISBN 978-1-920434-97-7



9 781920 434977

www.onedayleader.co.za