

Madiba Lives



Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela

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Infinite Gratitude Madiba

Thank you for Zest and Will to Live

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The right way of honoring Nelson Mandela is to take a pledge to work towards making Africa free of violence and poverty – Sri Sri Ravi Shankar

Madiba - Africa's Greatest Teacher

Africa's child is grateful to be a devoted lifelong student of Madiba's Academy of Freedom. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude for being afforded the honourable opportunity to draw infinite wisdom from **Africa's greatest Teacher, Thinker, Stalwart and a Beacon of Light**, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela.

We applaud the fact that Madiba was humble and clear that he didn't walk the freedom journey alone.

Alongside him stood other great leaders who in their own right have also chosen the road less travelled with a vision to free the people of Africa. These past and present leaders include Jomo Kenyatta, Julius Nyerere, Samora Machel, Kwame Nkrumah, Seretse Khama, Thomas Sankara, Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson, Oliver and Adelaide Tambo, Winnie Mandela, Albertina and Walter Sisulu, Albert and Nokukhanya Luthuli, Ellen Khuzwayo, Steve Biko, Zef Motopeng, Govan Mbeki, Bishop Tutu, James Gregory, George Bizos, Tsietsi Mashinini, Emma Mashinini, Ahmed Kathrada, Robert Sobukwe, Mamphela Rampela, Kamuzu Banda, Helen Joseph, Andrew Mahlangeni and many other unsung heroes. It is clear that Madiba has not walked this journey alone and we are equally grateful to his family for their sacrifice and to his colleagues, friends, associates, mentors, acquaintances, comrades and supporters from all walks of life.

These are Africa's Ambassadors of Hope who have run the marathon of life. The marathon is a test of perseverance because it covers a long distance and takes several hours to finish. Therefore the runner not only has to be quick on his feet, he also has to show perseverance to win. These people are the runners who carried on sweating and steaming ahead all the way to the finish line to achieve their goals. Inspired by the wisdom of Venerable Master H. Sing Yun, the Chinese say that "a person who is 60 years old is only in the first year of a cycle".

Real life only starts at 70 and a person at 80 is still only a child. While many celebrate their 90th birthday, centenarians are rare - Venerable Master Bodhiruci, the great translator lived for 150 years.

So what is the learning for all of us?? This enlightens us that as human beings we all have endless lives however there is more to the marathon of life than running the furthest, running the longest time or having the most perseverance. The greatest test of life is having achievement. Though we may not be the champion or the runner up, at least we will finish the whole race. That is what is important in the race of life.

We draw from Madiba's strength as a boxer as well as Mohammed Ali who had such faith, great strength and belief in his own actions that when he went into the ring he celebrated himself already as a winner!! What counts in the ring is what you can do after you are exhausted, the same is true of life. Run despite feeling discomfort, run even when faced with despair, say no to prejudice, no to failure, don't lose sight of your goal, **envision yourself as a winner**. If you do, the will can never retire. **The race can never stop** and faith can never weaken. Do it against all odds and listen to your inner voice. Choose to follow your heart.

All these men and women underwent extraordinary sacrifices so that we as Africans who belong to a different generation can live in a continent that respects human rights and upholds human dignity whilst working towards improving the quality of life. The debt of gratitude that we owe to these giants cannot be over stated.

In the true spirit of the vision for a truly liberated Africa, we express our profound and sincere gratitude to Mandela and all our struggle heroes: Thank you, Asante, Siyabulela, Merci, Mungode, Obrigado, Shukran, re a leboga, baie dankie, ha khensa, rolivhuva.

Nelson Mandela and many other great stalwarts of freedom from all walks of life who walked this path together had a dream that dispelled limiting stereotypes just like Martin Luther King had.

A dream of equality of opportunity, of privilege and prosperity; a dream of a land where we will not take necessities from the many to give luxuries to the few; a dream of a land where we will not argue that the color of a man's skin determines the content of his character; a dream of a nation where all our gifts and resources are held not for ourselves alone, but as instruments of service for the rest of humanity; the dream of a country where every man will respect the dignity and worth of the human personality. Thus when we look at each other we see Humanity, Soul and Divinity

Madiba, a man who lived simply and without frills - an ordinary life with ordinary people but who did extraordinary things - actions that will forever transcend time.

Thank you Tata for teaching us that as Africans and in particular as South Africans, we should recognise this universal shared humanity. When there is pain, there are no words. All pain is the same. Emotions are universal. I rejoice when you rejoice and I hurt when you hurt. This phenomenon is an expression of our *Ubuntu* philosophy. I am because you are, you are because we are. *Umuntu Ngumuntu Ngabantu*. A person is a person because of other people.

Right to the heart of *Ubuntu* is a shared sense of values. We as South Africans naturally identify with this: unity, cooperation, support, sharing, compassion, grace, forgiveness, self control, humility, collaboration, honesty and the list goes on. The same values lived by Madiba.

The unique and diverse knowledge, talents and values that we have are not a mistake. It is a miracle not for us but for South Africa and the world. Our society looks to us to unlock the barriers that continue to promote racism, poverty, unemployment, violence, illnesses, sexism, crime and many other social ills.

How do we then Master the Art of co-creating the change needed to give effective GREATNESS to Mother AFRICA? Is it living in harmony, Africa healing within, Africa's awakening, celebrating diversity or uniting the knowledge and power we have for Africa's renaissance? Violence free? Poverty free?

Dr John Demartini in his teachings raises an interesting question, "Can a set back or obstacle be a blessing?"...Think about this!

- Bruce Lee became the greatest martial artist because as a young man he was badly beaten in the streets of Hong Kong and swore that this would not happen again.
- Ray Charles, Stevie Wonder and Jose Feliciano turned blindness into musical genius.
- Paul Bragg nearly died of lung disease, so he created health food stores – he became the world's foremost exponent of the breath and health of life.
- At a humble young age Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela realised that the country will best be served through empowerment of the self, and education for all, in the most profound way. A dream he lived to celebrate.
- Dr Demartini himself was dyslexic and written off by a school system, until he was discovered by a Yogi Teacher. Today Dr Demartini is a world renowned Human Behavioural Specialist, Educator and Author.

These are some of the few individuals who turned their adversities into GREATNESS.

The challenge in South Africa is not how many executives we can create and how many entrepreneurs we can develop. The answer does not lie in the country's GDP as profits go to the pockets of executives or to overseas investors. The point is not more taxes for in the past years we have experienced excessive wastage, corruption and mismanagement of funds.

The big question is how do we create a significant change in just one person's life in a manner that generates a ripple effect in order to reach critical mass? How do we enable just one person to move out of the gutter and achieve their GREATNESS, so they can in turn change another's life?

If we take our vision (that which we see and know about ourselves), **merge it with our values** (our governing principles), **and align it with our soul's desire** (the need to make a difference and achieve GREATNESS), that would translate into us all selflessly serving humanity.

China and India are able to flourish because of the following:

- These two nations offer distinct and defined service to the world – China is the world's manufacturer and India is the world's IT and Call Center.
- They are driven to educate, skill and challenge all their citizens to participate in developing their economy
- They go out into the world seeking new visions that are beyond their own borders (how else would they know what the world needs if they do not travel and expose themselves to new visions and to sell their services?)

However, as South Africans we are still bogged down by issues of colour, gender, exclusion and exclusivity and are not rising up to the challenge of achieving GREATNESS. Rising up to the challenge includes asking the Self; how does my knowledge help unlock a world of opportunities for at least one other South African? Like a marathon runner or a great world class golfer, we need to spend time mastering our craft so that:

- We touch and transform the lives of more South Africans than we can ever imagine
- We need to master this craft in pursuit of excellence and setting the standards of what defines us, as South Africans (We know if its German engineered, then its super solid, or if it's a Swiss Watch then it's made to perfection)

- At the end of our lives we should be known as legends, **because our vision should supersede us as a DNA that says we were there, we left a mark and we shall forever be remembered for the GREATNESS that we were.**

The early lives of the great masters were characterised by much challenge and hardships...this in my view was a fertile ground for unveiling their power to achieve GREATNESS. Because out of adversity comes Greatness

When our desires are in sync with the knowledge we acquired, our understanding of the world around us, our ability to apply ourselves and the need for achieving GREATNESS, then we have the substance legends are made of. It is when we are living our truest desire that we are able to unleash the world's great potential and endless possibilities.

This is the stuff great leaders concerned themselves with; their ability to take knowledge, merge it with their desire or the purpose of being alive and applying it in an innovative manner that transforms society and shifts thought (this is positive change).

This inspired way of being, makes life exciting and worth living. It makes us legendary. It is the essence of what the great son of Stellenbosch Chris Barnard was made of. Dr John Demartini says it is our relationship with our mind that determines the level of our GREATNESS. He categories these mindsets as follows:

- The '**Day to Day Minds**' that worry about just surviving the day;
- The '**Month End Minds**' that just say: 'when is month end I need my pay check?'
- The '**Year to Year Minds**' who commit to an annual resolutions
- The '**Short Term Minds**' with five, 10 year plans
- The '**Legendary Minds**' that see 50 years, 100 years, 200 years into eternity.

What does South Africa Need?

Mindsets that carve a healthy legacy for South Africa is what is needed to transform society in a meaningful manner beyond just compliance with policies such as BEE. Minds that know that the millions of **South Africans in our townships, rural areas, hospitals, in streets and jails are brilliant potential waiting to be unleashed** so that South Africa can take its place amongst the nations of the world in GREATNESS.

The Role of Academic Institutions

The necessary values that academic institutions should drive as Stellenbosch University does, should include readiness to serve, tolerance and mutual respect, responsibility and academic freedom. Its function is to offer knowledge and to make sure that those that interact with the institution experience these values as it continues to engage in imparting knowledge.

As the Alumni of Stellenbosch, WITS, UJ, UNISA, UCT and many other academic institutions what do we bring to the table? **What is our vision? What spaces do we see ourselves transforming? At the end of our lives, what type of society and nation would South Africa be ... all because we lived?** How are we expressing our gratitude and our GRATEFULNESS for the priceless treasures, wisdom and knowledge we have received from our Institutions? How do we do this in a meaningful and action orientated manner?

Yes, the knowledge we acquired is a small puzzle in a total picture of our existence. However, it is a GREAT enabler for us to manifest our truth using our talents. Making sure that, the song we are going to sing, the story we are going to tell, the picture we are going to paint, the lives we are going to touch, will be remembered long after we are gone.

It is this kind of innovation, a different way of thinking, a creative way of being that produces new economies in a sustainable and healthy environment.

Therefore, together with our academic institutions we need to review the first engagement we have with scholars as they enter tertiary institutions for the first time. At this point, like Mercedes Benz receiving its raw iron, we need to see these students as a final product, in the show room, ready to offer their value to society. This means the following needs to be taken into consideration when enrolling students and when they finally leave the gates of their institution to engage with society:

- Create tools that align the learner's desire and passion to the appropriate faculty/subject matter to study. This moves us from the business of mass intake to the business of conscious teaching and learning
- Infuse in the curriculum national priorities, globally relevant skills and building blocks that create character traits that are required to build and transform South Africa. These character traits, as a result of tertiary education, should enhance individual consciousness that translates into a new culture of what it means to be a South African.
- Part of being a graduate, should also mean that the student has gone through rigorous, experiential training and mentorship, and has designed an action plan that translates into a productive output in line with the country's needs. Thus knowledge in action, knowledge for change.
- Alumni's who are seasoned practitioners in their areas of study, should be engaged in the mentoring and coaching process of graduates in order to ensure that the choice of study and specialisation is informed and that the action plan is realisable and fits in the with country's required skills for growth and development.

- This continued engagement between the institution, new students, and its post grad students, in realising a new way of creating real meaning out education, should construct a virtual network where concepts and ideas can be tested, played out and shared. Much like Ted Network (Technology, Entertainment and Design electronic networking). In this way, through university networks, we develop blue chip students with competitive skills that can be put into action.

The network therefore offers all its participants to expand their individual dreams and desires to universal consciousness, thus co-creating greatness.

There is always that thing that we dream about that we know if we do it, it will change humanity. It might be a childhood dream, it might be a nagging voice, it might be a void that we cannot fill or an irritating feeling that something needs to happen. Listen to that inner voice, be still enough to hear, to remember, to feel and reconnect. We always know what needs to be done. What is important is the courage to do it. Let's have the courage to let go of our socialisation and past indoctrinations, and start living up to our heart's desires.

So, dare to be different, dare to make a difference. Go forth with Love and Light.

Let freedom reign. The sun never set on so glorious a human achievement – Nelson Mandela



A pledge to live the Madiba way

95 Lessons learnt



For every woman and girl violently attacked, we reduce our humanity... For every moment we remain silent, we conspire against women – Nelson Mandela

1. Forgive: It will free you from pain. A peaceful heart inspires vision
2. Live with purpose and serve with passion wholeheartedly
3. Educate the nation: It is a powerful weapon for fighting injustice
4. Act audaciously, admit the truth, accept and embrace what is and admire the greatness of others and yourself
5. Radiate faith, trust and belief in the Divine while looking for a cue that will you to make choices
6. Envision your destination and embark on a lifelong marathon with grace
7. Count your blessings and have gratitude for what you already have. *Thank you* are magical words
8. Savour the moment, sense the wonder in now, sing your song and serve fully
9. Shape up for the marathon of life, strengthen your resources, stand up and be counted, satisfy your thirst for life, seal your divine contract and share your wisdom
10. Stop and listen, smell the roses, soothe your inner self daily, sparkle and shine your light, steer yourself in the right direction, spray your genius generously
11. Stretch your mind, body and soul, strip away the small stuff and switch to the truth
12. Listen to your inner voice and be still – taking yourself to your inner power and inner knowledge to look, love, light, learn, live, leave a legacy, lead from inside, let go and let it be
13. Give your body, mind and spirit balance and be fully aware of every moment
14. Serve and love yourself and others whilst living your best life
15. Focus on your calling and be true to yourself without fear
16. Enjoy the moment, have fun and laugh. Every moment is special and cannot be repeated
17. Inspire and create your master plan, ignite your passion and innovate your solutions in order to hold onto your character
18. Use your strength to change what you can and the wisdom to leave what you can't
19. Savour the moment and sense the wonder in now and never harbour hatred
20. Sound your strength and shape up for the marathon of life
21. Strengthen your resources and stand up and be counted
22. Satisfy your thirst for life realising oneness with your Source

23. Seal your divine contract and share your wisdom
24. Steer yourself in the right direction and live your intuition
25. Strip away the small stuff and open doors to explore untapped potential
26. Live the following values: self service, pure generosity, sincerity, simplicity, truth, humility, honesty and see the power within
27. See positive aspects in times of trouble and feel the heartbeat of others
28. Make decisions, listen intelligently and embrace unity in diversity
29. Decide to be conscious it is the core of your life and influences all your choices. These are congruent with your most passionate beliefs
30. Reconcile yourself to step out of the past and move into the future
31. Trust the Divine to light the way in times of darkness
32. Follow your calling with hope with patience, perseverance and pride
33. Have gratitude as it unlocks the fullness of life
34. Love your space as there is no place like home
35. Master the art of surviving disappointment and let go
36. Navigate a stormy journey with a moral compass with full trust
37. Refuse to accept defeat and be courageous against all odds
38. Savour the blessings in every moment no matter what
39. Stretch beyond what is comfortable with unswerving courage
40. Live, learn, love and leave a legacy: plant your seeds everywhere
41. Learn to say yes when you mean yes and say no when you mean no
42. Make time to think, strive for justice and peace and lift the mask
43. Master the art of change because everything changes so you better know how to do it
44. Strive for unity in action: great people are never aggressive
45. Live a healthy life and look after your body
46. Meditate as it is an internal process of renewal and liberation
47. Be creative as this is the result of doing something different with all the skills, talents and experience at our disposal
48. Learn to get what you want without a bloody fight

49. Be patriotic and remember where you come from
50. Be 100% committed and prepared in whatever you do
51. Have integrity: this is what you do and say when no one is looking
52. See life as a fantastic growth school and be a lifelong learner
53. Protect our children: they are the future
54. Dedicate yourself to deepening bonds with the people around you
55. Live without fear and live in wholeness. It increases the quality of your life
56. Learn to become strong – nothing can take that away from you
57. Protect the earth – it is the only home you have
58. Don't be afraid of your vision: You have great power
59. Live in total surrender and embrace life however it unfolds
60. Accept what is and move on. Respond to the call of your ideal.
61. Be responsible and accountable for your own actions and live simply
62. Express gratitude and remember that within that gratitude, the wholeness is already present
63. Live everyday with fullness as if it were your last. This will free your soul
64. Listen to your inner voice and do your part in the world. No matter how small
65. Love unconditionally and without judgement
66. Respect your God given talents and radiate your light
67. Be patient as you embark on your journey – over time you will master this art
68. Savour the abolition of the Group Areas Act, this means we are no longer segregated and inhibited from travelling in our own country
69. Enjoy the abolition of the Mixed Marriages Act and establishment of the Civil Union Act that means we are able to marry who we love
70. Relish the abolition of the Bantu Education Act that means our children and ourselves can be as educated where and as much as we want to be - we have never-ending opportunities for tertiary education
71. Delight in the abolition of Pass laws which means we have freedom of movement
72. Understand that language equality means we can respect our own languages and have all African languages be official

73. Note that we are able to purchase our own homes with electricity and running water
74. Enjoy the fact that Employment equity means we have unlimited job and career opportunities
75. Teach young ones that our history of origins is no longer hidden and our indigenous knowledge is freely available
76. Recognise that human rights and all its freedoms mean that our lifestyles are different
77. Take the pleasure in knowing that we have the freedom to be who we are and know that we *are* good enough
78. Express ourselves through our religious freedom and the right to multifaith expression
79. Mend broken families through the changes that freedom and equality have brought to society, fathers are now able to play a more meaningful role in their children's lives
80. Model the concept of separation and divorce vs. unhappiness and that it can be done with dignity and love
81. Climb the corporate ladder with freedom as women feel empowered and are held in high esteem
82. Execute and sustain our concise Early Childhood Development Plan
83. Feel free because we are no longer held under siege because of the colour of our skin, gender, class and creed
84. Benefit from the fact that disabled people are empowered and have equal rights. Democracy equals human rights for all
85. Enjoy that our homes are no longer isolated and we have active participation on a global scale, international relations, no more sanctions, global support and are able to partake in international sports and entertainment
86. Learn at the knee of the masters to lead from the back, that reform begins within, that crisis often precedes transformation and innovation and that actions speak louder than words – the universe applauds action and not thought
87. Search for ways of eradicating feelings of fear and unworthiness
88. Understand that growth and development is only limited by what we do
89. Savour the prospects for diverse friendships are real
90. Delight that we have been afforded freedom of expression and choice
91. Live honestly and know what we have been taught that there is power in truth

92. Release your creativity through poetry, writing, reading, arts and crafts and the fact that our innovation knows no bounds
93. Utilise the access to information we have – knowledge is power
94. Make your choice - there is freedom in all aspects of our lives
95. Know that many men and women underwent extraordinary sacrifices so that we as Africans who belong to a different generation can live in a continent that respects human rights and upholds human dignity whilst working towards improving the quality of life. The debt of gratitude that we owe to these giants cannot be over stated.

**Tata, thank you for teaching us the art of navigating our long walk to freedom
The destination is never a place but rather seeing with new eyes**



95 Unforgettable Words of Wisdom

Letter to Winnie Mandela in Kroonstad from Nelson Mandela: Conversations with myself

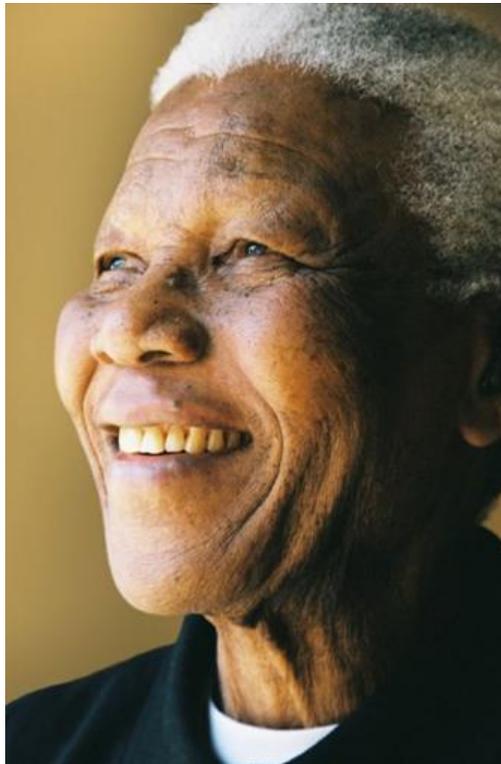
. . . the cell is an ideal place to learn to know yourself, to search realistically and regularly the process of your own mind and feelings. In judging our progress as individuals we tend to concentrate on external factors such as one's social position, influence and popularity, wealth and standard of 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.



Education is the great engine of personal development. It is through education that the daughter of a peasant can become a doctor, that the son of a mineworker can become the head of the mine, that a child of farmworkers can become the president of a great nation. It is what we make out of what we have, not what we are given, that separates one person from another – Nelson Mandela

The echo of Madiba's teachings will live forever

Tata, we will always hear your silent voice, see your bright light, be guided by your soul and feel the warmth of your touch. Your courage will live inside of us forever. We will carry your calabash of knowledge for positive change and we commit to hand over the baton from generation to generation with unconditional love, fearless power, unshakeable faith, inspired by your integrity and honesty and be embraced by the power of your love



Living the Madiba Way... Now



- Prioritise the care of our children because they are the future
- Use education and health because they are the strength and the pillar of the nation's wealth
- Morals, values and ethics are key to in order to promote responsible freedom and citizenry
- Live the spirit of Ubuntu as it is who we are
- Have faith in everything we do even though the journey may be long
- Use money wisely: to serve, to make a difference, to transform and help - poverty is not natural
- Live the dream: It is possible
- As in the words of Swami Chinmayananda, realise that *Youth are not useless, they are used less. Youth are not careless, they are cared less...*
- Dream of a violence-free, poverty-free nation united in action for positive change
- All people must give back to Madiba in whatever way we can. We must commit to his great learnings: to inspire, influence and impact positive change

Madiba's Infinite GDP

Thank you for giving Africa and the world Gross Domestic **Peace, Purity, Prosperity, Power, Perseverance and Passion**

PEACE 

prosperity

Deepest sympathy and gratitude to Madiba's parents, grandparents, great grandparents and all those who came before, Mam Graca Machal, Mam Winnie, Madikizela-Mandela, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, South Africa, Africa and the world. We have all lost our father. May he rest in peace.

KhanyaLangaLesizwe Let Madiba's Light Forever Shine

We hear the voices which say that it is an appeal from all those, throughout the universe, who sought an end to the system of apartheid. We understand their call, that we devote what remains of our lives to the use of our country's unique and painful experience to demonstrate, in practice, that the normal condition for human existence is democracy, justice, peace, non-racism, non-sexism, prosperity for everybody, a healthy environment and equality and solidarity among the peoples. Moved by that appeal and inspired by the eminence you have thrust upon us, we undertake that we too will do what we can to contribute to the renewal of our world so that none should, in future, be described as the "wretched of the earth".

Nelson Mandela



Africa's Beacon of Light

Tell your own Story

Knowing who you are and where you come from is the first step to empower you to reclaim your rights and belongs to you. At the same time, inspire you to share. In my life I have found that the best way to share is through storytelling.

I believe in the power of stories as a divine gift, a universal right and a heritage passed down from generation to generation, so let me start with one.

This is the isiXhosa's story of creation.

Once upon a time, God created the first human being by splitting a reed from which came a man and two women, who were the progenitors of the human race. The Great being after creating Man, sent Nwabi the chameleon to tell him that he, God, had decided that Man would live forever. After Nwabi's departure, the great Being thought otherwise and sent Ntulo the gecko to tell Man that he must die. The gecko Ntulo was swifter than Nwabi so he arrived first and delivered the message of Death to Man. When Nwabi finally got there, Man turned him away rudely, saying "Go, we have already accepted the message which Ntulo has brought us." Nwabi tried but to no avail. And so it is that men must die, and stories live forever.

Storytelling is the art of portraying real or fictitious events in words, images, and sounds. Stories are told for *entertainment* purposes, and often to teach lessons and provide morals. Storytelling is often considered to be a crucial aspect of humanity. Human beings have a natural ability to use verbal communication to teach, explain and entertain, which is why storytelling is so prevalent in everyday life.

The youngest forms of storytelling were oral, told around a fire combined with gesture and expression: words were spoken from one person to another in an effort to communicate a message or a feeling. Stories are also seen in the artwork scratched onto the walls of caves.

With the invention of writing, stories were recorded, transcribed and shared over wide regions of the world. As human activities have become more refined and complex, visual stories have been presented in images carved into wood, ivory or stone, painted on canvas, recorded on film and stored electronically as digital images.

People in all times and places have told stories. In the oral tradition, storytelling includes the teller and the audience thus creating co-ownership. The storyteller creates the experience, while the audience perceives the message and creates personal mental images from the words heard and the gestures seen. In this experience, the audience becomes co-creator of the art. Storytellers sometimes dialogue with their audience, adjusting their words to respond to the listeners and to the moment.

Thus no two tellings of an oral story are exactly alike. Modern actors, singers, rappers and comedians can at times be storytellers. There is also a distinct kind of contemporary performer called "storyteller" who combines several different elements.

Authentic storytelling values who the recipients of the story are and what they know and uses that as building blocks to create new meaning and understanding. It also challenges what those recipients know and open their eyes to new ways of seeing the world. That is transformation.

Too often we complain without ever doing anything and yet the Universe applauds action and not thought.

To quote Toni Morrison: "If there's a book you really want to read, but it hasn't been written yet, then you must write it."

The same could be said about the creation of authentic storytelling through documentaries, dramas, entertainment, children's programmes and films. *The power of stories lies in the fact that they have the ability to push through barriers of discrimination and inequality.*

Being born into a storytelling tradition, let's be convinced that we learn best and change from hearing stories that strike a chord within us by nourishing our souls, stimulating our intellect, building our bodies, evoking our emotions and resonating with who we are and where we come from and where we are going.

An African proverb says: Every time an old man dies it is as if a library has burnt down.

The marginalized, are the most important namely, children, the elderly, the disabled, the poor and the illiterate people whom society forgets because they are not able to demand the same centre stage compared to the rest. It's important in our storytelling that we reach out to people who are helpless, defenseless, hopeless and disillusioned.

It is important that we ask ourselves these questions:

What are the stories that define us? Who defines us? Who tells these stories? Who owns these stories? To whom are these stories told? Are these stories authentic? And are these the stories we want to tell and have others tell about us? If the answer to these questions is "No," then we must start taking responsibility and actions to ensure that we tell our own stories to ourselves and the world and we take ownership and authorship of these stories. Our success depends on the honesty and integrity of our actions as well as on the impact these stories have to those that we tell these stories to.

Consider ourselves as a life-long learners, so lately I have been applying what I have learned about stories from childhood in my professional experience. I have a great passion for learning and for teaching because I believe in sharing. When shared with others, stories can have an enormous impact on how well we move forward in the changing the world around us.

Why people write stories

- 1) It is a spontaneous spiritual calling - what is critical is how you answer the call
- 2) It is an opportunity to inspire the telling of our own authentic stories as we are all authors and artists of our own lives
- 3) It is a time for delving deep inside yourself and letting go so the truth heals you. When we go through a tapestry of pain, anger, rejection, fear, disillusionment and regrets we discover at the same time the hidden pearls of grace, joy, love, peace, happiness understanding, knowledge, power, wisdom and genius
- 4) Telling stories inspires other souls to have the courage to author their own stories in their own organic voices. It's an eternal gift and a thought memory that will live beyond your years and live forever – stories never die
- 5) When you tell stories you discover the peace within yourself which elevates you to a higher consciousness and deeper awareness to an understanding that you are life, you are light, you are love! This state is not a state of superiority or elitist, a state of being special nor is it a state of being better than the next person, nor does it put you on a pedestal. It is rather a state of awareness of who you are. It is an enabler that aligns you when you go off track. Put simply, it is angelic consciousness because there is purity and an angel inside all of us. Consciousness reiterates that there is an angel in all of us. It reminds us of the spirit of *Ubuntu*: "That I am because you are, you are because we are. Unless you are I cannot be. We are one.
- 6) It is a time to heal our own hurt and embrace blessings and gratitude. Remembering that we are worthy of love no matter what we have done or not done. God is good and with us all the time. All we need is unshakeable faith, steadfast trust and boundless belief.

7) Opening yourself up unleashes blockages that turns a deaf ear to the inner voice which is humbly pleading lovingly to be redeemed. Your soul is pleading for freedom.

Authorship and Ownership

People often misunderstand when we talk about authorship and ownership in African storytelling. There is sometimes resentment and misunderstanding about what Black empowerment means. Authentic African storytelling enrolls diverse voices and allows authentic voices to tell their own stories. It also acknowledges the context within which the stories are told, it is also based on a value system that has a shared sense of origin - a value system that is shared and owned by the recipients. It is not a dictate by few individuals based on their personal tastes and preferences as expressed by Ngugi- it is a product of peoples history and where they are headed to and it also embodies a whole set of values by which people view themselves and their place in time and space. This has to be case across the whole production value chain from concept to delivery.

Authorship of stories is not about fronting. Ownership does not mean being a "darkie for rent" who never participates in the creative, narrative process. African storytelling is not simplistic. It is not limited to stories told by Black people. To be Black is not automatic entrance into some special cultural space. In world history, those who have helped to build the same culture are not necessarily of one race, and those of the same race have not all participated in one culture.

First of all, African includes but is not limited to: people born in Africa, those that are of African descent, those that love, care for and identify with this continent, those that are rooted in this continent, those that are patriotic about this continent and those that have invested in the renaissance and success of this continent.

To quote Chinua Achebe: "People go to Africa and confirm what they already have in their heads and so they fail to see what is there in front of them. This is what people have come to expect. It's not viewed as a serious continent. It's a place of strange, bizarre and illogical things, where people don't do what common sense demands."

I am because you are you are because we are. UmuntuNgumuntuNgabantu. A person is a person because of other people.

Right to the heart of Ubuntu is a wealth of a shared sense of values that we as South Africans naturally identify with as in unity, cooperation, support, sharing, compassion, grace, forgiveness, self control, humility, collaboration, honesty and the list goes on.

WE have to own the fears that we have of each other, and then, in some practical way, some daily way, figure out how to see people differently than the way we were brought up to. What a hater doesn't understand is that in hating one group, actually he or she hates all groups. Hate is like a cancer. It goes from one cell to another, one root to another, one person to another, one group to another. If it's not stopped, it can invade a whole country, the whole world. A hater doesn't understand, therefore, that actually, in destroying others, he then destroys himself. Life has taught us that there is no glory in killing people, and there's no glory in degrading people. There is no glory in persecuting.

Authorship and Ownership in African storytelling means understanding the meaning of stories: it means understanding that:

"...It is only the story that can continue beyond the war and the warrior. It is the story that outlives the sound of war-drums and the exploits of brave fighters.

It is the story...that saves our progeny from blundering like blind beggars into the spikes of the cactus fence. The story is our escort; without it, we are blind.

Does the blind man own his escort? No, neither do we the story; rather it is the story that owns us and directs us."

--Chinua Achebe, *Anthills of the Savannah* (1987)

We, as Africans need to own our stories intellectually, spiritually, culturally and economically. Until Lions have their own historians, tales of the hunt will always glorify the hunter.

Every human culture in the world seems to create stories (narratives) as a way of making sense of the world. Despite these universal features, however, the particular narrative meanings, themes, genres, and styles of story telling around the world differ from culture to culture. Authorship and Ownership means understanding the context of the cultures which produce the stories.

African proverbs and stories draw upon the collective wisdom of our oral tradition, expressing their "structures of meaning, feeling, thought, heritage and vision," and thus serve important social and ethical purposes.

Television too, in its different genres and especially in the documentary narrative should convey culture, experience and values as a means of transmitting knowledge, wisdom, feeling, and attitudes in our society.

Whether we talk about *Zakes Mda, Emma Mashinini, Ousmane Sembene, Djibril Diop Mamberty, Eskia Mphahlele, Sindiwe Magona, Lauretta Ngcobo or Sello Duiker* - One cannot talk about African stories without talking about the particular cultures and orators on which African storytellers draw...for their themes and values, for their narrative structures and plots, for their rhythms and styles, for their images and metaphors and for their artistic principles.

And yes, African storytelling is also about telling stories in indigenous languages. Language is a primary means of learning and transmitting one's culture. Language is history and memory. Language is emotion. Language is lineage and remaining linked.

Alice Walker when talking metaphorically about language said: *How simple a thing it seems to me that to know ourselves as we are, we must know our mothers names.*

It is important to also know your language, your mother tongue. An African proverb says: A bird is in the air but its mind is on the ground. Wherever you are, it is important to remember where you come from and what is important to you.

Animal stories have many variations and abound in the oral traditions of Africa and the African Diaspora. Smaller, physically weak, and seemingly vulnerable creatures—like Tortoise or Spider in the Ananzi stories--are often endowed with special intelligence and human characteristics. Ironically, large, powerful animals like the lion, elephant and leopard are often duped in such animal stories, often through the stomach and the heart.

Tricksters like Tortoise or Hare, exist on the peripheries of the social order. Their individualistic, non-conformist behavior creates havoc and disharmony in society, and can threaten the survival of the community. (Contrast this attitude to the positive ways that American culture values individualism.) Secular tricksters like Tortoise often project the kinds of evil forces and bad behaviors against which the human community must contend to survive and which must be kept in check. Thus, for example, recounting Tortoise stories in African communities can function to reaffirm the priority and wisdom of the community, reassure its members that balance and harmony can and should be restored, and that the community will survive and prevail.

Key features of Authentic African stories:

- The Holistic view of Africa
- Capture the joy, fears, hopes, pain and dreams of being African
- Dynamic, flexible
- Customs and traditions

Values inherent in African Stories are:

- Support, unity and sharing – Communal Values
- Laughter, creativity, compassion and grace – Personal Values
- Acceptance of difference – Social Values
- Humility is also important. Do not be a doormat but understanding the power of the medium and your power as storytellers.

Authentic African storytelling as Paul Robeson says "shows Life not just as it is, but as it should be".

Chinua Achebe himself explains that a story *"does many things. It entertains, it informs, it instructs." "If you look at these stories carefully, you will find they support and reinforce the basic tenets of the culture. The storytellers worked out what is right and what is wrong, what is courageous and what is cowardly, and they translate this into stories"*

What authorship and ownership of African storytelling means is weaving a dream that will continue to survive and adapt to the challenges of modernization facing Africa today, and that will fuse in uniquely African ways, with newer creative forms and influences to enrich the global human experience and its creative expressions.



Madiba's Calabash of Wisdom

Calabash: a symbol for eternity ... where all thirst is quenched. The African calabash is used when there is a gathering or coming together of people, where ideas are shared and stories are told. It is a big clay pot used for cooling water and also used to ferment traditional beer (amorula). Can also be used when serving ... as the main source and is always placed at the centre.

It is therefore a symbol of communalism and sharing. It holds the community together and promotes "davha" – when people are called to help in tilling fields. It is a symbol of co-operation, of fertility and growth, laughter, dance and happiness and the essence from which life flows.

I started with a story therefore it is only fitting that it ends with one.

A just man decided he must save humanity. So he chose a city, the most sinful of all cities. Let's say it is Babylon. So he studied. He learned all the art of moving people, changing minds, changing hearts. He came to a man and woman and said, "Don't forget that murder is not good, it is wrong." In the beginning, people gathered around him. It was so strange, somewhat like a circus. They gathered and they listened. He went on and on and on. Days passed. Weeks passed. They stopped listening. After many years, a child stopped him and said, "What are you doing? Don't you see nobody is listening? Then why do you continue shouting and shouting? Why?" And the man answered the child, "I'll tell you why. In the beginning, I was convinced that if I were to shout loud enough, they would change. Now I know they won't change. But if I shout even louder, it's because I don't want them to change me."



United in Action for Change

Arise Africa

A New Day is Dawning

The salvation through African Renaissance should not be set aside. It's not all doom and gloom. The much-talked about African Renaissance is not merely political claptrap, but a real paradigm shift. The philosophy dates back to the early 1960s when **Great Statesmen** such as **Kwame Nkrumah** of Ghana preached pan-Africanism; **Julius Nyerere** of Tanzania advocated the spirit of **Ujama** to symbolize togetherness; **Jomo Kenyatta** of Kenya orchestrated **Uhuru** to symbolize freedom across the nations and **Kenneth Kaunda** of Zambia waved his symbolic white handkerchief, spreading the culture of humanism, manifesting mutual helpfulness and respect. Our own **Nelson Mandela**, the first democratically elected President of South Africa who instilled the vision of a united, free and democratic South Africa which he compassionately committed to in life and if need be, in death. Seemingly we should not miss the moments of grace and gratitude to our leaders who have taken the baton from those who come before them: Former President **Thabo Mbeki** and current President, **Jacob Zuma** along with our Deputy Presidents through the years (F. W. de Klerk (NP) and Thabo Mbeki (ANC) jointly: 1994–1996); Thabo Mbeki (ANC): 1996–1999; Jacob Zuma (ANC): 1999–2005; Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka (ANC): 2005–2008; Baleka Mbete (ANC): 2008–2009 and Kgalema Motlanthe (ANC): 2009– current.

No matter what people have done or not done, they are worthy of love and human dignity and we should carry the spirit of Ubuntu in our hearts and always respect and give dignity to our leaders – not losing sight of our values, ethics and morals. As the jungle rule of survival now pervades the political landscape, we should be very aware of not losing our respect for each other. The same respect that we should be passing on to our new generation. **We must build on the virtues of our Africanness** which grounded us and carried us forward to where we are today. Let us also encourage citizens to love each other and see ourselves as one, as Africans.

It is through the visionary leadership of great men and women who have made great efforts to uphold service-orientated governance in our countries and many of them introduced the leadership and moral codes to guide the public conduct of political and public leaders. This was a great gift to encourage leaders to observe the rule of law and lead by example in their interaction with the public. These are the unforgettable treasures and memories that should always underpin everything we do and inspire even greater milestones of the African winds of change.

And so we have to heal our Africa within. We have to re-discover the true Africa, the Africa of laughter, of joy, of originality, of improvisation, the Africa of legend, of story-telling, of playfulness, the Africa of brilliant colours, the Africa of generosity, of hospitality and kindness to strangers, the Africa of immense compassion, the Africa of wisdom, of proverbs, of divination, of paradox, the Africa of ingenuity, and surprise, the Africa of a four-dimensional attitude to time, the Africa of magic, of faith, of patience, of endurance, of a profound knowledge of nature's ways and the secret cycles of destiny

Ben Okri

To Madiba with Love

AN OPEN LETTER TO GOD

Dear GOD

Thank you for the gift of life that you gave to the world 95 years ago

A vast treasure with boundless possibility, courage, trust and vision

A source of light, love, strength and wisdom

Grace and Gratitude

God, the source of our inspiration

Thank you for your ever flowing river of grace

From which we quench our thirst: Thirst for healing, love, joy and wisdom

Thank you for the awakening

Thank you for the awareness of this moment

Thank you for the experience of freedom and warmth

Thank you for the silence, a practical and immediate outlet

Thank you for your loving invitation

To the mystery of your unconditional love

Your Greatness

Thank YOU Tata for your guidance

Thank YOU Tata for the light

Thank YOU Tata for the commitment

Live Madiba's Legendary Mind

Call to Action

Open invitation to all Teachers, Women and Authors to preserve the heritage and legacy of Madiba by writing from their own special memories, beliefs and feelings.



True greatness, true leadership is found in giving yourself in service to others, not in coaxing or inducing others to serve you. True service is never without cost. Often it comes with a painful baptism of suffering but the true leader is focused on the service that he or she can render to God and other people, not on the residuals and perks of high office or holy title - we must aim to put more into life than take out of it.

Jay Oswald Sander

The Great Learning

The way of great learning consist in manifesting **one's bright virtue, consists in loving the people**, consists in stopping in perfect goodness.

When you **know where to stop**, you have stability.

When you have stability, you can **be tranquil**.

When you are tranquil, you can be at ease.

When you are at ease, you can deliberate.

When you can deliberate, you can attain your aims.

Things have their roots and branches,**affairs have their end and beginning**.

When you know what comes first and what comes last, then you are near the way.

The ancients who wanted to manifest their bright virtue to all in the world first governed well their own states.

Wanting to govern well their states, they first harmonised their own clans.

Wanting to harmonise their own clans, they first cultivated themselves.

Wanting to cultivate themselves, they first corrected their minds.

Wanting to correct their minds, they first made their wills sincere.

Wanting to make their wills sincere, they first extended their knowledge.

Extension of knowledge consist of the investigation of things.

When things are investigated, knowledge is extended.

When knowledge is extended, the world becomes sincere.

When the will is sincere, the mind is correct.

When the mind is correct, the self is cultivated.

When the self is cultivated, the clan is harmonised.

When the clan is harmonised, the country is well governed.

When the country is well governed, there will be peace throughout the land.

From the king down to the common people,

All must regard the cultivation of the self as the most essential thing.

It is impossible to have a situation wherein the essentials are in disorder,

And the externals are well managed.

You simply cannot take the essential things as superficial, and the superficial things as essential.

Translated by Charles Muller (first translated in July 1990)