We send this newsletter to you in this cold weather, hoping it would make your time in bed or couch more worthwhile. We are in the digital wilderness, our website has been suspended due to financial constraints. We do appreciate every contribution made in an attempt to keep us afloat, we managed to close some debt we owed our hosts. The approach has, however, proved to not be as successful as we had hoped it would be. We still strongly encourage you to help in any way you can to try and get the back online. We are busy sending funding proposals to government departments and private funders in a bid to find a sustainable solution that will not discourage reading and writing.

Our passion about encouraging the culture of reading and cultivating the art of writing has seen us forego the option of charging for subscription on these newsletters. We would like to state categorically that the website and the newsletters will be available free for a very long time to come.

This newsletter is titled iNkolo, which is a Nguni word directly translated to mean "A Belief", and explores many aspects of Religion, Faith and Spirituality. We cast our net very wide to come up with iNkolo, as we moved away from mainstream religious sentiments and bring views mainly considered alternative. In Poetry, Blog and Story-Telling, we try and uncover outlooks that may have otherwise not have been given a platform. This newsletter is not biased in favour of or against any religious view; in fact, we tried to strike as much balance as we could in the subjects represented.

This is a platform founded firmly on the principle of freedom of speech, and we believe that virtue of having an opinion, however ignorant or profound it may be considered, you deserve to be heard. We therefore strongly urge you to participate in conversation we have on social media. "Like" our page on facebook and follow us on twitter @ILWIWDotCom. We are highly responsive and engaging.

Information contained in this document is too vital to be enjoyed by only a select few; try and forward this newsletter to as many reader and writer friends as possible. Encourage them to sign up for mailing list, so they too can receive this newsletter sent directly to their e-mail addresses. If you received this newsletter from a friend and not only want to be sent our future newsletter but previous ones too, send an e-mail to info@ilikewhatiwrite.co.za with an empty body and the subject Previous Newsletters.

We have plans of opening a library in Qwa-Qwa which will mainly be used to mentor budding writers, and we ask you to donate books you can afford to part with. We have this initiative because we believe that one cannot be a writer if they don't read. Send an e-mail to nyakallo@ilikewhatiwrite.co.za to enquire about how to get the books to Qwa-Qwa.

Going forward, we will be sending a newsletter with adult content, it's all erotica. One needs to be warned it is not for sensitive readers. We are busy putting together another issue on homosexuality and feminism. We hereby invite contributions on these subjects, but we also warn those that are likely to be offended by such content to consider themselves informed.

All feedback welcome.
Enjoy iNkolo!

Nyakallo Lephoto
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It was a long weekend. They were excited to be going home. Any excuse to get away from the big bad city. She packed and decided to play a Joyous Celebration dvd while waiting for her brother to arrive so they could drive down together. She called her mother who’d left an hour earlier with their sister and niece. They said the traffic wasn’t that bad, the toll gates were busy though.

Her brother finally arrives, they load their luggage into one car and set off. He’s driving. ‘Let’s get gas and food on the way out so we don’t have to stop anywhere’, he said. ‘Ok, there’s a Total garage around the corner. It has a Steers as well, let’s go there’ she said. Tank refilled. Slow service at Steers. Seconds. Minutes. Their food finally arrives.

They are on the road again. ‘Watch out for the camera, it’s an 80 zone’ she said. ‘Alright’ he said. He’s playing dope music; it’s loud, they’re in good spirits, busy chit-chatting. Traffic’s not so bad. He comes around a bend and slows down. He jams the brakes and comes to a complete standstill, hazards on. There’s a CTM warehouse on the left hand side. Traffic’s not moving. He asks for his bottle of Coke, she reaches down to get it and passes it to him. She pulls out her toasted chicken mayo as well. ‘I’m starving’ she thinks.

The sound of squealing brakes, ‘Whoever that is, they will not be able to stop’ she said. ‘Eh monna, whatever it is, it shouldn’t be on the road, it is hazardous’ he said. An ice cream truck zooms past. They laugh. She reaches down to get her drink. The sound of screeching brakes again. ‘WTF, the ice cream truck and its faulty brakes just zoomed past mos’ she thinks. He’s probably thinking the same thing too. There’s no time to think about the mystery of the ice cream truck, the squealing brakes and the implications thereof.

There’s a loud bang. She looks into the mirror and sees metal and cars flying behind her. He acts fast and swerves to the right as far as he could. There’s an even louder bang on his side. She closes her eyes. This can’t be it, she’s still hungry, what a shitty way to die. She doesn’t even want to look at her brother for fear of what she might find when she opens her eyes. The car comes to a standstill. The music’s stopped playing. She opens her eyes. The sandwich’s untouched. He gets out the car. ‘Hallelujah, he’s still alive’ she thinks. ‘Get out the car now’ he says. She jumps out. He asks if she’s okay. She mumbles something incoherent. He surveys the damage to the car. He’s speaking to the driver of the car closest to him. Holy shit its a 5-6 car pile-up. She’s confused, the shock sets in, she gets back into the car. She starts crying. Calls a friend, who listens patiently, she’s on her way to where they are. A man from a tow-truck company appears by her side. He’s asking stupid questions. ‘Get out of my face’ she says. He fiddles with her neck, checks her pulse, then leaves. Her brother is on the phone to their mother. He gets off the phone. Her phone starts ringing. Their sister’s on the phone, asking questions. She hands the phone to her brother. More questions. Their conversation ends. They’re going to turn around and come back to get them he informs her. He hugs her, ‘We’re okay’ he says. She calms down.

She spots a Phadziri bus in the debris and chaos. There are people screaming and running from it. Kids everywhere. It looks like the bus hit a car and flattened it. There’s a young boy trapped in the car. That car hit another car, there’s a ripple effect. There are 3 or 4 more cars, smashed at various places to varying degrees. There’s a pregnant woman lying on the road. They’re asking her if she can breathe. She doesn’t respond. Somebody gets the trapped child out of the wreckage. His heart stops, they perform CPR on him, they manage to resuscitate him. ‘Where’s the ambulance?’ somebody asks. No answer.

The cops show face, they quickly take charge and close the road. A medical helicopter needs to land. The little boy’s heart stops again. More CPR, he’s resuscitated yet again. There’s a massive crowd now. Injured people or curious onlookers? It’s hard to tell. The ambulances finally get there. They go about their business. ‘Injuries this side’ somebody says.

She crosses the road and walks towards an ambulance. Blinding headache, she needs aspirin. The paramedic has none. Absolute fuckery. The paramedic says she’s only carrying morphine. Possible addiction? She politely declines. People are getting examined, gently being prodded here and there, flashlight in your eyes, how many fingers can you see, bend down, get up and then tell me how you feel.

The helicopter lands. Wind and dust everywhere. The young boy and his father are airlifted to hospital. The pregnant woman is attended to. ‘Who’s related to this woman?’ The paramedic asks. ‘We need to know if push comes to shove, do we save the mother or the baby?’ ‘WOAH! What a crappy decision to have to
make’ she thinks. She quickly walks back across the road, doesn’t stick around to hear the answer. She calls her friend. She’s still stuck in traffic. They talk and both decide that it is better if she turns back. ‘I love her to death’ she thinks.

The cops are taking statements now, name, surname, which car were you in, describe the accident. More questions. ‘Be careful, these tow truck guys are sharks’ the cop says. Her brother’s on the phone, insurance, negotiating rates with the tow truck drivers, he’s alternating calls between their older brother, father and their sister.

Their mother, sister and niece finally get to the accident site. They pack all their stuff into their mother’s car. The niece says she’s hungry. The toasted chicken mayo is repossessed and given to the little one. The owner of the sandwich doesn’t have much of an appetite anyway. The car’s towed away. Their father calls, he sounds worried and wants to drive down with their older brother. He’s reassured it’s not necessary. 4 long ass hours later, they’re finally on their way home. Not much conversation in the car. Everyone’s tired and weary.

It is almost midnight. Polokwane is a 100km away the board says. ‘Not too long now’, they’re all thinking. Minutes later there’s a thick cloud of black dust. Visibility is reduced to nothing. ‘Slow down’ the mother says to her son. He jams the brakes. Second time that night. Thank goodness for ABS. The dust starts to clear, there’s a blue Toyota Condor spinning in the middle of the road. There’s another car that’s veered off the road into the bushes. There’s a car approaching on the opposite side of the road, they all hope it stops in time. It does. They all exhale. The blue Condor stops spinning.

There are bodies lying on the road. A decapitated body. The head’s still rolling around on the road. There’s at least 5 other bodies strewn across the road. There’s a woman wearing a green dress. Her limbs are at an unnatural angle, her beige panties are visible. Her dignity, like her, dies a cruel death. The others look like they’re all dead. There’s a young lady climbing out of the Condor. She looks around bewildered. She’s the lone survivor. They try dial 112, No service. FUCK! They tweet Rob Byrne.

‘It’s a good thing my stomach’s empty’ she thinks, ‘otherwise the probability of that food coming back up and being regurgitated would have been very high’. They drive away. It is all too much for one night. No conversation whatsoever in the car. The usually chatty niece has nothing to say. Young kids shouldn’t see such. Even she can sense that all is not well. It is way past her bedtime at that too.

They get home. The father and brother are relieved. You can see it on their faces. Stories are told and retold. Everyone finally goes to bed. Prayers all around the house. Concerned family members call throughout the weekend. They mean well, but it gets a tad annoying retelling the same story over and over again. Slowly, life gets back to normal. The car is fixed. The rental car goes back to its home.

The cops call with follow-up questions. The little boy didn’t make it. The pregnant woman is paralysed and lost her baby. The bus driver was first charged with culpable homicide then it was switched up to murder. The driver’s renounced himself from any responsibility for the accident. The case is on-going. The faulty bus miraculously disappeared from the police yard before it was tested. Fucking corruption! Phadziri buses are still on the road. Bladdy death traps. She curses every single time she sees one.

Life after accident number 4 has normalised again. She’s managed to get over most of her anxiety. Still, she doesn’t want a bus behind her in traffic.

That nerves of steel thing she had going on before the accident is back! All is well again on the road.

Until she hears the sound of screeching brakes..
Subtitled “A true story”, this thumping read (with a gorgeous and inviting cover) is a memoir of the ex-Hawks spokesperson in South Africa, Polela. It’s mostly about his bruised childhood and how he fought in a rather courageous way to be where he is today.

When Polela learns through his drunken uncles during summer holidays that his father murdered his mom, he is driven closer to the edge by the news. From planning revenge – in a rather naïve way - which is making a dangerous weapon and hunting down to violently kill his father to trying committing suicide when he learns that he is nowhere closer to getting his weapon on his father. But thanks Goodness after quickly thinking about his younger sister, Zinhle, and all the brutal abuse she would have to endure without him, he quickly snaps out of it. It is often said that to have a meaningful and productive life one must find a purpose to live for and that's exactly what the author found. He found a purpose- which was to protect his sister- and hope certainly kept him going and rescued them both for the better.

The first chapters of the book are filled with detailed stories of the type of chores Polela was forced to perform as a youngster by his grandmother. They are pretty normal chores to anyone who grew up in the very rural areas of South Africa in those days. But unfortunately Polela does not think so as he keeps insinuating that performing these duties constituted abuse. So for that reason, to a person who grew up in the rural villages and farms and also quite familiar with these types of activities, these parts of the book might actually read like gross exaggeration.

Maureen Issacson who was with the Sunday Independent at the time when the book went for publishing described the book-on the cover- as “Polela’s brave account of his scarred childhood breaks with tradition... a memoir so painful it bleeds off the page”. And indeed as Polela documents twists, turns and folds of his childhood in a very poignant way one can’t help but weep right along as one turns some of the pages because the pain bleeds ever so poignantly on those pages.

The book reads like one of those movies where the main character goes through tons of trials and tribulations but ends up finding a good Samaritan who’s willing to lend a hand somehow or rather. For instance, when Polela finally gets university registration fees, he goes through another testing period of his already bruised life. So testing that he almost drops out of school but as he is about to drift yet again, another good Samaritan mushrooms out of nowhere and offers him assistance so that he continues with and completes his studies.

This chilling memoir was once shortlisted for the Sunday Times Alan Paton award. Fans of family drama will definitely love and enjoy reading the book. They will smile, laugh, get angry and definitely cry more often as Polela takes them back to his utterly troubled past. And my goodness, because Polela doesn’t sugarcoat the truth to protect any of his family members it’s very difficult to put the book down. He lays bare the tragic abuse by his very own extended family as it happened and as he recalls it. It is a heart wrenching memoir and not just a story of horrific childhood that no human being who has gone through it should be expected to get over it. But it is also a story of facing “the demons” head on while searching for healing and forgiveness. The writing is fantastic and the author’s pain bleeds so heavily and poignantly you will definitely find yourself weeping at some of the events because of the candid manner in which they are written and told.

My Father My Monster is published by Jacana

Follow me on twitter @MrSkota
A Bantu in My Bathroom
Nomfundo Mtshweni

The foreword did a great job in preparing me for what "A Bantu in My Bathroom" is all about. Jonathan Jansen was basically saying to me, "Nomfundo, brace yourself... hold onto your seat; you're about to get into something that will make you cringe, get uncomfortable and have you deep in thought". Oh boy! What a rollercoaster ride it was; there were parts of the book that made me excited, feel bad, intrigued, scared as if I was going to wet my pants and laughing. The book is eye opening in the sense that it made me realize the things that we as South Africans are uncomfortable with, but furthermore, it showed me that we have a long way to go.

When Eusebius wrote this book he knew very well what he was getting himself into. In his introduction he says that "writing necessarily means putting a part of your private self out there for affirmation, criticism, engagement, ridicule, judgement." I strongly agree with this statement; his thoughts are out there for all to consume and judge.

I enjoyed reading the book despite the fact that I had to refer to my dictionary several times; something which makes sense given the fact that Eusebius is a political and social analyst, a talk show host, a debating champion and a columnist.

The book has three sections, namely race, sexuality and culture. In the first essay, which is part of the race section, Eusebius discusses an advert he came across in The Star while looking for accommodation where a lady we will refer to as Sally, was looking for a white person to share her home with. Out of curiosity Eusebius called her, and to his surprise, she was rather friendly and jolly; surely racists aren’t meant to be like this, they’re supposed to be angry people with Afrikaans accents. That is the stereotype one may think of but the lady went on to justify the reasons why she was looking for a white person to share her home with.

The essay I enjoyed the most is the last one titled, The Funny Revolution. I personally love laughing and I enjoy comedy, so this essay made me laugh as I found myself nodding and agreeing to the issues discussed. "Laughing is a coping mechanism for us; all of us enjoy seeing ourselves narrated in the arts; and comedy allows us, being a rainbow nation obsessed, to laugh in national unison."

The essay titled "Don’t you just wanna to try, my son? With a woman?" Wherein he discusses his experience as a gay guy coming out to his father. While his father was disappointed initially, their relationship has improved over the years; his father has now accepted his sexual orientation. This essay shows the things that gay people have to deal with in our society as they are discriminated against and their families could even turn against them.

I recommend the book to anyone interested in reading about South Africa and how we as a country address questions of race, sexuality and culture. Some questions that are covered in the book are: Can Blacks be racist? Why is our society so violent? A well-written book, it is bound to keep you engaged.

Nomfundo Mtshweni
Follow me on twitter @Doof_Star_07
I was in a vast, thrilled multitude listening to the old, old voice.

"The Supreme Being sent Tladi, the God of Thunder and Lightning, with six other gods and one goddess to subdue and settle the earth for people. With lightning He cleared the silence and the void, splitting the rocks, freeing the water and fire trapped within them so that it could flow and cover the whole earth. On retreating to form the oceans, the waters left behind them mountains and valleys, forests and rivers. And out of them came the crawling creatures."

"The goddess was O'Es! the Goddess of Wisdom and Prudence, ruler of the first house of Tladi. All the spirits were given tasks, but when the male spirits held their meetings they did not include O'Es! They said she was a woman and not serious about their work. What they did not know was that with her powers she could control the potent forces that now roamed the face of the earth."

"When the plans of the male spirits failed because of these forces they went back to the Supreme Being to ask for advice. The Supreme Being asked them where O'Es! was and they told him what they had done. Then the Supreme Being told them to go back and ask for O'Es!' forveness and to give her whatever she asked for. They relented and when O'Es! asked that they give her the same initiation that was kept for men, they initiated her into the secret knowledge and their plans succeeded."

The old, old voice trembled to a stop. There it rose again.

"That is how women also became healers, sages and rulers in the days of peace, progress and prosperity. Until another lawless man, in an age of confusion, usurped the throne from Ka-Talanta, a priestess of Mphatia!atsane, the morning star. Then the potent forces of immoderation where let loose again. Our decline soon followed, and strangers with strange customs became our overlords. The forgetting began and we have been forgetting ever since."

The ancient voice now took on a timbre that it had lacked during the lamentations.

"The balance must be restored," it declared. "Pono! Restore us! Restore the eternal cycle! Restore the Ancestral Way! Show us the way back to the stars!"

"Through the womb of a woman all people pass," Pono responded, "so it is a woman who knows the person best suited for leadership."

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I don't doubt nor challenge for a brisk moment the mysteries and complexities of the life we're living in, but for me to mentally, physically or otherwise submit to the idea that someone who breathes the same air as I do may have a certain supernatural power, or a certain control over my life is preposterous and insane. I know, a lot of people get offended when I touch on witchcraft, on the illogic of the phenomenon, or why it never stands as a plausible 'offense' in the court of law. People believe eccentric things out there, perhaps everything we do or say is somehow a facet of belief, perhaps underlying our decisions, or beneath our habits, lifestyles or ideologies is a robust belief in something deeper; that all that we do is but offspring of what we believe. Food for thought?

I ain't got front, even as a kid, I never jumped up and down the bed at the idea that 'umhlonyane' would cure my flu, or of those other BLACK and scary herbal mixtures in 1L coke bottles that literally tasted like instant poison that my mother brought from her 'clinical witch doctor' from Idutywa, supposedly to cure all our illnesses ("uzifon'zvera"). 1. They tasted like the mud in hell (with all the herbs that were even harder to swallow) 2. I really just wanted penicillin or Panado or something. 3. I was a kid and didn't really have a say in the matter, these were forced into me. Also, I was never fascinated by my mother spraying (holy?) whatever 'water' around the yard before dark to protect her house from people flying around in what is referred to as "iKetsi!" (LOL ...In retrospect the fact that she believed in those (and probably still does) is a bit cute!). Look, it's 2012, a lot of the things that may have been mysteries in 1972 have perfect logical explanations now. I mean just last week Saturday (5th May) we experienced what meteorologists call a "Super Moon", where the moon "appeared 30% bigger and 40% brighter than usual." Now please take a second and imagine what that phenomenon would be blamed on in some rural neighbourhood in Limpopo where people don't even have electricity? ...don't mind that...imagine who? The old lady who'd been suspected of witchcraft perhaps? I don't know - you figure it out!

Read me carefully I beg of you, my agitation is not against the old people that actually believe and practice rituals to prevent witches from trickling through their houses like Santa Clause on Christmas eve, I don't mind the brooms and the Ketsi, the "eetations" (I don't know- what else am I supposed to call 'iDiso?') and all, ALL WITHOUT TANGIBLE PROOF MIND YOU, what I don't understand mostly is us (the youth), and our attachment to their ideas! What the hell are we still talking about them for, why the hell are they still the first things in our minds when shit hits the fan for? Before you go crying to your mother (knowing perfectly well what her recommendation will be) what did the doctor say, huh? Think about it, let it swirl around your head and make sense of it slowly, yes...what did your employer say he was firing you for? Do you not have an alcohol problem? Were you falsely accused? Do you know about AA? Before you assumed witchcraft because your child failed a grade, did you monitor your child's work? Do you know about dyslexia? Forget the "pig" lice, did you check the cleanliness of the bed you sleep in? Might you perhaps have slept with someone who had the
borne in us. For the most part, we are creatures, hence their ideas and beliefs are imitations using their wisdom and their caution. We would have survived life somehow succeeded using their ethos, and we too, in our paths, will have believe, they will have made their beliefs known with everything they know and passed on to their children, young brothers and sisters now. Our parents, they will have taught and conditioned us with everything they know and believe, they will have made their beliefs ours and we too, in our paths, will have somehow succeeded using their ethos, we would have survived life-taking situations using their wisdom and their caution, hence their ideas and beliefs are borne in us. For the most part, we are their clones! The point I'm trying to make is that today, we are the spearheads of our lives, our families' lives and maybe our parent's lives too; we are to our children, young brothers and sisters now what our parents were to us then, meaning, as swiftly and vastly changing as the world is today, we have a responsibility to captain these ships safely ashore!

With no special effects or anything, and no dramatization or whatever, whoever or rather, wherever this topic has come up around me (mostly around people my age) in the past, the general consensus at the end has always been that 'people know that these things (witchcraft) exists amidst their lives and amongst their people, but they don't jump to conclude them as the main or only problem'

Let me explain: whereas in the past the first thing people would have done would be to run to a witch doctor for 'immunization' when they couldn't get a job for 3 consecutive years, assuming and believing that there was no other problem than that of someone bewitching them, today they would first check the jobs they apply for, check how the market is behaving, check their application documentation and methods, practice and re-practice their interviewing skills, try bribery and if all don't work...then maybe on year number 5 go to the witch doctor. This is fair and personally I share the same sentiments. We cannot switch something we believe off or on like a light bulb, belief is a gradual process of understanding, seeing and knowing, you don't wake up the next day and believe in something else. Perhaps our parents had no other explanations, perhaps because of technological challenges, but we do. Perhaps witchcraft was not as vague as it is today, I don't know. I just wish we don't fuel the fire as easily as we do sometimes, I wish that sometimes we think things through before blaming witchcraft. Yes, before calling your parents and causing their blood pressure to go up about a recurring dream you had, chill for a bit...let some time pass, it may happen that like all dreams - they are fictional too! The world's tough as it is, let's not compound our lives with unnecessary gibberish, and remember, at all times, children record everything you say or do - be an impact in their future and condition them as less as possible.

I must admit too, out of all the times I've discussed or debated witchcraft, I have been insensitive to other people's beliefs, crushing and 'leftist' idea in my path. One writer wrote: "change emits from the inside and spreads to the outside" perhaps I needed to see and feel the situations from the 'inside.' Like bees, people sting when they're cornered, as a result, I have been labeled a witch more times that I can recall while aggressively trying to 'free people's minds.' Truth is, in whatever I write (well one could argue otherwise LOL) I try to make people think different, myself included. We cannot limit our thinking due to ancient philosophy, the world is changing out there, and fast. I understand the detriment of imposing my ideas on other people is wrong, but the one idea I'm shameless to impose is that of a bit of perspective, that of unorthodox thought.

Lastly, go home, have that ritual, if for example 4 specialist doctors don't know what is wrong with you perhaps the witch doctors may, perhaps the elders might provide discourse, no one person knows everything.
Faith Emasculated
Sanele Zim

The mind of a man cannot be quantified, it cannot be contained, it cannot be predicted nor tamed. You cannot describe it in literal terms because no words in spoken language can suitably define, the mind of a man.

You cannot objectify it, nor comprehend its faculties. We cannot fully comprehend the mind that drives it and moves it. It doesn’t grow weary nor does it grow faint. Men don’t kiss-and-tell what their mind thinks. They don’t forget where they’ve stopped to pause for a moment’s disturbance. It wonders and roams wildly for the next thrill.

That is why today, we lack men who are men enough to admit and accept that being a man is nothing short of being a custodian of the land of wild dreams. Have you ever paused and asked yourself why all the greatest inventors, philosophers, scientists, theorists, and even biblical prophets and priests are men?

In as much as women have physical, emotional and psychological tools that men don’t have, the same is true with men. Yes, women are God-chosen baby carriers, their emotional equipment is more advanced and/or developed, and they possess the physical softness that is crucial to nurturing, men also have traits as unique.

We are stronger, physically and emotionally, please do not confuse strength with development. I’m tempted to entertain the feminists but I cannot, I will not. I’m treading in their domain, albeit as a passer-by. My point is a man is equipped with a rather loose mind. Galloping wildly in the land of wild dreams. Forever seeking the next thrill. He is fascinated by the undiscovered, the unconquered and the unmade.

You see, God creates, but man makes. I repeat: God creates, but man makes. God created a man, but what makes a man is himself! God created fatherhood, but what makes a man a father is himself. God cannot force a man to be a father, even though he can have children.

God, as creator of man cannot force a man to be a man. If a man decides that one day he is going to wake up and start being a homosexual, God cannot stop that. Homosexuality is a man’s invention. Always seeking new adventures, always thinking of another invention. A man’s mind cannot be contained nor tamed. It cannot be predicted nor described in literary words. It wonders wild and always hungry for the next thrill. God-created, man-made man.

The mind of a man always changes, always shifts from one point to another. It is unstable, unlike a woman’s. I hate parallels and comparative speech! When the Bible says, “God created man in His own image,” it meant exactly that. Imagery, what is imagery? I never understood this until I stopped holding my mind back and released it to wonder free. God created the mind but I made it. I suppressed it. I tried to contain it. I tried to quantify its processes. I tried to make it succumb to society’s dictates. Man-made man in a man-made society.

You see, God created the earth, but man made it. We shaped it, modified it, divided it, regulated it, defined it. Imagery! We made the earth to be what we think, an extension of our thoughts, a product of our wondering and adventurous minds. Seeking the next thrill...

When God created man, what did He have in mind? Was He bored? Was He forced by any existing circumstance? Imagery. Wondering and adventurous mind... seeking the next thrill... God had to satisfy Himself about all the “dreams” He had. He had to do something about His creativity. The thought of allowing such a powerful mind idle was too much for Him to bear. He could not just be God alone. He needed to show Himself what He could create with His powerful mind.

Imagery. Look at yourself. You will see God. “I will make man in my own image...”

Wondering wildly and adventurous... seeking the next thrill... Waiting for an era to be ushered in is like waiting for a train that just left the platform. The mind functions in the future. Never in the present nor the past. You cannot contain what your mind seeks to say or do. Forget about following the band-wagon. You cannot put it in suspension. It is like a bulldog that forever wants to break free. You can chain it for years but once it is unchained, the chase begins.

What a man needs right now is to stop entertaining vanity. Being dragged into this world’s useless quarrels, homosexuality, feminism, religion, politics, and such. A man says his point and moves on. Seeking that which his mind is after.

I’m vocal in everything, but an activist of none. My mind is occupied with my wildest dreams. I’m sitting here writing this, but my mind is long finished. In my mind’s eye I know how this will end. In my mind’s eye I know what follows. I’m seeing it in the future. I’m the master of time and space. My mind is already busy with next projects. I’m seeing it in the future. I’m quantum leaping from time-zone to time-zone. I’m unstable, I’m a God-created, man-made man.
We are born with & because of our defiled karma, it's not pure otherwise we wouldn't be here, that's what is meant in Christianity as a "natural sin". Nirvana decompose karma. Whatever you identify yourself with will control you but you control whatever you dis-identify with. Jesus said we must be "poor in spirit", in English, be identified to nothing. That's nirvana, that's Loka, that's heaven. Meditation is a way to nirvana.

If a Buddhist die does he/she goes to Christian's hell? No.
Is those people who came & died before Jesus went to hell? No.
If you never heard of Jesus & his teachings in your lifetime you will go to hell when you die? No.
Then what? Where do Buddhist go after they die?

If a Buddhist fails to enter nirvana, the pinnacle of self & happens to die, he/she will be preceded by karma to his/her own rebirth. It can get to as worse, being demoted to being reborn as an animal, an insect even.
In African knowledge we learn not to kill any rare creatures that enters a house because it might happen to be our forefathers. If you kill it, someone in the family dies.

When Africans do their Sangoma rituals, they stab an animal with a spear after chanting, singing long mourning songs & letting that animal inhale strong but not dire incense. It's an auxiliary to that animal to be rebirthed as a human, so to attain nirvana thenafter.

Unlike reincarnation in Hinduism, rebirth acknowledges the existence of ancestors & recycled spirits respectively.
When a spirit is rebirthed it doesn't enters (although a flesh manifest from a spirit) a body to its maximum "density". Some percentages are left behind but the majority is experiencing the same experience as before death again. For instance, using a burning candle to alight another candle & you have two burning candles of a same fire, you can have many candles from a same fire, that's how God was multiplied, yet one.

Human rebirth is a unique in that it's a rare opportunity for the development of the mind & the exhibition of compassion. I personally don't think that Jesus will return because he had no bad/fatal karma. His karma was so pure so it can't knock him back to this dream.

Whilst most Christians, with expectations die then wait for the judgement day to be resurrected. Buddhists will be at nirvana.

When we talk of seduction, addictions etc, in Buddhism they don't practice sex in monkdom, just like nunnery in Christian Catholics.

Buddha said "A practice of sex won't end a desire for it". So instead of curbing their mind from sex, they rather not have sex at all.

Sex is natural, one can think, it's not possible to refrain yourself from it. But you can if you're willing. You control yourself if you're not identified to yourself.

Dalai Lama said "It's nice to scratch yourself when you itches but it's best not to itch at all".
Gluttony is a sin in Christianity, that's nothing but a warning to an addiction.

You become a slave to an addiction & that's a prohibition to nirvana.

~That's an end to my trilogy. Ramasa in the city of T.M.P.
Blingforce. Godcore!
Healing for the Broken Woman
Adele Mudau

That moment when you discover that the man you loved and trusted has been unfaithful to you. That excruciating pain when it feels like your heart has been crushed and your world as you know it has been pulled from right under your feet. That feeling of helplessness as the pain begins to rise up from your heart and into your throat and the tears start streaming down. That moment when a man walks away from you; ill-treats you or chooses another woman over you. That defining moment...

It shouldn’t be the case but for so many of us, this and other moments leave scars that run so deep that we adopt and suffer from low self-esteem for most of our lives. That moment has the potential to be such a defining moment because it questions everything you have known, felt or believed of yourself. It invalidates you as a woman. It declassifies you as a woman who is lovable and worthy.

But does it really? It’s a matter of perception and choice. Things like these have a way of making a woman feel less worthy and special than she really is, but no one can make you feel inferior or less deserving without your permission. I have learnt that if anyone makes me feel any less than what God says I am then it’s because I have allowed them to. It’s a matter of perception and choice! There is nothing more sad that an amazingly beautiful woman who doesn’t know her worth.

People will hurt us, people will talk falsely about us, people will betray us and walk away from us; they will forsake and treat us like we never meant anything to them. Our first instincts will be to doubt ourselves, to blame ourselves and conclude that we were never worthy of them. Instead our first instincts should be look up to the One on whom our confidence should be built.

A close friend and I recently went really deep into this conversation after we both admitted that we had a low self-esteem. It isn’t something that just springs up out of nowhere during our childhood and sometimes the seasons of life can bring to the fore underlying feelings of insecurity and doubt in a woman. There are seasons of rejection, seasons of discouragement and disappointment, seasons of fear and heartbreak.

A failed relationship can often have this effect on a woman. As humans and most importantly women, we tend to seek assurance from the people who are closest to us. In the early years it is usually friends and family, and as we grow we tend to seek this assurance from the men in our lives.

I have always struggled with a low self-esteem and for much of my life, this allowed the enemy to plant seeds of doubt and insecurity in my heart. What people thought was a girl being shy was actually someone who doubted herself and thought herself unworthy and unlovable. I always felt that I had to prove myself. I needed to be pretty and well-dressed, smart and like-able. I always questioned and second-guessed myself. I lived in “What if’s” and “If only’s”. When something in my life wasn’t going right I would tumble into the depths of depression, reminded daily of my failures and inadequacies.

I allowed my feelings to dictate who I was in Christ; Like a wave of the sea driven by my insecurities and tossed by external forces and circumstances (James 1:6). Over the years experiences in relationships added to the doubt and it eventually deteriorated until I turned into some kind of a recluse who avoided social events and gatherings of all kinds. I avoided relationships with people for fear of rejection and being found wanting. This is probably hard to understand and why no one ever knew. It’s hard to explain but any woman suffering from the same thing will relate. It was almost as if I avoided being in public places in case I was found out. In case someone realised how totally unworthy and unlovable I am. In fact, it felt like everywhere I went I was the least most interesting or lovable person. Looking back most of it was all in my head but God had to lead me to a place where my worth and value were really questioned and He was the only answer.

With everything I tied my self-confidence and worth to taken away, I had a lot of questions about who I was, what was what I meant, for what purpose I was created and what my value was. In each question I asked, God came up the only answer. I am who I am because He is.

I am still on the journey to total rest and assurance in Christ, however my confidence is rebuilt and my sense of worth restored, it doesn’t matter what people around me say or seem to be thinking – I know now that I am wonderfully and fearfully made.

This is something that God has been ministering to me over the last few weeks, not only for my sake but I believe also to help my friend and other women overcome their self-esteem issues which are nothing but lies from the enemy, designed to make us doubt our worth and purpose not only in the world but in the Kingdom of God.

The enemy always uses the people around us – albeit unknowingly – to plant seeds of doubt in our lives. He lays snares for us and he counts on us getting ourselves caught and entangled in the stubborn weeds that grow in our hearts from the seeds he has planted. It is so easy to let words and actions have a lasting effect in our lives, but I have learnt not to allow negative words to take root in my heart because the only fruit those seeds bear are doubt, fear, worry and insecurity.

If like me you have battled with doubt and insecurity most of your life, the most important thing you need to know is that for whatever question you may have God is the only answer. Your worth and value can only be found in losing yourself in Christ (Matthew 10:39). In losing yourself in Christ, you will find yourself. You will find your worth and your purpose. You will find that you are wonderfully and fearfully made.

In fact you are purposefully made, made for a specific purpose and season. Why do we feel the need to seek assurance from people? What do they know about our worth? Why do we seek assurance from our men when all the assurance we have is Christ on the cross. Why do we yearn for the approval of man when Christ’s death on the cross is our seal of approval from God? His blood says we are worth it.

His grace says “I made you purposefully, I know every hair on your head and everything about you, I know why I made you the

Blog
I have learned to embrace it and dress but I have come to accept my height and often fantasised about as a teenager my height for example. I cannot take a changing. 

We are created in His own glorious image, therefore there is nothing missing and nothing broken. The world has created an image of what is beautiful in a woman and like the Egyptians we have followed and adored these “carved god’s and images”. The world has dictated the perfect colour, proportions that a woman should be built to in order for her to be called beautiful. Anything outside of that is not seen as beautiful or worthy. As children of God we should know the truth, we should know what our worth is built on and as women we should understand what makes a woman beautiful - The kind of incorruptible beauty (1 Peter 3:4) that doesn’t fade even with age. My legs might not look like a “supermodel’s” but they are perfect and they come from God. He moulded me into the image I am. Not every woman will look like the world’s image of beauty, the growth comes when you learn to love and embrace yourself and every aspect of yourself. There are things that we can change if we are not happy with them, for example if a woman is not happy with her weight then she needs the strength and motivation to change it. Weight is a temporary effect of worldly actions. As long as your loss of weight is not tied to your sense of worth and as long as your desire to change that thing about yourself does not lead to obsession and your confidence is not directly and solely dependant on that thing changing.

The things we cannot change, we need to accept and embrace. I cannot change my height for example. I cannot take a few inches off my height; it’s something I often fantasised about as a teenager but I have come to accept my height and I have learned to embrace it and dress to flatter it. Every now and then I have “Aha” moments when I really thank God because my height has come in handy. To a man or a very confident woman, all these things might seem trivial and the pain might seem self-inflicted but to the woman suffering from a low self-esteem it feels like bondage she cannot break free from. A low self-esteem remains a complex issue and for men it is particularly hard to understand. When you are or have been in a relationship where you got hurt and betrayed, trust in the other person is not always the only thing you lose.

That kind of betrayal breeds insecurity not just within the context of the relationship, but in the woman’s ability to be comfortable and assured in her own skin. The reason for this is because our confidence is built on the man loving us, we have left our assurance and approval to a man but God is not a man that He should lie or betray us. He is the same today, yesterday and tomorrow. He loves us and is loyal to us regardless of the season or our mistakes. Our confidence should be built on Him.

In the Garden of Eden when God delivered sentence to Adam and Eve, His words to Eve were: “Your desire shall be for your husband and he shall rule over you.” I believe this is why most women tend to base their approval of their own selves on what their boyfriends and partners say or think about them. It is the reason why we so desperately seek attention, affection and approval from the men in our lives. It is the same reason why our self-esteem suffers such a huge blow when the men in our lives hurt us. It’s the reason why we get so consumed in our relationships that we lose all sense of self.

When Jesus died on that cross He freed us from that curse, He made a way for us out of that bondage. Our confidence should be built on our Rock and Redeemer, our loving and merciful God. He is the one true God. A loving, just and gracious God. Our confidence should not be based on our looks, works or anything we have done. It should be based on who He is. Beauty fades (Proverbs 31:30), people sometimes fail and fall short of God’s glory - what will your confidence be built on then?

If your confidence and worth are tied to worldly things and people, when things go wrong it becomes easy to fall into the depths of despair and insecurity; but when your confidence, value and worth are tied to our constant Rock, you will not be unstable like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. (James 1:6). God has not given us an unstable mind or a spirit of fear, but He has given us a spirit of love, power and a sound mind. You are God’s own masterpiece, His own perfect creation. “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” 1 Peter 2:9. The darkness is the place where the enemy wants you – deep in doubt, fear, insecurity and low self-worth. God has called us out of that darkness into His wonderful light – a place of assurance, security, love, power, courage and strength. When all we focus on are our inadequacies and physical flaws or what others may think about us, we block out the light He has called us into and instead cast a shadow of doubt in our hearts and minds. We should find our assurance in Him, we should build our confidence on Him. Self-confidence is only as relevant as the self it depends on, but God-confidence is built on a God who is the same every day. He is constant and He never changes. When you move from a place of low self-esteem or having self- and works based confidence to having God-confidence your relationships be it with family, friends or lovers will be stable and more sustainable. When you are so assured and complete in Christ, your relationships will be healthier because you no longer depend on another person to complete you or give meaning to who you are. You worth and meaning are in WHOSE you are.

Love and Blessings Adele

Follow me on twitter @AdeleMudau
Oh my, it is rapidly approaching that time of the year when I wish that I could crawl back under the rock from which came from. Yes, Christmas is almost certainly upon us and I don’t like that one bit. I don’t know if I can articulate my sentiments all at once. There are just too many murky and underlying facets to my deep seated dislike for Christmas.

Now we all have our own intimate cock and bull stories that make us cozy up to this day. We follow the with some zeal and dare I say, obsessively. Well, for most of my life, I’ve chosen to step back and watch this asinine and delusional spectacle from a safe distance. Believe me though, no distance apart from being at the epicenter of it all is safe enough. Unless you’re present at the orgy and vigorously tucking into the madness head first, you’re gonna be looked at kinda strange.

Well lucky me, cos I really don’t have any hang-ups at being looked at in a weird manner. The world is, after all, a pretty weird and bizarre place, in case you hadn’t noticed. Frankly, I don’t much care about Christmas any more than I do for instance, care about the mating habits of the lesser spotted Brenton butterfly. I really don’t. But on the other hand, if you’re calling me up to celebrate J.C’s birthday, then I’m there like a bear, in red underwear. See I get the notion of birthdays and their accompanying parties. I’ve been invited to enough parties to safely deduce that I know how to make myself useful, or utterly useless, which ever impulse begs at such gatherings.

Sooo, dot dot dot, if you’re telling me that J.C’s turning all one two thousand and eleven years old, then I’m gonna take my hat off and toast to the honour of the Ancient and sentient spirit. I will not eve bring up the fact that 1973 of his birthdays have been posthumous and thus in Him in absentia. Cos I love me some Jesus and however it’s going down, you’ll find me back to back with God’s Son like the Kappa logo. Now I’m not too sure what image some of us mere mortals find me back to back with God’s Son like the Kappa logo. Now I’m not too sure what image some of us mere mortals have when it comes to the life and times of the Messiah. I just know enough to know that it’s pretty warped and twisted. As a result, a lot of people utter some downright ignorant and infantile things under the guise of coming to J.C’s rescue. Really now, like God’s Son needs some socially dumbed down, conditioned and programmed tool to come to the defence of his honour. Hellooooo, the Man is God’s Son!

The guy that I do wanna talk about however, now that we got that out the way, is the impostor. That stooge and stand in guy. How on earth have the so called thinking and reasonable folk been sold into falling for such utter baldrash? Who in their right minds would ditch the true Messiah in favour of that pot bellied Coca Cola agent and his reindeer? Santa Claus is the bane of my existence and he bears all the hallmarks of a kiddie fiddler. He knows exactly what children like and uses that unbekomingly annoying laugh to win their parents hearts over. And like every other paedophile, he always manages to convince the little ones to get on his lap, without fail!

Now all these Christmas and Festive Season shenanigans met me at all the wrong times of my upbringing. I am so utterly thankful to my parents that I wasn’t raised by the idiot box. The first eight years of my life were total bliss and television free. We read many a book, took walks into nature, went to the beach and told stories. Well all of that changed when we subscribed to the tube and Pandora’s box was thrown hooker thighs wide open. Suddenly there was this guy, this old man and his reindeer from the North Pole who was going to make my Christmas experience Merrier than ever before. I had too many questions on my mind to swallow this story hook line and sinker. Oh but the looks I got from classmates whenever I spoke about my disillusion. And the comments that flew? That was all I needed to know that asking any further questions would be risking my youthful well-being.

Well none of that made any of the questions vanish though. If anything, I was plagued and inundated by even more questions, in my quest to get to the truth. But there was nobody to ask, that was just plain dangerous and equally stupid, I’d surmised. I mean, here we had this guy, his reindeer and every kid in the world... And somehow he still forgot to give some of the neighbourhood kids their Christmas toys. I just thought that they must have been extra bad when out of sight, while all along Santa and his cronies had kept tabs on them. Not quite, in fact very far from that my friends. For one, I could never understand how a man with such a colossal waistline could get down a chimney we never had, without collapsing the roof even. And if he did, then how come the dogs never raised an alarm if there was a stranger on the roof? How come no neighbourhood watch or patrol cops ever saw this obese geriatric or mistook him for a burglar, on Christmas Eve? And the reindeer, where the heck does one park them? All these questions and no forthcoming answers were getting just a bit too much for my young and tender mind.

Fortunately, and not long after my ninth birthday, my mother just came out with it and told me that Father Christmas was all make belief. Now most kids would have been crushed by such a revelation and realization. But this came as a massive relief to my overly burdened and curiously laden psyche. Well I’ve had awkward Christmases since then, but my innermost peace of mind has been pretty much safe and intact. So once again everything duly returned to the arena of fun and games again, until I heard of the Easter Bunny. So there I was once again, trying to flesh another scenario in my tiny nine year old mind: “ Ulm, oh-kay, let’s get this straight; so these bellicose Romans abduct God’s Son, torture him real bad and nail him to a cross. And all along we’re being sent on a wild goose chase, to collect Easter eggs that a bunny rabbit laid!” If you would have honestly asked me, I would have told you that this was getting all too macabre and a tad bit Anti-Christ for my liking. I’m not even going to attempt making sense of the tooth fairy and that equally mindless St.Valentines ritual.

Now that I’m old enough to think for myself without any fear of society’s though police, I realize just how much we’ve been lied to about almost everything, at every single turn! And not too
many people are into the habit of questioning the motives behind these bizarre and perverted mass cult practices. Could it be that I’m asking too much to simply with God’s Son a happy 1973rd posthumous birthday? You know the good depart young from the face of this planet, and my Man J.C was no exception.

Being as enlightened and as advanced as Jesus was, he must have gone to great lengths to ease one existential crisis after another. It didn’t aid his cause one bit that he was surrounded fearful, ignorant and deeply suspicious people either. That must have just cause Jesus many a sleepless night. I cannot even begin to imagine all the anguish that Jesus was put through in His lifetime while existing among mere mortals. So do believe me when I say that all I wanna do this Christ Mas (And as always, I’ll always slip some worldly words of wisdom for the Messiah and tell Him that people have become exponentially more violent and blood lusting beings since back in the day. In this strange and hazardous world, the right to bear arms seems a sensible and rational decision and I always pray that J.C returns with a Magnum 357 and Desert Eagle, hostler to the hip, as well as a Colt 45 cos that firearm did a lot to make all men equal. So don’t be asking me any funny questions in the days leading up to JC’s birthday people. Y’all feel free to party with the paedophile in a red jumpsuit, I’m happy to be down for Jesus!

Follow me on twitter @1YANGAwakening

Looking back at my life, I’ve always been what I call a “Spiritual seeker”. I’ve always been interested in the workings of God and universal truths. As a toddler, I was my Grandmother’s regular church companion. I was so great at this, that I was able to sing Lizalis’idinga Lakho (a Xhosa hymn) from beginning to end, by the time I was three years old.

I was born into the Anglican Church, but grew up Catholic. I attended a Catholic high school, where we went to mass at least four times a week and went to confession regularly. By the time I was 15, I had decided that I would become a nun. My parents would not hear of it, and they told me that I could decide to become a nun after I turned 21, that I was too young to marry Jesus at 15.

Well, am I glad that they refused now! My idea of spirituality and my relationship with the Divine has changed a lot since then. I have examined other religions like Buddhism, Islam, as well as what people call the “New Age” religion. I’ve also examined what I call Spirituality.

I personally have a problem with religion. Maybe it had to do with my rebellious nature and my general dislike of organisations and being forced to con-form to someone else’s idea of what is right. I have not been religious now for many years, but I believe that my spirituality and my relationship with the divine have become deeper and more fulfilling. What I believe and know about my relationship to God, self and all of life has become more profound.

I now experience a God who is part of me. One who lives in me, as me and through me, in a practical way. I now experience a God who has no expectations of me beyond me knowing that I am unconditionally loved and approved of. I now know that my highest purpose is to be joyful, not to aspire to some man-made idea of perfection.

My experience of spirituality has strengthened my self esteem, and helped me to know without a shadow of a doubt that my existence on this plane means that I have my own place here, and that means that whatever I authentically am is perfect and belongs. I now know that I have guidance and it inside me. I have all the answers within myself.

I have found within my own brand of spirituality a God that I can truly love and trust. Not one that I fear and need to please. I have found the freedom to be and do what brings me joy. Most of all, I have learned to be in control of my own happiness.

My spirituality grows each single day, as I am taught by nature, clients, friends, family and various other teachers. My gospel is Joy, and my church is life.

Follow me on twitter @TembisaMakaba

Losing my Religion
Tembisa Makaba

Blog
The Best and the Worst thing to me is Jesus
Shane

A week of complex emotions can drive one to seek solace, mine today residing in putting these words on paper to make these emotions change their vibration. To be honest I hate writing, it takes a lot out of me. I wish I was one of those people that will feel a sense of relief after doing it. But I am doing it nonetheless, don’t know why but I am, bear with me.

The topic is above is exhausted right? Blah blah Jesus that Jesus this, I believe in Him I don’t believe in Him blah blah blah. Who needs a repeat of why you don’t believe in God, why He is fictional or why He isn’t. We’ve heard them before, all compelling, some factual some gibberish some enlightening. Either way they remain central to our general discourse of things unreal and real, We can’t help being drawn to them because we are curious by nature and we always want to know more, debate more and challenge ourselves more and those around us.

Now to Jesus, I believe in Him, I thought I should replace Jesus with God but I am comfortable with Jesus. You see we are taught for you to go to God you have to pass through Jesus so I’ll stick to Him since he is likely everyone’s first introduction to a higher power. So here it goes the Son exist, this is based more on personal experience rather than empirical evidence so you can dispute it if you want or argue the merit of the word exist. But this is not about proving Him or disproving the theory, it is rather about Him, Jesus.

Now as this has been rather an emotionally traumatising week I had a few uncomfortable truths I had to face, I had to remember I know. Firstly let me mention I am not religious, not that there is nothing wrong with that but I want you to know where I am coming from, actually I can’t recall when last I read a bible but I know the last time I did it it was for superficial reasons, reasons that will make you not see heaven.

Church attendance is dismal, I’m sure I am no longer in the records; I’ll probably be buried by a 2nd year intern priest. But Jesus has been fundamental in my life, He has been my everything and my nothing, my beginning and end, my morning star (I don’t know what that means, the star part), He is.

Now I can’t recall when exactly I was introduced to Him, I guess you grow up going to church and He is there, all you have known and all you have believed in. My family is not particularly religious but believers at heart. So church was never shoved down our throats as children, nor was God actually, one of the things I will forever be grateful for. Because of that I could take my time getting comfortable with this idea of a Son of the Creator.

So I went to church and did the routine, Sunday school to confirmation. I was never part of any church committee, just never had the desire, serving the Lord that way wasn’t me, well its not suppose to be about you but I was never a ‘group church’ person. I usually sat a quarter away from the door even, I was comfortable there, never understood the need to be up close and personal with the pulpit. Well as you might know Anglican churches have their own customs that can make church rather dull and boring, I enjoyed the preaching and praising (and drinking the blood of Jesus) part.

But I was never a good attendee, but you would probably see me December 25th and on Good Friday so as to not feel guilty. Fast forward a few years later, a lot has happened since then, I rediscovered Jesus and had to a lot of faith thrust on me like oxygen to a lifeless body. I knew He was there, I didn’t think He was there, I knew it, there in the breeze and in the storm, man was I relieved, boy was I happy to know I had someone to cry to and to sing to. Like all new relationship it was full of butterflies and everything sweet and spicy, the journey was full of rhetoric and full of answers, all at once, it was fulfilling, enlightening and full of love. Without that journey I don’t think I would be were I am spiritually, don’t think I would have survived my early twenties with a clear head.

I was given the answers and I liked them, they gave me comfort, told me I was moving in the right direction. Like all things I questioned of course and some things were hard to contest but the main questions were asked and answers given, I grew and I loved the Lord, still do. Like all relationships we hit a rough patch, I lost touch with that connection, through small and great

Which brings me to today, Jesus was the best and worst thing to happen to me, He made me know there was more to life than meets the eye, he gave me an unearting of desire and aspiration. Yet He blinded me to the world as it is. The world of things not going your way, the world of heartache and unexplained phenomena happening on a daily basis. Not that He said once you truly believe these things will go away but the illusion of things will get better was given and sold to me, I bought it. We all have our personal Jesus. I don’t think we serve the same one; our level of understanding of Him differs as much as our experiences with Him, we may fall under the same religion but we don’t serve the same Jesus. So the one sold to me was someone’s else’s, He was Jesus as he/she saw Him, as he/she related to Him and that’s where it went south. You see things don’t get better, they are just what they are, and they are one painful beautiful experience. That’s my Jesus, that’s how he showed up in my life, in one cold loving smack.
He wasn’t kind at all, he made me aware that I had to wake my mind to my spirit, to my soul. To stop and realise the questions already had answers. I just chose not to see them because it will make everything so confusing, make me vulnerable to life (in a good way). So Jesus was the best thing to happen to me, without Him I won’t know these more to Him, the is something I dare say bigger than Him, not me finding Him but me finding myself, my remembrance. Some may say its one and the same thing but religiously yes, but spiritually no. Me and Jesus are One yes, you find yourself through finding Him yes, yet you are separate at another level, he has had His earthly spiritual journey, you are still alive living yours. You are separate.

I don’t want to get hectic, we have all heard the spiritual stuff before, I don’t want to dwell on them, we have our own way of processing this life and why it happens, the love and fear dichotomy that exist within our sanctuary, Jesus was my Alpha and Omega, He was the beginning of knowledge and the end of it.

Jesus was the best thing to happen to me and the worst.

Follow me on twitter @MsShaneSekano

There is no doubt that human beings are complex; so complex that if you had to study the behaviour of two siblings from the same household raised under the same circumstances, it is guaranteed in your findings you will notice how much their personalities differ. In some cases they may even be complete opposites.

This aroused my curiosity. Sure we are all unique, but this did not explain much at least to me anyway.

I went on a quest to uncover the mystery surrounding human behaviour. In the process I familiarised myself with astrology. That was my aha moment!

Which led me to the conclusion: personality= Environment+ upbringing+ astrology.

When we are born, the planetary positions influence our birth charts and personalities. There are 12 signs in the zodiac, the first being Aries and last is Pisces. The sun signs are the general part of astrology (horoscopes); each and everyone of us has almost all the signs in their birth charts.

The signs are divided into elements, Water - Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces
Earth - Virgo, Taurus, Capricorn
Fire - Aries, Leo, Sagittarius
Air - Libra, Gemini, and Quality: Cardinal, Fixed and Mutable.

Astrology goes on to explain the Rule of Attraction. Projection. A man with Venus in Aries will be attracted to a feisty, tomboyish, bold, blunt women. A woman with Mars in Aquarius will be attracted to intelligent, and detached men who are emotionally strong.

Learning about astrology can help you understand yourself and people in general better.

If you too, would like to feed your curiosity, or would like to relate better with your friends, colleagues, children, parents, partner and even to understand your boss.

Please submit the dates of birth, where possible the time, and the place of birth too.

Looking forward to hear from you!

comment below with your requests for romance compatibility; state clearly which star sign belongs to a man and which to a woman.

Enquiries are also welcome.

mail me augur.bode@gmail.com
I believe that a long time ago, way before our ancestors’ time, people saw then what I feel strongly manifests today still, that there is something ‘out there’ ‘bigger’ than us humans. You don’t have to look far, neither do you have to think that hard, it’s power is real and beyond human comprehension. We know it is the sole custodian of both good and bad luck; it takes away your loved ones or gives you the best gifts life ever could. We don’t have a calendar for when it will deliver, so we wait and take to heart what the elders teach us about being alive, about peace and about patience as pertaining to living better lives. While most call it God, some refer to it as Allah, some Buddha, fate or destiny, some refer to it as the ancestors, some think it’s the human mind, a fragment of the ‘untapped’ 90% of the brain that scientists claim we don’t use. Some don’t bother to think that hard, for they know that whether you know it or not, it has monopoly over everything on earth.

Whether we believe or not, we understand fundamentally that regardless of whatever teachings we master, it will do as it pleases, as it sees fit, whether or not we understand its plan. Yet, ironically, we watch the 7:30pm news on SABC 1, wait 29 minutes to hear Thabile Makaphela lie to our faces about what the mysterious skies will do ‘tomorrow’, basing her theories on some half-assed studies, knowing very damn well that her fables always end up with our monies, through some super organized channel, in her pockets, her mangers’ pockets and the whole entire team of oblivious perpetrators. They know this too, the perpetrators, for some of them put some nice looking white boy with a foreign accent and a skinny suit, pack him up with the latest gadgets and technologies and teach him how to lie to us about the weather, alluding us all by the timeless cheaters of the mind, materials. Truth is, we don’t know why it rains, we don’t know why the sun shines, or what the sun is, and our understanding of these ‘objects’ is purely based on our experiences around them. To me God means “I don’t know how, I don’t know when, I don’t know why, but yes it can happen.” “God” is an idea, it is a series of known truths by every human being (who’s grown an old enough brain to think for themselves – at least about nature) about the world, before other people’s justifications, their sugarcoating or shifting, or ‘enhancing’, before their thwarting or distorting what we already understand about it. We know that some days it rains; we know that some days it doesn’t. We know that some people are arrogant, some people like to rape babies, some days we feel like shit and some days we feel really good. We know that bad things happen to good people and vice versa. We know the skies are ‘blue’ we know that people cannot fly (unless they are from Limpopo. LOL – kidding), we know that anyone can die at anytime, we know that whether you know or not, it has monopoly over every second that whoever came up with the bible and the whole Jesus concept knew ‘God’. Whether or not his intentions were to teach righteousness to his fellow people or to instill order or to inject fear in their minds so as to control them is speculation open for everyone to nibble on. I do believe though that if there was ever a time of lawlessness, even remotely closely horrendous as historians claim Saturnalia was, then the bible would have come as a handy tool in both instilling fear and teaching righteousness.

Personally, I think the bible is quite cool. I feel that no one person in the history of human kind can, so effortlessly, condition the human mind as swift and as subtle as the bible does. Generally, people are dumb; they cannot think for themselves and are always looking for someone or something to follow. So why not give them the book that teaches about the dude who’s been on his way back to the world since before we were born, to “save us all from eternal damnation”? You know him, the magician dude who could walk on water and occasionally turn it into booze so everyone could get sloshed? Whose mom never got laid ONCE but was pregnant and gave birth to him? Denzel Washington speaks of a vicious slave owner, Willy Lynch, and his “simple but diabolical” methods to control slaves in his time (on his movie, The Great Debaters), “keep the nigger physically strong but psychologically weak and dependant on the slave master. Keep the body and take the mind.” Spot the relevance as pertaining to the mind and the bible? Holy awesome Jesus, Mother of Christ? I don’t have time to teach people the obvious, I know what God is and I’m content with what I know. I have more ‘faith’ than half these dweebs anyway! Whoever wants to believe that God’ll get pissed when I smoke a cigarette or when I slap the shit out of someone who I feel wronged by can do so without me imposing, but out of my face!
On the other side, the thing that vexes me most is not the celestial concepts, but individuals’ misunderstanding of them, their twisted ideological dispositions and their dimwitted defenses of them.

Nxa! These “bible believers” inability to sustain the very belief they condescend other people about is more than insulting. This Arsenal of retards is at the club every Friday and Saturday nights, fornicating with a thousand men, “destroying the temple of God.” ‘No, but my God is a forgiving God, he knows I’m a sinner and is working with me every day to make me a good person, to purge me from sin” – tha Fuck? Motherfucker how do you fuck around with that conscience in your head? I’d rather be right by people around me than by the church, I’m sorry. Fucking ass-wipes fill the church to capacity, with their eyes closed, in the meantime fucking other people’s wives, cheating on their husbands, like-like “no but the flash is weak”... what? Your fucking grandma is weak!! The hypocrisy is nauseating! I’d rather stay at home and be good by all my peoples, Rastafarian or Buddhist, Christian or Goth, “all of you, kick your feet up and let’s talk about how we’ll get Juju back on his rightful position, instead of confinement, who’s God is more powerful that who’s” “Nah guy...fuck that! Lets talk about the future, grab some Amstel in the fridge homey ...hell or heaven my ass!

So we go to church, we scream in prayer, we tithe and buy all sorts of stuff like holy oil, holy water, rosaries or ankle and wrist beads to ward off evil spirits and all kinds of negative energy. But, are we aware that there’s a much bigger demon within all of us which motivates all those actions and whenever it is hungry, we feed it with these actions? It’s a demon we might not worship, but we strongly acknowledge with our weakness of faith or lack of necessary actions. This demon is FOTU, popularly known by its full name, Fear Of The Unknown.

Many factors in the human mind create unseen obstacles yet they are the hardest to get over because we have layers and layers of excuses as to why we don’t do certain things and in most cases, it’s usually the things that matter most. Either that or we fear being ourselves because we are too concerned with being accepted by others instead of accepting ourselves first. I know how hard it can be to believe in yourself, especially when you have always been in situations where you were left feeling like you aren’t good enough and because rejection is hard to digest, not even making an attempt at something seems the only way you can protect yourself from disappointment.

Let’s ask ourselves one question, “What’s More Important Between Not Going For What I Want Out Of Fear Of Not Getting It Or Going For It And Actually Getting It And Realizing How Limitless My Possibilities Are?”* Don’t be a prisoner of a negative attitude and dwell on questions like what will people think or say if I do this or that. Those are just doubts which are likely to have been planted in your mind by those who don’t believe in you or support your dreams. Instead of letting failure destroy your hopes, used it as a lesson to improve yourself. Mistakes were made to actually help you see where you need to improve so you can be better.

Fear is state of mind which is set on expecting the worst out of incidents which have not even occurred. Because it lives in the mind, it’s power depends on you making the choice to ignore it. Your will power in ignoring fear is what makes it weak. I’m not here to quote you any book or convince you to walk on coal in a room full people screaming “Yes, You Can”. I’m just here to tell you to value yourself enough to ignore anything or anyone that makes you feel less capable or inadequate. Don’t sacrifice your destiny by being in doubt of great possibilities. Possibilities which can be guaranteed only through action, because the saying “Life Is What You Make It” is actually true. So next time the unseen demon tries to hold your dreams hostage, remember that you have a weapon called choice to help you decide if fear and doubt are really worth you losing everything you have ever wanted before you even tried to get it.”

Follow me on twitter @LeratoFiniza
Kids are a joy to be around, until they learn to ask "why?" Then they would ask even the most obvious of questions; sometimes just to check if your answer matches their own. As to whether a human brain is pre-programmed to seek logic or we value reasoning because it is a measure of intelligence, remains something I am yet to get my mind around. Please allow me to get away with not making a distinction between the terms brain and mind, since this discussion is not targeted at a place in a science journal.

Whether obvious or not, all human action has selfish motives; even the selfless have a need to be needed and are ever actively looking for parasitic relations to satisfy their thirst to provide for others.

Reality is in most parts a product of our thought processes; we are souls with bodies and not bodies with souls. Spirit we are, energy we are; we cannot be destroyed, only transferred; hence even after death we live!

I have always had this schizophrenic dialogue with myself about God's existence and - depending on which crowd I have - I often argued each point of view convincingly. In questioning existence and the purpose thereof, I got stuck in between two views:
1. God Exists and he is not religious.
2. God is a Man-Made Invention.

This is usually a debate that would take place between two people with contrasting religious/spiritual views, yet these are both my opinions. I guess that explains the complexity of a human mind!

I have already made an assertion that Man is Spirit. By this I am not saying it is a Universal Truth; I'm just struggling to find credible arguments to the contrary.

An overwhelming majority of mankind believe in the existence of God - or some or other divinity depending on what you choose to call it - but very few can prove beyond any reasonable doubt the existence of that superpower. Belief, in its definition, is the acceptance that something exists, even without proof. My arguments may not be the gospel truth, universal facts or legally acceptable evidence, but I believe it comes very close and I will demonstrate it.

Let me begin by making a distinction between Fact and Truth. Fact is universally accepted phenomenon that can be scientifically proven, while Truth is a generally accepted theory that applies to sectors of society that believe it. The Sun rises in the East and sets in the West, that's a Fact; it can be scientifically proven and is universally accepted. Immaculate conception, therefore, is Truth since no one can prove without a shadow of doubt that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin mother; but many believe it. Fact is universal while Truth is relative. My arguments below seek to land on fertile ground in the middle of all this assertion.

I can come up with about five arguments to prove God exists, but let's stick to three for the purpose of this writing.

The first reason I will give to prove God's existence is that every entity is measured and valued against the finest and purest of its kind. All Gold is measured and valued against the finest ounce of Gold that exists, so are all diamonds measured and valued against the purest. Mankind is, therefore, judged against the perfect and infallible manifestation of human beings; we call that superhuman being God or the divinity. (For simplicity, I shall refer to the divinity and God interchangeably; I am not suggesting they are synonymous, but for the purpose of this writing let's ignore semantics).

The second reason I will put forward to prove God's existence, is that all entities in motion were set in motion by an entity that was in motion itself. Before time and any entity was in motion, there existed one entity that set the first object in motion; that entity itself was in both static and motion state. We call this originator of motion God.

Thirdly, creation is all we need to prove the creator's existence. The device you are using to read this was created by someone. You may not sense that person with any of your five senses, but you know (s)he exists. All nature around us was, therefore, crafted by someone. We call that creator God.

Let me proceed to say, "God is a Man-Made Invention." I did mention I will be making seemingly contradicting arguments, but are they?!

Because man is fallible, we are forever seeking assistance from an infallible being that is biased in our favour. It is in our nature to believe there should exist someone that made us and is looking after and fighting battles for us. We call this all caring, all providing being God.

Ever wondered why God is the opposite of Peter De Villiers; when
Inkolo

the Springboks play bad the coach gets blamed, but when they win it’s the players that get all the praise?! When we achieve things in our lives, God receives credit (Glory and Praise), but when do bad (sin) it’s because we are bad people and deserve punishment and eternal condemnation in the bottomless pit with ever-raging fire!

Humans are creatures of hope; suicide is a result of those that have lost all hope. You too would wish death upon yourself if tomorrow did not promise a better situation than your current struggles. Hope is, therefore, that one thing that keeps us going; Hope is the best thing God provides. “Hang in there while I take my time to come to your rescue! In the meantime, go to a place of worship make financial contributions so as to quicken my response time.”

If man were perfect, God would be irrelevant. If we could heal ourselves when ill, fulfill ourselves when feeling empty, comfort ourselves through trouble and feed ourselves when starving, we would not believe in God. God, as a result, is a creation of our minds in defence to harsh realities of life. In fact the whole life experience is a product of our thought processes; all five senses conspire to give perception of existence as we know it; life. Since we are souls with bodies, energies having a bodily experience, we eternally exist in our minds and all that’s around us is simulation of reality. Mind is God.

Follow me on twitter @NyakalloLephoto

Sabelo Mthembu is an artist who discovered his singing abilities at the age of five. As is the case with a few other singers, Sabelo’s started his singing journey at church wherein he stole congregants’ hearts. But Sabelo did not allow himself to be confined in this space; growing up, he exposed himself to a variety of sounds, from vocal jazz all the way to world music. Most of what he knows about music was self-taught; a testimony to the desire that he has for music. He recalls how he spent his late teens “flipping through music theory books trying to figure out how things work”.

This self-trained Jazz singer sang in the University of Johannesburg for six years. Not only does Sabelo sing, but he is also a songwriter with a strong classical music background. And as if that in itself is not impressive enough, Sabelo has experience in conducting and directing, skills which he put to use when he worked with a music group called Quova.

Some of you might be wondering why his name sounds familiar. Well, that is because Sabelo was in season 4 of South African Idols where he reached the top 12 stage; something which avid fans of the show know is not a minor feat. The exposure that came with having been on the show led to some raving reviews about him and this proved to be a pivotal point in Sabelo’s life; it influenced his decision to pursue a solo music career.

Having worked with local artists such as Zamajobe, Louise Carver and more recently The Muffinz, as well as performing with his band at a range of functions, Sabelo is now ready to make a bigger mark in the music industry. After seven years of dedication, Sabelo, described by a fan as “a singer with a clean voice that effortlessly exudes utmost quality and a pleasurable musician to listen to”, will be releasing his debut album which was produced and recorded at “Figure of 8 Productions”. The album launch took place at the University of Johannesburg on 22 February, 2013.

The album, entitled “Songs of Brotherhood”, has a jazz / afro-soul / classical / pop feel to it, making it an offering set to appeal to a broad range of listeners. Sabelo says that his album is written with the intent of honouring men and that his wish is “that through this album we can learn to love and accept one another without any reservation and conditions”. A fresh new voice promoting values that resonate with many? Now that’s something to look forward to.

Twitter Lerato Sedibe @LeratoLeeSedibe
Sabelo Mthembu @SabelooMthembu

Music

CD Review: Sabelo Mthembu
Laerato Sedibe

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Twitter Lerato Sedibe @LeratoLeeSedibe
Sabelo Mthembu @SabelooMthembu
I believe in the existence of God like I believe in the existence of many entities I am only told of, such as Gravity and Speed-traps. That way you can call me Christian. I am, however, very disturbed by Christian practices that are against Bible Teachings. Herein, I refer to, inter alia, Infant Baptism, Confessionals, Popes and the recognition of the 25th of December as birth date of Jesus Christ.

I am led to believe that the word Christian means Christ-Like, being like Christ. Would you call the Pope, with his elaborate costumes reminiscent of Rock Stars, Christ-Like? Surely, Jesus Christ hung around the poor and dressed modestly. He did not need heavy security as he was indistinguishable from people in his vicinity. That is evident in that Judas Iscariot had to “kiss” him to identify him for his detractors’ benefit.

The Word of God and Love are two best selling commodities in Church. Preachers seem to promote wealth creation above all else, prying on the gullible and ignorant to elevate themselves to celebrity status. The very thing Jesus Christ condemned in saying, “…it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom…” Lately, we are invited to church so Pastors can lay hands on us so we could get ‘financial blessings and breakthroughs’ but not before we have parted with our hard earned 10% and bought books and DVD’s.

If it is a calling you would do it, even, for free. The Caller would reward you. Granted, heads of churches are not immune to paying bills and eating like the rest of us. Yet, excessive emphasis on the material leads us astray.

God destroyed the twin cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of the infestation of Homosexuality, the extent of which had men breaking doors in an attempt to have sex with God’s angels. Churches, however, go and conduct wedding ceremonies for Homosexuals. Worse, even, ordain Homosexuals and Women as Pastors.

We have all witnessed baptism ceremonies where infants are dragged, mostly screaming that kicking, to be immersed in the water, while the congregation sings, ‘...ha ba dumela le ba kolobotse ka lebitso la Ntate, le la Mora, le la Moea o halalelang...’ Pagan practice, indeed. Jesus Christ ordered, ‘seek their consent first’, roughly put. Infants do not consent to anything.

While on that, how does this Holy Trinity thing work? Is it a space god that sent his son, who also happens to be himself, on a suicide mission and then remained on earth as air? Or is it a case of matter existing in 3 states, liquid, solid and gas, like Water, Vapour and Ice?

Another Pagan celebration of a foreign god prevalent in church is Christmas, 25 December, as a birth date of Christ. The Bible makes no mention of the exact birth date of Jesus. We do know, however, that it would not be in December as that month falls in Winter in the Northern Hemisphere. The 3 wise men would not have seen the star in the evening and the Child Jesus would have frozen to death in a horse’s sty.

I would like to still have more clarity on the relevance of Confessionals and speaking in tongues.

Clearly, it is church, more than any institution, that leads most to the bottomless pit. If such a place exists, at all.
Enlightenment vs Faith
Ramasa Mojoloane

Light, glory...these are words that every mere sentient being is hoping to acquire & preserve in this physical life. Taking from my inherited name Ramasa, although this is not about me & my identity I just wish to share.

Ramasa is a combination of two nouns, Ra & Masa. In Kemet religion they refer to sun-god as Ra, horus, a foe of set. Shakespeare emphasized this by "sometimes too hot the eye of heaven shines" on sonnet 18.

Masa is a setswana term, which means morning. So my gods, by default merged two relative terms which can be explained as "Ra, the sun-god revive every consecutive morning". Morning is a period of hope, to gaze again the twilights from the sun & greet the illuminated nature. Light is very vital to humans & nature altogether. Some humans went as far as worshipping Ra as their ultimate & omnipotent God. Ra is their source of light cos a dark life is a vain life. Enlightenment has played almost like a monarch in esoteric knowledge & most religions throughout the world.

In Hinduism, on bhagavad gita it's explained as "Be like kindly LIGHT in the leading" Chap 2vs28-3 & in Christianity on several scriptures like "God is my light & in him is no darkness at all" John 1:5 & "O, send out thy light & thy truth, let them lead me" Psalm 43:3. Some may blindly dispute but in Genesis 1:3 "And God said let there be light..." this was an implication of enlightenment & not necessarily visible light from the sun.

Light's significance is not just a Sango-ma burning countless candles in her surgery or domba, it's not just an invention of a light bulb by Thomas Edison & not just the valuation of fire in African our rituals.

My interpretation of enlightenment can be borrowed from a famous science theory of relativity by Einstein which is E = MCsquared.

For me, this is more than just an explanation of reality. He stated that E stands energy & to me it can be equivocated to God, God being energy, then M which is mass can be equivocated to people, the mass & every tangible or sensual entity & lastly Csquared which's light in a vacuum can be said to be enlightenment.

So E = MCsquared can be God = people multiplied by enlightenment, which is evidently factual, "For the Lord will be your everlasting light" Isaiah 60:20.

Our bodies, planets & every other object swim because of & within that light (lets metaphorise by saying water) called God. Water decompose down & paradoxically combine everything & it's within everything. It gives life even to the so-called dead, for practical instance, just inspect how spirited worms emanates from the "nong-spirited/dead" body. The difference between I & God is the very same distinguishable difference between water & ice.

A third eye in Hinduism is a representation of an eye which has capabilities of beholding that light or God. The Diwali festival is when enlightenment triumph over the darkness of ignorance, ego & maya. The crackers for new-year's eve are set to disperse light in our lives & the 7 candles of yoga meditations. These are symbolic acts of enlightenment, just like a glory depicted behind Jesus's head in portraits, excluding conspiracies behind.

Illuminati, the left eye on a pyramid & the statue of liberty which upholds the torch of light, represent enlightenment. Every colour of spectrum emerges from that white magnificent light, all is radiated from. That concludes the notion of every human's primary purpose that of being enlightened & not necessarily have fortifications brought by faith, which can be demolished.

Faith is to believe, to abide. According to Apostle Paul faith is the assured expectation of things hoped for, the evident demonstration of realities though not beheld. So this means faith deals with duality. Duality automatically separates, so a man with faith is separated from God.

Faith blinds us not to purify our karma to have better results, it's different thus we have different religions. Faith bleeds believe-systems & faith is complicated in both meaning of that word. Faith can be conquered by doubt, on occasions & just because of faith we witness bottomless, plentiful rituals. Faith deceive us to be interacting with God. Faith heals, nourishes, it can rescue one from predicaments & can give one prosperity. Faith can get you to heaven but enlightenment is God. Faith in absence of enlightenment is confusion. 

Faith cannot eradicate one's ignorance of God, it enslaves more. Faith deal with mentalities & heart-litities to actualize only material but just because neither heaven or God is material therefore it's useless.

Faith can be capitalised by people with greed, ego, wicked thoughts & can still be applicable. Enlightened people don't need laws, guidance & other manner advices. Faith is another fill in a cup of thoughts, enlightenment is emptying thoughts. Karate means empty hands & it's used for enlightenment. Faith is expensive & can defunct.
I was asked by Nyakallo to join ILWIW as a contributor after he saw my rants on Twitter. We felt that before I begin typing away I should introduce myself first and let you know who exactly is behind these words.

Firstly I’m not going to use that “I’ve cooked since I was 4 years old and I was born to do this” blah blah blah nonsense. I’m a former Process Engineer. I used to wear a tie and suit everyday for 6 years before the “madness” hit me. I’m from Soweto, from a family of boys, didn’t spend my youth in the kitchen but outside playing soccer or reading books about aliens and shit. I decided to travel South Africa for a year after I quit the corporate scene and once I got tired of that I enrolled at one of South Africa’s best culinary colleges, Prue Leith Chef’s Academy (www.prueleith.co.za), in June 2009 where I studied towards a Grande Diploma in Food and Wine (basically I’m a chef with an expensive signed cardboard that says I am).

Whilst at the academy I entered a World Cup pie designing competition run by the British High Commission. I subsequently won the competition and with it a trip to London to cook in one of the best restaurants in the United Kingdom, Corrigan’s of Mayfair. My recipe was published in the Pretoria News and online on the Independent Newspapers and BBC News website’s (basically killing any plans I might have had to copyright it and make lots of cash from it and runaway and buy an island...or something). I was also interviewed for an hour by Talk Radio 702 during their peak hour drive time show. Why am I telling you all this besides to boost my ego? Well in short I want you to see that I’m just an ordinary guy who likes fiddling with food, I won’t tell you lies cause I paid way too much money to study the truth and that I’m good at what I do. Stick with me as I talk food and lets make this a fun journey.

I’ve cooked for TV shows, for celebrities, for politicians and high profile people. I’ve worked in restaurants, game lodges, as a private chef and in catering. I told myself I would never EVER start a blog but I’ve had way too many people asking me to teach them stuff about food via twitter ( @LesDaChef ) and when I go out to restaurants I always wish there was a restaurant reviewer who could actually relate to the normal person from ko kasi (yes, that does mean I will be reviewing restaurants and eateries).

So basically I’ll be sharing my personal journey through food. I’ll educate, I’ll entertain, I’ll review stuff and basically just debunk the complexity that is really not that complex when it comes to food. Please feel free to interact and ask questions!

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**Irish Stew**

This stew I learned whilst working as a junior chef. Its very simple to make, doesn’t use wine or cream and if made correctly is perfect on a cold winter’s night.

Its important you use REAL liquid stock and not stock cubes. Stock cubes will make the stew salty. I posted a few recipes as to how to make a proper stock before on ILWIW but if you’ve forgotten please google a lamb stock recipe online. Trust me, it makes a big difference as to how flavourful your soups and stews are.

**NOTE:** For even cooking make sure your veggies are all the same size

**Ingredients:**
- 1kg Lamb pieces (cut into cubes)
- 3 Onions, cut into quarters
- 4 Carrots, cut into even pieces
- 4 Turnips, cut into even pieces
- 5 Potatoes, cut into even pieces
- 2 Leeks, sliced into rings
- 1 tablespoon pearl barley (or fennel seeds)
- 2 teaspoons Thyme
- 2 tablespoons Flour
- 28g Butter, melted
- 1 litre Lamb stock
- 1 tablespoon Parsley, chopped

**Method:**
- Cut the excess fat off the lamb
- Toss the chopped up lamb in the flour
- Fry off the fat you cut off until it melts. Remove any remaining, unmelted pieces of fat
- Fry off the meat in the melted fat until browned
- Remove 2 thirds of the meat from the pan, leaving 1 third in the pan.
- Add the onions, leeks, parsley and butter to the pan
- Pour stock into the pan and add the barley/ fennel
- Bring the pot to the boil for 3 minutes and then simmer for 2 hours.
- 30 minutes before serving add the turnips, potatoes and carrots
- Season with salt and pepper
My girlfriend hated soups for some reason she still doesn't seem to know. I made this soup for her once and she’s become a believer ever since. It’s also one of my favourite things to eat.

South African foods tend to have a sweet and chilli or sour flavour to them. This is linked to the history of our food and the numerous cultures that call South Africa home. Butternut soup is one of those dishes that has taken on a life of its own in recent times. Come winter time people rush to Woolworths to buy ready-made cans and tubs of the stuff. To try get my brother and his girlfriend off the habit I made them this soup once and they too have become believers. It’s THAT good. Summer or winter, it’s filling and 100% vegetarian. I won’t go so far as to say it’s a healthy alternative as it does have loads of butter, sugar and cream.

The recipe calls for vegetable stock, please don’t use stock cubes! I’ve posted an entry earlier on in this blog explaining how to make vegetable stock, if you don’t have any close by rather use water instead. You’ll also need a hand blender to make it. It won’t work otherwise! Trust me, I’ve tried it without a blender and all I got was a tasty butternut puree. Serve with toast or croutons and enjoy!

Ingredients
210g finely chopped onion
200g finely chopped celery
2.5kg cubed butternut
5g nutmeg, ground
5g ginger, ground
10g curry powder
5g peri peri
5g turmeric
10g cinnamon
5g ground coriander
1 teaspoon fennel seeds
20g brown sugar
3 spoons butter
20g garlic, finely chopped
500ml vegetable stock (or hot water)
250ml cream
Salt

Method:
- Mix all the spices and sugar together in a bowl.
- Toss the butternut in the spices and place in a casserole dish or oven tray. Dot the butternut with the pieces of butter evenly and roast in the oven at 180 degrees Celsius covered in foil for 30 minutes.
- Remove the foil for the last 10 minutes in order to brown the butternut
- In a deep pot fry the garlic, celery and onions in a bit of oil until soft and translucent.
- Place the roasted butternut in the pot and mix it in with the fried vegetables.
- Pour enough vegetable stock to cover the vegetables and simmer for a few minutes.
- Blend the vegetables and stock with a hand blender until all chunks have been pureed. Taking care not to splash yourself.

Add the cream and blend further. Season with salt.
- If the soup is still thick add more stock and blend further

Follow me on twitter @LesDaChef
Request for a Donation of Books You Can Afford to Part With

Purpose

This letter is written to inform you of the library initiative that ilwiw.com is starting in Qwa-Qwa and to ask for books and any other donation that might benefit the library.

Background

I Like What I Write is an online organization that seeks to encourage communities to read and write in a manner that is not prescribed or channelled, the organization's core belief is that "all opinions should be heard" therefore we provide that platform for budding writers and readers. People have been submitting their materials in the form of articles, blog, poetry, opinion pieces etc, and we managed to create awareness and establish the much needed dialogue on matters of interest. We also offer writing workshops to budding writers. We then, informed by the increased numbers of the consumers of the material on I Like What I Write saw it necessary to establish a physical library so that those with no access to the internet can walk in, sit, read and engage with fellow readers and writers.

The library

The library will provide access to book of all kinds to the communities of Phuthaditjhaba and surrounding villages. It will allow engagement as readers will be encouraged and allowed to share thoughts on books they just read, even write their thoughts and those thoughts and opinions we will publish on our site I Like What I Write for further engagements. The library will be managed by a writer, who will apply his writing and reading experience to encourage reading and writing without prescribing material to be read. We plan to bring in computers in the future, so that books can also be accessed in soft copy and the much needed interaction with the social space on the net. Ultimately, I Like What I Write library aims to create and sustain a generation of rural people who reads.

Request

Based on the above we request that you to donate any book, journal or research report to the library to widen the scope of reading that might also entice some library users to further their studies.

We are waiting in anticipation for a positive response.

Yours
Lepholo Nyakallo (Mr)
nyakallo@ilikewhatiwrite.co.za (078 383 3396)
I Want to Partner with ILWIW

For the Amount: R__________
Monthly  Quarterly  Annually (Place X)

Personal Details
Title: __________  First Names: _______________________________  Surname: _________________________
Telephone: ________________
Cellphone: _____________________________
E-mail: ____________________________

Select Payment Method
Debit Order  Credit Card  Direct Deposit  International Credit Card (Place X)

Please Indicate Partnership Classification:
New  Upgrade  Downgrade (Place X)

Debit Orders and Credit Cards
Account Holder’s Name: _____________________________________
Account Number: _________________________  CVC (3 DIGIT NUMBER AT BACK OF CARD):_______
Bank: ___________________ Branch: ___________________ Branch Code: ________________
Start Month: ____________/________ (e.g. May/2012)
Day of Month: 1st  15th  25th (Place X)
If you wish your debit order to run for a specific period of time only, please indicate date of termination
________/________/_______ (Date/Month/Year)
The Authority of this debit order may be cancelled by giving Designer Scripts 30 (thirty) days’ notice in writing, sent via e-mail. Please
notify us immediately if any of your details should change.
Date: _________________________ Signature of Account Holder: ____________________________

Direct Deposits (Tear out and present at a bank)

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Date: _________________________ Amount: R____________________ Signature: _________________________
Please e-mail all deposit/proofs of payment slips to us info@ilikewhatiwrite.co.za
Q: Hey my baby is 21 days n I'm breast. Feeding my baby was given soft poRrige an also formula milk wil my child be infect-ed or not pls help be 4 its to late
A: Please make sure that it does not happen again. Continue exclusively breastfeeding and giving the Nevirapine syrup. Do not stress.

Q: Can a 21year old live a full life without going on lifelong treatment? Or does every1 eventually have to take the pills
A: Eventually most people will have to take treatment. Some people will start it sooner than others. And some people may never need to start it. The CD4 count and the clinical condition is what determines eligibility for treatment. This is why it is important to check the CD4 count every 6 months.

Q: If I was breastfeeding for 1month than left it gave him formula he was negative what are the chances of him getting hiv if I didn't give him nevarapin after?
A: If baby has had no further exposure to the virus then he should still be HIV negative.

Q: Hlo doc.can one drink zitplex tablets when on anti-retrovirals even if you don't have skin problems,will it have a negative effect on the treatment?
A: Why would you take Zinplex if you do not need it?

Q: Hi doc I'm hiv pos and taking odimune and ds24 my cd 4 is 573 and planning to have a baby I need help my doctor said I should wait
A: Email me - [email protected]

Q: Taking odimune n activovite @ de same time does it decrease weight?....what can one use to gain weight?
A: Not as far as I know. And as for gaining weight - are you eating properly?

Q: Doc, i v been ebf, and i also used bottled to feed my 3months old, am not on treatment, pcr not yet back. My concern is would changing to formula affect his status in any-way? I have to go to work in a months tym.
A: The difficulty with early switching is trying not to go back to breast milk once you have started formula. I have had mothers who give in and breastfeed when baby cries or refuses the formula. You need to make sure that you will not give breast and formula - that is mixed feeding and this is what increases the risk of HIV transmission from you to baby. Please follow-up on the PCR results as soon as you can. Baby will get a repeat PCR test six weeks after you stop all breastfeeding. You will stop the Nevirapine syrup one week after you stop all breastfeeding. You must continue the Bactrim until the result of the repeat PCR test comes back and it is negative.

Q: Baby is on bactrim because i was bf and stopped so i am waiting for the repeat hiv pcr test to be done and the results
A: Okay that is fine.

Q: Hi doc..my son is a month old n on fomular(plgn) n on never-pin...at home thnk we shud start gving him small feeds of purity on so forth as he nvr full..is dis mixed feedng?n dose ths increase his chances of being infected
A: Babies do not need solids before six months of age, and certainly not at one month. Please do not give Purity or small feeds. If you are concerned that baby is always crying, then try making sure that you burp him properly after feeds. And remember that babies cry - sometimes for no reason at all. That is the truth. Your baby is not exposed to the virus because he is formula feeding. The chances of HIV transmission are small.

Q: Doc,I'm da1 who hz 145 cd4 ,yes I'm on AZT pls tel me my child is safe@da clinic dey said he@high risk of being+bcoz I'm nt on ARVs&I'm36 wks preg
A: You are on AZT and it is bringing the viral load down. You are starting treatment this week and this should bring the viral load down even more. So please be optimistic that baby is going to be born negative.

Q: DOC if the bby waz on ilivitrim n breastfeedn aftr 6mnth it a mast to gv the bby formulr or rooibos is fine
A: Babies need milk for the first 12 months of life. After six months baby has to continue with breast milk or a No 2 formula. Rooibos alone is not fine.

Q: hi doc my bby is exclvbrst fed, and on nvp syrp she is teething, then i tuk her 2 da clinic 4 advice on what 2 buy 4 teething pain, they said i must buy TeelieLis it right 4 her.and is't any chance of getting affected cause of Tjel plz hil we love our girl.
A: Teething gel or powder does work. The other soothing thing is an iced teething ring. Baby just needs something to chew on - even your finger will do.
Q: Hiv+ parents :) its possible. My baby tested negative. I'm so happy :). Thank you Dr.
A: :-) 

Q: Dr is it true that smokers have the high CD4 count? Smoking makes cd4 count high
A: Not that I know of. I have yet to hear or read about this.

Q: Hi m hiv positive n my 2 weeks baby is on cipla nevirapine m breastfeeding bt nw I found ma dream job have 2 feed her formula must I stop giving her nevirapine m so confused plz help
A: You have to continue giving the Nevirapine syrup for one week after you stop all breastfeeding. When exactly are you planning on switching to formula?

Q: Hi Dr Sindi, Will my baby be infected if I were to fall pregnant? My partner is HIV negative but am positive and we use condoms and we always talk about what if condom breaks because I get dry more often.
A: HIV transmission from mother to child can happen during pregnancy, labour and delivery or during breast feeding.

We have a very good programme in SA - the PMTCT Prevention-of-Mother-to-Child Transmission programme. All pregnant women that test HIV positive in the public sector clinics are enrolled onto this programme. These women receive antiretroviral drugs to try and minimize the risk of HIV transmission to their unborn babies during pregnancy, labour and delivery and during breast feeding.

If you were to fall pregnant then it would be prudent for you to take part in the PMTCT programme.

Dryness during sexual intercourse must be very uncomfortable. The best advice is for you to either engage in foreplay until you are well lubricated or to purchase a lubricant like KY jelly.

Q: Hi Dr Sindi. I'm 18 weeks preg and +ve. VL 21000 copies & CD4-230.. I need a good HIV Clinician around PTA. I have tested -ve since 2005 - 2011. on Nevirapine +Lamzid.
A: Please send me an email drsindi-vanzyl@gmail.com so that I can make some recommendations

Q: My baby is 4 weeks old I took her for PCR yesterday but they didn't tell me whether to stop giving he NVP she's on formula milk
A: You have to stop the Nevirapine syrup.
Did they give you Co-trimoxazole syrup? If not, please go back and ask for it.

Baby has to take that syrup until the PCR results come back and if they are negative then baby will stop the Co-trimoxazole syrup

Q: Hy dr! I'm hiv positive & breastfeeding, wht i would lyk 2 know is,do i stop de day she turns 6months or by de end of de month or during dat month maybe a week before she turns 6months? #confused#
A: You have to wean baby from breast milk to formula and solids. We do this over a period of 4 weeks starting on the day that baby turns 6 months.

By the end of the baby's 7th month she should be on formula and solids.

Please make note of the day that she stops breast milk totally because you will need to take her for an HIV PCR test 6 weeks after that date

Q: Hi dr my 9days baby is on zidovudine for how long is the baby going to drink it.Thx
A: All HIV-exposed babies take Zidovudine syrup for 4 - 6 weeks then they go for the HIV PCR test.

The babies that take the syrup beyond this period are the babies that are breast feeding and whpse mothers are NOT on any treatment.

Are you breast feeding or formula feeding? Are you on lifelong treatment or not?

Q: Resids- my babies also sleep in their tummies .. Hwever the link u sent say under no circumstances must they - they must slp on their backs hence I say its a little irresponsible....esp us new moms who read things jus to make sure we doing the right thing
A: I see your concern...

Well please do not be too worried. If you are a new mom you will do what most of us did...check that baby is breathing every 10 minutes.

All the best!

My definition of HIV is Hope is Victory and you can ask me anything HIV related anonymously on this link: www.Qooh.me/DoctorSindi
To read more of my articles visit my page www.ilwiw.com/hope-is-victory

Regards,
Dr. Sindisiwe van Zyl

@SindiVanZyl
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We reach an audience mainly made up of females aged between the ages of 18 and 42, living in urban areas and have post-matric qualifications.

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The mind of a man cannot be quantified, it cannot be contained, it cannot be predicted nor tamed. You cannot describe it in literal terms because no words in spoken language can suitably define, the mind of a man.

You cannot objectify it, nor comprehend its faculties. We cannot fully comprehend what drives it and moves it. It doesn't grow weary nor does it grow faint. Men don't kiss-and-tell what their mind thinks. They don't forget where they've stopped to pause for a moment's disturbance. It wonders and roam wildly for the next thrill.

That is why today, we lack men who are men enough to admit and accept that being a man is nothing short of being a custodian of the land of wild dreams. Have you ever paused and asked yourself why all the greatest inventors, philosophers, scientists, theorists, and even biblical prophets and priests are men?

In as much as women have physical, emotional and psychological tools that men don't have, the same is true with men. Yes, women are God-chosen baby carriers, their emotional equipment is more advanced and/or developed, and they possess the physical softness that is crucial to nurturing; men also have traits as unique.

We are stronger, physically and emotionally, please do not confuse strength with development. I'm tempted to entertain the feminists but I cannot, I will not. I'm treading in my own domain, albeit as a passer-by. My point is a man is equipped with a rather loose mind. Galloping wildly in the land of wild dreams. Forever seeking the next thrill. He is fascinated by the undiscovered, the unconquered and the unmade.

You see, God creates, but man makes. I repeat: God creates, but man makes. God created a man, but what makes a man is himself! God created fatherhood, but what makes a man a father is himself. God cannot force a man to be a father, even though he can have children.

God, as creator of man cannot force a man to be a man. If a man decides that one day he is going to wake up and start being a homosexual, God cannot stop that. Homosexuality is a man's invention. Always seeking new adventures, always thinking of another invention. A man's mind cannot be contained nor tamed. It cannot be predicted nor described in literary words. It wonders wild and always hungry for the next thrill. God-created, man-made man.

The mind of a man always changes, always shifts from one point to another. It is unstable, unlike a woman's. I hate parallels and comparative speech! When the Bible says, "God created man in His own image," it meant exactly that. Imagery, what is imagery? I never understood this until I stopped holding my mind back and released it to wonder free. God created the mind but I made it. I suppressed it. I tried to contain it. I tried to quantify its processes. I tried to make it succumb to society's dictates. Man-made man in a man-made society.

When God created man, what did He have in mind? Was He bored? Was He forced by any existing circumstance? Imagery. Wondering and adventurous mind... seeking the next thrill... God had to satisfy Himself about all the "dreams" He had. He had to do something about His creativity. The thought of allowing such a powerful mind idle was too much for Him to bear. He could not just be God alone. He needed to show Himself what He could create with His powerful mind.

Imagery. Look at yourself. You will see God. "I will make man in my own image..." Wondering wildly and adventurous... seeking the next thrill... Waiting for an era to be ushered in is like waiting for a train that just left the platform. The mind functions in the future. Never in the present nor the past. You cannot contain what your mind seeks to say or do. Forget about following the bandwagon. You cannot put it in suspension. It is like a bulldog that forever wants to break free. You can chain it for years but once it is unchained, the chase begins. What a man needs right now is to stop entertaining vanity. Being dragged into this world's useless quarrels, homosexuality, feminism, religion, politics, and such. A man says his point and moves on. Seeking that which his mind is after. I'm vocal in everything, but an activist of none. My mind is occupied with my wildest dreams. I'm sitting here writing this, but my mind is long finished. In my mind's eye I know how this will end. In my mind's eye I know what follows. I'm seeing it in the future. I'm the master of time and space. My mind is already busy with something else, my physical body is lagging behind, still writing. I'm quantum leaping from time-zone to time-zone. I'm unstable, I'm a God-created, man-made man.
Ash-mud & muti, mysticism & a sufi, 
rots eating us inside, made by witches to reside inside us, 
when a doctor scan they slide to the side inside us, 
phantoms & retards, palm-books we carry & tarot cards, 
they'll lock your thought till you're admitted at the morgue, periodically, 
Sangomas keep bones in their stomachs, 
within a life of symbols, a sun & sins there's only less truth-wise but more facts & crammed lies, 
notions, deceptions, bribes & toxicated conceptions, 
babies born blind, lots of harlots, large tablets that aborts, 
nowhere to fit God caus' there's too many blood-grievances, 
some goes AWOL, some lean against a wall, 
spiritual mountains & no bikes, steep strikes, no BMX, to life goodbye, be...my...ex, 
because together we try to climb & when we reach it's anti-climax, quick sodomy, news are always new so what's the latest? 
Why do we kings, kinged queens even live shortened asleep, lukewarm slumber-parties, mediocre celebrations in a smelly dream, a consciousness weep?
Lady-heaven is right here in a mist, silver-dish her some food, wash & anoint her feet, look beyond her looks & get closer when she utters to speak, 
we used to brawl for our blood, dirty-thoughts in a blood-bath, 
blood-battles, antibodies, yours is a hospices' ward if you aren't one of our blood, 
say hallow to the one you've cursed to avoid the holocaust, messenger better run & spread this pandemonium to the mass, 
that no pain is no gain but we only gain pain caus' again & again we use the same tool that's insane, reflect !
These people act like they're not enjoying this pain, I suggest you track that agony from its eternity, 
your spirit is warring with you resulting in your lusts of battling me, conflict, you're soul-blind of it, 
you think the antidote is being supreme so to dehorn how you feel, your fault is you have a concept of what God is, we're timeless but you feel watched during madness, blue-lyric & bliss, 
plights, predicaments of flocked earthlings, trying to settle spiritual boxing with fists in fleshly rings, 
it's not a myth, 
an only fatal war is spiritual so don't loose your teeth, ancient spiritual warlords died before they could confess, they're aren't the baddest just because they came first, 
they talk of root-herbs medicine, my body never accept what it can't clean & furiousity can be fruitful, 
that turns gall after they ripe & later like guilt toxicates parts of a heart that rules, 
mastered tuition, no master nor a pen, we learn from the wrongs, he good & the unforgettable from the wrongs encountered obstacles as pit-holes, hell bed-flames we burn, 
I went numb for the then organised past-pains & those prepared to come, It's hard to see joy in poetry, 
sorrow hits twice a time to show us that we're dumb, 
as authority's surface-lines God is neutral, self-judgements, self-misjudgements or no judgements at all but believe to be determine our fates that are so crucial, just, middle-disposed is the one supreme... 
Lets not stop the battle but lets find the peace & God in every struggle because there's a truth that assists to know so we can decide & there's a father truth that frees inside, 
there's a spiritual warfare going on & off out there... 
Choose your side.
The Day He Cried
Lebohang Mpholo

That long heart-breaking day
He bravely walked to His cross not as a defeated soldier but in triumph,
That day He was not thinking about the nails in his caring hands
Nor the piercings on his side that dripped of the living blood,
He was not thinking about the nails or thorns on his brow not about the whipping on his back but had you in his thought....
He had me in his heart full of love

That long heart-breaking day
He kept on going,
He pressed on with a cross of our sins weighing Him down, for me He cried...

What kept Him on the cross was the thought of His love for you
His unexplainable desire to walk with me through heaven’s gates,
It’s the thought of you that made Him endure the piercing pain...
He had me and you in His heart,

Discouragement lingered near and so He called helplessly to His dad
"My God, My God why have you forsaken me?"
...words piercing to the heart, He uttered!
Yet His love for you...
His love for me kept Him on the cross.

When it seems like you are all alone just remember His tears
For us, when with a heavy heart you stumble through this lonesome world
Just remember His pain filled walk to Golgotha.
Do remember His tears when you can’t take it no more...
Please remember He prayed for you hanging painfully on that cross.
In this cold empty world just remember someone prayed for you...
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