



Focus on Ngomso!



Above: Ms Adelle Potgieter, known as maDlomo amongst the black community, with protégé, Mrs Lulama Ngqungwana.

Ngomso Youth Foundation was founded by ROHA's Vice Chairman, Mrs Lulama Ngqungwana, with the purpose to provide emotional and informational support to young girls in her community to avoid teenage pregnancy and the spread of HIV/AIDS. After years of gaining experience on the ROHA management, Mrs Ngqungwana felt ready to begin her own project. Ngomso means tomorrow and is thus an apt name for an organisation aimed at protecting the future and innocence of our youth.

"I am very grateful for ROHA's assistance in starting the

project. maDlomo is adept at drafting constitutions and helped us to rewrite our Constitution to meet the criteria for NPO-registration," says Mrs Ngqungwana. "I am so happy that we finally got our certificate!"

Being a single mother with a teenage daughter, Mrs Ngqungwana has seen the social pressure on young girls in her community who are exposed to sexual advances, drugs and alcohol and the devastating effect this has on the youth when they make a wrong choice in this regard. "Many young people become depressed and even suicidal when they learn that they have become infected with HIV, so I started Ngomso Youth Foundation to help young people protect themselves from this," says Mrs Ngqungwana. ROHA Chairman, Ms Potgieter feels that the Government intervention in preventing HIV/AIDS is failing. "There is a lot of information available around HIV/AIDS, condoms are freely available, yet young people are still getting infected. The truth is that teenagers should be better supervised and know that the best way to prevent HIV spreading is to abstain from sexual relationships completely!" This is where Ngomso Youth Foundation can offer a valuable service. It aims to provide young people in Zwede with an emotional home in the form of counselling services, emotional and informational support and arranges activities such as life skills training and craft workshops for the youth.

ROHA continues to support Ngomso by mentoring the management team and volunteers and assisting with much needed equipment and training materials. "We are committed to assisting community groups with training and mentorship programmes so that they can help their own people. The need is often greater than we can meet alone and therefore community-based self-help groups like Ngomso are invaluable," says Ms Potgieter.

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REGULARS

Editor's corner

In this edition our main feature is on Ngomso Youth Foundation, a community group that we are mentoring! The ROHA team wishes to congratulate Ngomso on receiving its registration as a nonprofit organisation and wish it every success for the future.

The A to Z of Mental Health focusses on fear. It is one of the emotions that is most crippling if not managed properly and therefore warrants a special look.

We invite feedback from our readers regarding the newsletter to ensure that you find our newsletters informative and useful. Your letters, comments and suggestions may be forwarded to: The Editor, ROHA News, P.O Box 12832, Centrahil, 6006.

Wishing you all the best for the rest of 2009!
The Editor.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter is that of the individual authors and not necessarily that of ROHA.

Feedback
Healing Spirit
We have made alterations to the stable block to make the stables more user friendly for the horses and to include a feed room and two more stables. We would be able to rescue two more horses once the new stables have doors. Only minor changes are needed (like a coat of paint, tables, chairs and a toilet (even if it is a porta potti)) and then we will be ready to receive community groups to interact with the animals and receive life skills training. But right now the money for these last changes are lacking. With the recent rains we've had, ragwort has come up in two grazing camps. It is poisonous for the horses, so we are very busy removing the weeds, while the horses are confined to other camps. Volunteers are needed to help, please, since the more we pull out the more there are to pull out!

From the Chairman ...




Despite our best hopes, 2009 is turning out to be a very difficult year! The year is speeding past and it seems that we are all so busy surviving the economic recession that we wonder what we really have achieved so far this year. As a nonprofit organisation, just keeping our doors open and services going in these times is achievement aplenty! Some months some of our staff are not getting paid at all and yet work, trying to support others less fortunate. Truth be told, we don't always feel so cheerful when we have to ask for extensions in paying the bills, but we keep going because we simply won't lay down and die! When others depend on you, you just have to keep going as best you can!

So what can one do in these times? Rethink and restructure your life, your expenses, your financial planning, your dinner menus. Crisis times are a great time to get innovative! One way to save money, is to rethink what brands we buy for food and clothes and where we buy it. If you know where to shop you can still buy 10kg of rice for R70, which is R30 less than most other stores!

Despite these hard times, there are still loyal donors that support our projects. We wish to thank you for your continued support. And for those donors who cannot support us right now, we also thank you, for your past support (be it in cash or in kind or in prayer). Our prayers are also with you, in the hope that you will weather this financial storm and have a prosperous and happy future!

Yours sincerely,
Ms Adelle Potgieter
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The A to Z of Mental Health

by Adelle Y. Potgieter

F is for Fear

Everyone knows fear. It is a very powerful emotion! It can be a powerful motivator, inspiring us to achieve, but it can also be crippling, robbing us of the power to achieve a fulfilled life and have happy relationships. Therefore we will look at fear specifically in this column. I would also urge you to revisit the two articles on emotion we had in previous editions of this newsletter. (These articles are still available on our website at www.rohasa.org).

We have said previously that emotion has two main purposes:

Firstly, to save our life!

Secondly, to enhance our life quality!

Fear comes into play in both those categories. But what can one do to manage fear so that it does not end up devastating one's life? Many people are crippled by 'What if (disaster strikes)? We all have felt the nervous knot tightening in our stomachs or felt so stressed out that we can hardly breathe. As a scuba diver, I was taught that if the unexpected happens or disaster strikes, to stop, breathe and think! But in some cases a person's life may be threatened if you do not respond rapidly (in other words, sometimes there is no time to first stop, breathe and think). Years ago, when I was in the Police Service, I hated not having adequate training in areas I felt necessary to perform my duties safely and successfully. It was expected of me to drive to robberies and housebreakings in progress (the blue light and siren charade!), without having any training in advanced driving! During the gang war in 1996 in the northern areas of Port Elizabeth I was expected to do thirty something house penetrations per night (without special training), whilst specially trained units like the Task Force are not allowed to do more than three per day, due to the high risk and levels of concentration required to execute a house penetration successfully! So what did I do to survive and to do my best? I answered the question: What if....?" And if I did not know the answer, I asked someone

who did, discussed options, case scenarios and read about the subject to increase my knowledge. Once one has a plan of action in mind, fear can no longer cripple you to inaction!

At the risk of sounding crass, I would like to share with you my take on "Shit happens!" It certainly does! But I have come to amend this. The Adelle Potgieter version is this: "Shit happens! Deal with it!"

Bottom line: Hope for the best, prepare for the worst. If the doodle hits the fan, like it has for many people financially at the moment, what can be done to survive? Answer your what-if-worst-happens case scenarios and you may surprise yourself with having more resilience, determination and perseverance than you thought possible before! And don't forget to breathe, deeply, and make time to relax (without the cigarettes and glass of wine, because it is really bad for your mental and physical health).

People generally think for a response to become automatic, you have to have practiced it many times to make it part of you! I disagree completely! It has happened to me many times that simply by deciding on a potential response once has been enough to implement it when crisis strikes! And not just for me. One of my best friends, Marlien, who was working in the gang war with me told me one day that she experienced that too! I told her that when her partner pursues a criminal on foot through buildings, she (as the patrol van driver) must radio for help, lock the car, grab the R5-rifle and follow her partner to provide support and round corners a particular way to avoid ambush! When it happened, she recalled and implemented the instructions, having heard them once only and never having physically done the actions before! The mind is a powerful tool, programme it to respond to crisis positively (ideally before the need to respond arises), including how you deal with fear, in a way that will protect your life and enhance your life quality!

You can and you must manage fear in your life in a meaningful way to live a good and happy life! We wish you every happiness on your life journey!

(Please share this information with all you can. - Ed.)

Food for Thought



*"Treating people better
than you think they deserve,
is the mark of a noble character
and honours God
who made us all!"*

- Adelle V. Potgieter

Photo credit: A. V. Potgieter, 2009.



Don't Quit

*When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and debts are high,
And you want to smile but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit...
Rest if you must—but don't you quit.*

*Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about,
When he might have won if he'd stuck it out.
Don't give up, though the pace seems slow
You may succeed with another blow.*

*Often the goal is nearer than
It seems to a faint and faltering man;
Often the struggler has given up
When he might have captured the victor's cup,
And he learned too late, when the night slipped
down,
How close he was to the golden crown.*

*Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are.
It may be near when it seems afar.
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
It's when things go wrong
That you mustn't quit.*

- Unknown.

Spirit of Adventure photo by A. Potgieter, Aug '09.