

Inspired **to be**

Thabisile Phumo

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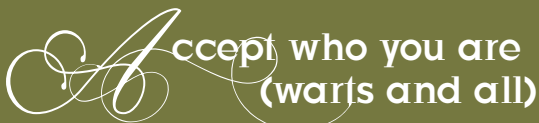
I was lucky to be gifted a book called *'The Dreamgiver'* by a special friend, at the right time. It was a capturing read that opened a door long closed... a door of forgotten dreams and possibilities. All so often, as women, we surrender our dreams and ourselves to loved ones, situations and our environment.

It is my wish that you will find, anywhere between A and Z, something that resonates with who you are or wish to be. This is a collection of gems, gathered from women generations before us and we hope you will pass on to generations that come after us.

'Inspired to be' is written as simple as ABC, literally, but applying it or believing it remains a personal choice.

To the one who gives Life and the many loved ones who have shaped and supported this journey.

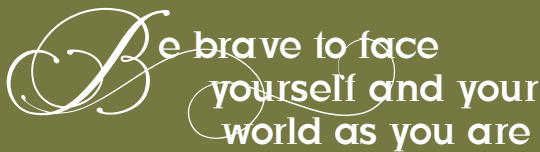
Love,
Thabi



Accept who you are
(warts and all)

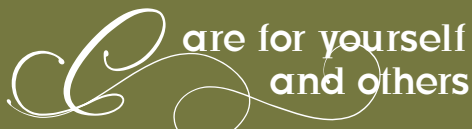


The world has got to love you as you are...
On a 'take it or leave it' basis.



Be brave to face
yourself and your
world as you are

Women are born brave – we unlearn it as
we subscribe to the noises around us.



Care for yourself
and others

Care is the foundation of personal growth.
You cannot care for anything or anyone, if it
does not start with you.

Share the world and its challenges

...Like Nike says Just Do it™. The worst that can happen is that you will succeed (women want to be ready for marriage, ready for a promotion...learn from men and fake it until you make it).

Experiment with your life

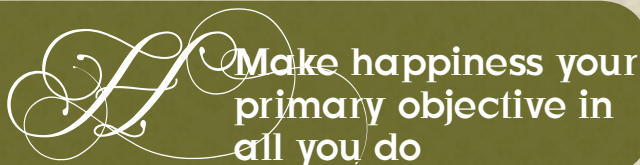
Life is too short for you to live like a traffic light. Change jobs, participate in new hobbies, travel and make your life worth living.

Find yourself in every situation

It is easy for women to lose themselves. I believe this is why we make bad colleagues or bosses or become doormats to mom-in-laws or boyfriends. Some of us surrender ourselves to anything and everything; at times. Don't lose yourself in the first place; but if you do (because you will know), STOP and find yourself.



Look at yourself and others from a point of grace.



You must choose a person, a job or an activity because they make you happy. Stop the day you stop being happy. That is the day when, like a shower that does not get cleaned, you get grime and from there... you become worse than my one aunt who operates from a point of war with herself and the rest of the world. Unhappiness kills; if not emotionally, it will eventually do so physically.

Inspire yourself daily

Life is tough, but those who succeed do so because something or someone inspires them daily. Learn to inspire yourself and that the best inspiration comes from within. Oprah won't do it for you; no matter how many Master Classes you watch.

Learn to juggle and do it well

Women are born jugglers, but when we get all these things at once; we forget. A juggler gives all the clubs or balls equal airtime otherwise he has to stop or they will fall. Unless you own the company, go home at home time and even if you do, work smart so you can go home at home time. The single friends always mourn about being single and I ask, if you sleep at the office, unless the security guard on duty is your target, you have no chance of ever meeting your dream guy, no matter how determined you are.





Be knowledgeable about what you do and the world

You have never heard of blond man jokes... Why watch soapies when you can watch the Discovery channel? How many of us read? And the 50 Shades series doesn't count (no offense to the author). Gossip, which I love, does not count either. In fact, if we eliminated the gossip box, we could fill the space up with at least three encyclopaedias I am told.



Love and Love to a fault

The beauty of life is love; love people in spite of and because of who they are. You need to love knowing for sure that love is and can never be a transactional endeavour.

N Become maternalistic as a principle

We are born with that encoded in our DNA and if we took that approach the world would have been a better place. All we need to do is our best, but not at the expense of who we are. Choose to remain yourself; you don't want to keep on changing mirrors because you can't face up to who and how you have become.

Nurture those around you so you can begin a garden of prosperity and stability

Just before you say nurture? My mom-in-law or boyfriend or husband? A big fat **Yes**. Have you ever thought that your mom-in-law might be as lost as you are and does not genuinely know how to share? Or your husband, if you are the first, has never been married before and what he knows is as dangerous as riding a superbike without training? Nurture them, you get more with honey than vinegar. In this space, the world is truly blind. We have all at some point or another used *an eye for an eye* principle that we sometimes forget the beauty of our choices. Anyway, I am simplifying but the best gardens are the ones most nurtured.

Optimism is the key

Worrying senseless just raises your blood pressure because no matter how much you worry; your circumstances, unless you act on them, won't change. Base your optimism not on some super visualisation concept, but simply on the occurrence of day and night (you get this proof every day). In all your challenges, after dark comes light and even in darkness, there is the moon. That is optimism in action and the learnings are free... Gift yourself the luxury of time to look out at dusk and at dawn and learn from that.



Patience is a virtue

Every good thing takes time, for Mandela it was 27 years. So don't build your life on a weak foundation. Allow the foundation to dry and build the walls to precision; for at a certain point in your life, when your circumstances change or your walls crumble, it will be easy to rebuild because you know how to. Learning to genuinely know how to, takes patience.

uestion everything

I have two kids I should rename "why". But I am learning that as we grow older, we lose that ability to question everything. You get a pretty woman who dated a married man and didn't know it. This often happens because we don't question. Even if you are in a relationship, before you commit, ask a guy if he can play the Spanish guitar; it's only fair. Ask about his mom, if you intend to marry him, so you can decide where to relocate to after marriage... some of us should have moved to Russia.

espect yourself and others

Before you go 'yeah!'... The best form of respect is when you use it as a verb and not as noun. It is about being genuine about who you are so that people can accept you for who you are and you can accept them for who they are. There is nothing as disrespectful as acting a part - unless of course, if it is going to appear on TV. If you suffer from buliotosis, be straight so we can know that the best way to deal with you is to send you to the bathroom!



Learn to be still/silent

You will be amazed by how much you will learn and how pleasant your environment will become, if you learn the art of stillness or silence.



Trust is key

Wherever your trust is, make sure you cement it. If you trust in God; do it with all your heart and if you trust in sangomas, be just as firm. If you are lucky enough to trust yourself, do it unwaveringly.



Understanding

Like knowledge, understanding is an art. Master it.

Value what you have

Your time on earth, your family, your job and your possessions. It is so easy to lose them so value them everyday in words and in action because tomorrow might never come... Do you value your job no matter how bad you think it is? Other people out there are pushing CVs like crazy. Other people are single; Do you value your partner; Some don't have parents or siblings, do you value yours?



Wisdom

The greatest people in the world are not clever but are wise. That is why there is a big industry focusing on EQ, instead of IQ, because I am sure you went to school with clever people who have amounted to nothing - because they were clever but not wise.



Live like a xylophone

Live your life in song. Dance to the beat of your own music and let those around you enjoy you because of the way you sound and the fact that you make them dance. That is why we relate to each other; you want the people around you to make your heart, mind and body dance.



Be young at heart

Age is a number that is overrated. Age, but retain the childlike ability to discern, to love, to laugh and to find joy and beauty in small things. Our preoccupation with bigger and better is the source of the rut most of us find ourselves in. Children do anything and everything without fear of being judged. I am not suggesting recklessness, but be young at heart and live like you have a butterfly tattoo on your heart...



Be like
Shaka Zulu

Born to the most challenging of circumstances, he rose up to become one of the greatest warriors of our generations.

He was tenacious, determined, steadfast and nothing stood in his way. Yes, just like him you might get sabotaged, but I would rather die having mattered than safely. If you don't die, you need to look back and say, "I might be in a bad space now, but the ride was fun and worth my birth".



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