

Visit to Limpopo

Pieter and Meryl Horn and Cleopadia Mohlaodi spent three days in Giyani and Elim, Limpopo province visiting friends who have been part of Moral Re-Armament, now Initiatives of Change (IofC), for many years.



Our first stop was with **Wilhelmina Miyen**, widow of the headmaster, Patrick Miyen, and their son and three daughters and two of her great-grandchildren. It was an unhurried time of catching up and for Cleo to hear more from Wilhelmina about their part with IofC in years gone by.

Dr Margaret Zuber (sister to Sylvia Zuber) and **Edmée Botteron**, who both worked at hospitals and clinics in the area, introduced the Miyens to the work of MRA, practising a quiet time and absolute standards.

Wilhelmina was teaching in a teacher's training college at Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga province. She would visit schools in the area to evaluate young trainee teachers. On one of these trips Mr de Beer, the white headmaster, told Wilhelmina that she must sit at the open back of a little van. It was windy and drizzling and she was pregnant with their youngest child, Peter. En route back to the training college Mr de Beer went via his home. Wilhelmina was not invited in and Mrs de Beer made snide remarks about Wilhelmina on the back of the van. Back at the college Wilhelmina had to continue teaching in her damp clothes.

"I was very bitter," she recounted. "One day I was talking with Patrick. He said, 'bitterness does not pay. Mr de Beer is trying to follow the (apartheid) government and what is expected of him.' After we had a quiet time together my thought was 'Forgive that man. He is not a bad man. He is trying to obey the laws of the country. Go and apologize for your bitterness.'"

"I went to his office. I told him that after I had travelled in the back of the van I had contracted a cold and that I am pregnant. I told him that I had hated him... and that I was sorry. I told him that it had not been at all easy to go and talk to him. But the Lord gave me strength."

De Beer said, "I'm also sorry for humiliating you. Very, very sorry. It will never happen again. I want to tell the school. It will be a lesson for not only me and you, but for the teachers and the children."

At the school assembly De Beer told the story to the whole school and said to Wilhelmina, 'I should have apologised to you first.' He extended his hand to shake hands with Wilhelmina. Wilhelmina described how the whole tone of the school changed. There was order, peace and love in the school.... "This is what God does. You think it is a small thing but it (turns out to be) a big thing."

On the second day we travelled on to Elim, 73kms north west from Giyani and were taken by **Thomas Khosa**, recently retired from the health services, to the home of 88 yr old **Vidah Mageza**, cousin of Patrick Miyen and then spent the next two nights in the home of **Nelly Tlakula** and her daughter and two grandsons.

The following morning a meeting was arranged by Thomas for everyone to come to Nelly's home for the day. We showed the film "*A Man for All People*," the story of Dr William Nkomo. Cleo, who was asked by Thomas to chair the meeting, shared the story about the rift between her mother and their neighbour and how it had an effect on the children of both families. Cleo had felt that she could not go along with this and started talking and smiling to the neighbour's children. When Cleo's brother passed away, the neighbour's daughter was the first one to come to console Cleo.



***Back row from l-r: Cleo Mohlaodi, Nelly Tlakula, Thomas Khosa, Happy Mdoka, Daphne Shiluvana, Meryl Horn, Queen Mageza, Nsovo Manganyi
Front Row l-r: Elizabeth Mageza, Frieda Mahlali, Vidah Mageza, Tsakani Miyen, Selinah Maparogo***

People then had time to introduce themselves and to interact. The following are snippets from what people shared:

Nsovo Manganyi: “We need to be an example of moral based behaviour in our communities,” she said.

Daphne Shiluvana: “I learnt a lot from the movie. (Film about Dr Nkomo). It’s about living, not telling others what to do. I’ve really learnt that God has a plan for each one.”

Selinah Maparogo: “I am now understanding the purpose of MRA/IofC and ways to change yourself – not by talking but by action - work on myself first. Look at the mistakes I have been doing. My neighbours – not their behaviour but the way I behave. Not judging. Yesterday and today is changing my behaviour.”

An invitation to return

The Elim team decided to meet once a month from now until July (to begin with) and have invited Creators of Peace facilitators give a Peace Circle in Elim from 31 July - 2nd August. The dates are still to be confirmed.

We returned full of gratitude for each one whom we met and had conversation with, and for the very warm welcome and generous hospitality we received.

South Africans Have Major Role at ICB Conference in India

Business is one of the strongest drivers for change - good and bad.

In 1986, European and Japanese business people, led by Frits Philips, founder of the multinational Philips company, set up the Caux Round Table to promote ethical business practices - what some now call moral capitalism.



One of the spin-offs of this focus of more than three decades on the role of business in world change is the Initiatives of Change for Business (previous Caux Initiatives for Business). Every two years, the ICB meets at Asia Plateau, the IofC Centre in Panchgani, India.

Anthony Duigan of Pretoria writes:

“This year I attended the biannual conference on the theme, “Creating Value by Building Trust” with two fellow South Africans, Crispin Sonn of Cape Town, director of Gamiro Investments, and Bob Garbett, Managing Director of Professional Aviation with head office at Lanseria Airport.

This conference was a double-header, starting with a “CEO’s Conclave” on 1 and 2 February, co-chaired by Crispin Sonn and Farhad Forbes, Joint Chair of Forbes Marshall, a leading Indian engineering firm and multinational based in Pune.

This series of focused discussions was an opportunity for 25 business people from India, Malaysia, UK and SA so share their thinking and approaches on building trust with employees, customers and suppliers.

Living core values

The theme was summed up by ICB Chair, Sarosh Ghandy (a retired board director of one of the Tata companies): “Business is a lot more than just avoiding corruption,” he said. “It is building sustainability that is based on creating value (for employees and customers) and living core values such as love.”

Three values were summed up as the foundation of good and ethical business - authenticity, honesty and the willingness to be vulnerable.

The ICB conference proper followed between 3 and 6 February and drew more than 80 business people, including a large delegation from Japan. As always, the ambience of Asia Plateau combined with the early morning “Soul Nurture” (a one-hour silent reflection in the gardens of Asia Plateau) and “Inner Governance” sessions played a major role in preparing the delegates for honest discussions.

Both Sonn and Garbett were keynote speakers and made a significant impact through stories of their business lives, the decisions they made and the way they sought to conduct business. As Sonn noted: “I’m learning from my time here to use the word ‘love’ in business. And that’s a big shift for me.”

Garbett told the extraordinary story of how Mozambique authorities, some years ago, impounded one of Professional Aviation’s planes carrying cargo for a client and flying via Maputo, and would not release it without a bribe being paid. He and his late wife, Christine, refused to pay and ultimately lost the plane (the insurers, Lloyd’s of London contested the insurance claim and won on appeal to the Chief Justice). This resulted in them almost going out of business. The plane is still standing in Maputo.

As Garbett noted, despite the tough times they faced over years while fighting in the courts for insurance, he and his wife gained immeasurably from the stance they took, standing against corruption.

One important outcome of the Conference is the commitment both Garbett and Sonn took, to support the establishment of a wing of the ICB in SA."

Change In Progress

On the 29th January 2020, as part of the Change In Progress (CiP) outreach, the Initiatives of Change team gave 43 school-bags (donated by PEP stores) to disadvantaged learners at Noordgesig Secondary School. The principal, Mr. Deveraux and the teachers warmly welcomed the IofC team. With gratitude and humility, deserving Grade 8 and 10 learners lined up to receive their gifts.




Mr. Deveraux's said, "Our school is really blessed. First a trophy for being one of the top schools in Gauteng (province) with a 95.1% pass rate for 2019 matric results and now a school bag donation. God is really good."

Reported by: Lucel Snyers

Change in Progress camp

A call for younger people between the ages of 17 – 25 years to take part in the camp under the theme "Me and my identity." For more info contact Lucel: 073 729 1861 or 011 3310137





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Inner Healing Under Construction

The Creators of Peace (CoP) programme, visited the Leratong village situated on the outskirts of Roodepoort, west of Johannesburg. This kicked off the 2020 partnership between The City of Johannesburg municipality and the CoP programme.

Leratong which means a 'place of love' in the Sesotho language is the opposite of what inhabitants in this community would say about the state of their area. Leratong village started as an informal settlement in the 1990's where people of black and coloured races from all over South Africa settled. Today it is a community of over 100,000 people. There are challenges with water, sanitation, single-parent homes, crime, substance abusers, lack of identity and a lot of inhumane neglect. It is not uncommon for someone to pick up a deserted newborn or neglected child within the community.

The CoP Circle programme ran from the 18-20 February with 18 participants - 7 men and 11 women. As the facilitators we realised this community is a perfect example of generational inheritance of pain and grief leading to a society that's accepting of resentment and hate towards each other.



Participants during an exercise

Angelina, one of the participants, shared, "My mother is a good woman who helps everyone in our community but neglects us at home. I do not have a healthy relationship with her because she never pays attention to my deepest needs – to helping me to become the best person I can be."

The group had hopes that by the end of the Peace Circle workshop they would manage to deal with their anger, develop self-esteem and indeed start a journey of inner healing and self love.

From day one forgiveness was a priority discussion with this group. Inner healing was indeed 'under construction' because people could not even articulate what healing or change they wished to have. By the end of the third day, during the 'Peace in Practice' session some indicated that their next steps would be to improve their education levels. Others shared that they still had a lot of work to do within themselves for e.g.

needing to find work in order to bring hope for themselves and their families. Seven participants asked to be referred for professional assistance in issues of anger, clearing criminal records and grief.

Mantwa, one of the facilitators shared, "When one of the participants told of the pain he felt when he lost his child due to an abortion the mother of his child had, without telling him, I was reminded of my own pain of having a still born baby. I took a decision to forgive the blame I had for myself."

There will be a follow-up session on the 10th of March to check in with the group and also see how much progress has been made with decisions taken.

Report by Lucel Snyers and Mantwa Mabe

Conversations Boost Confidence

"After believing what others said about me I lost my confidence. These three days have boosted my confidence once again. From now on I will be working on **me** so that I celebrate my birthday on the 29th March with confidence," said Mandu, one of the 25 men and women participants in the Creators of Peace (CoP) Circle which took place from 25 -27 February in Braamfischerville, Roodepoort (west of Johannesburg).



It's been said that good communication is a bridge between confusion and clarity. The young women and men between the ages of 20 and 35yrs gathered at the Power of Cross Ministry church with the hope that conversations would help them start living their lives beyond perceived failure from those around them. Daily challenges of peer pressure are so deep and the majority of the youth have taken to tobacco and alcohol as a coping mechanism.

Painful conversations opened up as we went through the gathering points of the programme namely: 'What builds and what destroys my peace' and 'What is this peace that I am searching for?' With much role play, singing, storytelling and small group discussions the group started becoming comfortable with themselves and began to open up just like a beautiful sunflower facing the sun.

In the beginning, one of the participants had said that

he wished that "these three days would help me better my leadership skills." Then, after some role play activity, he commented, "I am impressed with the talent and openness I have seen in this room. This makes me believe we can achieve more."

We identified that the root cause of lack of communication within this group stems from lack of communication within the family structure. Many of the personal stories shared highlighted how many are living with family feuds and divisions. Sadly this is a story many black South Africans can relate to.

Nomvula shared, "I grew up, happy with my sisters and we would all share a meal daily despite the place we found ourselves living in. After our grandmother died the one sister inherited the house now we are all divided. This hurts. Today I find myself in taverns (pubs) drinking my pain away and trying to find happiness outside myself and outside my family."

On the third day, after experiencing the 'Inner Listening' session of knowing how to connect and find corrections and direction from God for one's life, ten percent gave feedback that they now smoked less and are starting to choose carefully the friends they keep. Lucel, one of the facilitators shared, "Family support is important. I too am being challenged to continue restoring relationships within my family so as to get to a level where we can honestly support each other."

It was a huge celebration at the end of the Peace Circle when participants started realizing the potential of applying what they had learnt. One participant shared, "I wish I could live in this room together with the CoP programme because this is where I am happy and find it easy to talk, unlike at home where we only talk when things are happy but do not know how to talk through important and serious issues that go on in our lives."

There will be a follow-up session on the 11th of March. We will also give mentoring skills to the group.

Report by Lucel Snyers, Mantwa Mabe and Cleo Mohlaodi

Pan Africa Conference on Governance - moving from wanting to doing

A three-day Pan Africa conference on governance with top-level speakers from different countries - is taking place in Ghana between 26 and 28 May 2020.

Several decades ago, the World Bank identified the lack of good and strong governance practices as "the crisis that underlies the litany of Africa's development problems".

The theme for this conference - ***Ethical Leadership and Good Governance: Key to Building a Sustainable Africa*** - is aimed at linking sustainable development of the continent with core values that underpin it.

As one of the conference planning committee put it: "We are aiming for a conference that moves Africa from just wanting and talking about good governance to actually doing it." Thus, the conference will aim to answer some key questions:

- What can we - citizens, businesspeople, political and community leaders - do to inspire and promote good governance, ethical leadership and sustainability in the countries of Africa?
- How can we equip, train, mentor and build capacity in the new generations that will be moving into leadership positions in the future?
- How can we best support and connect those in leadership positions already committed to ethical practices and incorruptible leading and sustain this commitment?

With the intention of "doing good governance", one practical outcome of the Conference will be the launch of Initiatives of Change for Governance (ICG), an ongoing fellowship of business, political and community leaders who will work through Chapters in different centres as catalysts for building a good governance ethos in all sectors of society.

The ICG will be launched at a special event within the Conference, a facilitated Round Table of senior business, political and community leaders. It will be based on the successful model of the Initiatives of Change for Business (ICB), a fellowship of businesspeople who support each other in doing business that is always ethical as well as competitive.

For more information and to register for this Conference, go to the website: iofc africa.org. Or contact Anthony Duigan at anthony@jcp.co.za



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