

'Heal Cape Town, make her a better place' – Clementia Pae



A new breed emerging;

a door of hope

"Heal the world; Make it a better place

"For you and for me; and the entire human race

"There are people dying; if you care enough for the living

"Make a better place; for you and for me"

It was exactly six days after Voice of Africa Global Media hosted an event in Cape Town that left many of our hearts aching and minds restless, that I found myself staring at a new dawn – a door of hope.

Looking at this new possibility, I realised that it remained entirely up to me, to either enter this door of hope, running joyfully; or to hold back and remain in the place of hopelessness and despair that we are witnessing daily.

SEE ALSO: ['Cry for freedom' from Cape Town's black professionals – Nomvuyo Xabela](#)

As I listened to the famous song, by the late Michael Jackson, "Heal the world, make it a better place, for you and for me, and the entire human race", it seemed as though I was hearing it for the first time as the the youth of Pinelands High

School were singing it, towards the end of their Music Gala Concert at Hugo Lamberts Auditorium in Parow.

I had come to the concert to see and support my youngest daughter, Lerato, and her friends, as they showcased their skills and talents, on different music items at the concert. My daughter sang a couple of solos and played the lead trumpet. She and many of her friends have been together since grade one. Eleven years on, they are still close friends.

When I entered the auditorium, I was given a brochure for the event, and it had writing on the cover – “Together we heal the world”.

As this multiracial choir stood on stage and sang “Heal the world”, I felt and saw a fresh wind of the Spirit of God blowing and whispering “THERE IS HOPE FOR CAPE TOWN”.

As I watched and listened carefully, I realised that these young lives signified unity in purity, and unity in diversity. Not only do they sing together, but they see one another as people – as equals. They see one another as friends, classmates, schoolmates, team members, etc.

Over the years, this unity and their love for one another might have been challenged and even polluted by the negative environment around them, but even so, no evil has taken root deep inside of them yet, because of the purity of their young hearts.

The Spirit of the Lord continued echoing: “A new breed is emerging, protect them.” “They are the new dawn of hope, to bring light, peace and the healing in the nation, embrace them.” “They carry life, they see life, they speak life, they do life, nurture them, in My ways.” “Speak life to them. Give them space to live the life that I have ordained for them.”

This was not a church service, but the Spirit of God was present. Looking again at the brochure, I realised that the

Spirit of God had inspired the design and the writing on the cover page.

God Himself is pouring out His Spirit and releasing healing upon all flesh, across society. The time for Cape Town to receive her healing has come.

Bridging the gap; preserving lives

The situation was however a very different one, a week earlier, at the event organised by Voice of Africa Media, to “Redress the Erosion of black Professionals in Cape Town”.

At this event the crowd comprised very hurting, very frustrated and very angry, young black professionals, who had responded to a call to “come and speak out about the challenges that they are facing in the marketplace in Cape Town on a daily basis”.

Voice of Africa Global Media (VOA) embarked on this movement, as a response to a much-raised question that has attracted great attention in media – the question of “Why do black professionals leave Cape Town?”

According to the Department of Labour, the percentage of black African professionals in Cape Town has increased by a mere 4% in the past 10 years.

VOA recognised that the loss of these professionals is not just a human resources problem, with movement from one organisation to another, but rather a socio-economic issue, which affects us all, and which needs urgent attention and collective effort. VOA responded by starting a movement, and creating a platform, to enable constructive dialogue. Here, life stories were shared, solutions presented, skills, talents, and lives preserved in the Cape Town marketplace and society.

Diverse industry bodies, marketplace professionals, various specialists, and all interested parties were invited to

participate in this dialogue, in order to bring diverse solutions. There was recognition of the need to first listen to those in pain, before coming to their aid with solutions; and on the other hand, that one cannot receive help, without speaking out about one's desperate needs.

The goal was, "heal Cape Town and make her a better place, for you and for me, and the entire human race.

The marketplace; a power switch

Deciding to not only rely on various research findings on the exodus of young black professionals, VOA conducted several interviews prior to its event. The responses confirmed that the challenges faced by black professionals in Cape Town are "segregation, hostility in the workplace, cultural isolation, lack of networking opportunities, etc."

At the event, listening to the different stories, and seeing tears of frustration flowing down the faces of our young professionals, one realised that, the energy, the power and the light that was bursting through their veins, when they left high school, had been switched off completely, without any warning.

Now, they found themselves in the very slippery, very deep and dark pits of the marketplace corridors, where depression lurks.

What is a power switch? It is a device that diverts the flow of something from one path to another. In the case of electricity power is switched from on to off. Our youngsters come out of university flowing with endless possibilities, but are brought to a complete halt as they enter the marketplace.

Instead of the marketplace becoming a launching pad that propels them to greater heights, for many, it becomes a deep and dark hole that they fall into, from which they cannot find a way out.

I had a privilege of meeting one young black professional, in her late twenties. This young lady had just been laid off by a reputable company in Cape Town. Even though she is a jewel, herself, full of life and flowing with creativity in her space, she was marginalised at her work, unfairly treated and later laid off.

She was about to pack her bags and leave Cape Town for Johannesburg. She also came to attend the redressing event. And as she shared her story, I could hear her heart crying: "You guys have failed us," meaning "You who have gone before us, you adults, have failed us. You failed to warn us of the evil of racism in the Cape Town marketplace. You failed to protect us. You failed to intervene."

As Arifa Parkar, CEO of Western Cape Business Opportunities Forum, who was guest speaker at the event, shared her own tough story of having to push through many obstacles, climbing up the corporate ladders in Cape Town, and being marginalised because of the colour of her skin. I could see our young professionals nodding their heads in agreement, and silently saying: "At least someone understands. Well, at least to a certain extent."

I saw a little wave of comfort envelope our youngsters. When the discussions continued, we soon realised that what has worked for us might not necessarily work for our youth today. However, it is still worth the discussion, moving forward.

Many of them, whom I managed to engage after the event, shared stories of their own close friends, who had committed suicide, because they were battling in silence.

Even at this event our youth were fearful about speaking openly, in case someone was recording them, taking their photos, etc, which might threaten their jobs. However, we assured them that the information was safe with us, and they ended up speaking freely.

On the other hand, it was encouraging to see a couple of our middle-aged black professionals, who are currently occupying senior positions in big organisations in Cape Town, raising their hands to say: "We will come and share our stories and struggles with our young counterparts on the platform. We have nothing to hide. We are ready for constructive dialogue".

Many organisations have been encouraged to measure the emotional state of their organisations, and to get professional help for their workforce, such as coaching and mentoring, workshops or training on cultural intelligence, etc. We saw a great response to this as well.

The role of the church; the role of parents

Currently, Vuka Africa Foundation is running a Healing campaign, "100 days word treatment", where Bible verses are read daily, by various church and ministry leaders from around the continent. These scriptures are taken (read) daily, as one would a prescribed medication when sick.

Many testimonies of healing have been received during the first and second phases of 100 days of healing that took place in 2017. This third phase, which began on August 1 2018, has even more organisations and nations participating, and the healing is flowing.

The word of God and prayer is the first and the most important gift and weapon that we are given to use and see the mercies of God rewrite our lives, our children's lives, and our communities and nations.

In addition to this, I am also hearing the Lord calling many leaders to take up a more active role in empowering our youth, beyond Sunday services and youth nights on Friday.

We have many business leaders in the church pews, who need to adopt, nurture, raise, coach, counsel and guide our young professionals in the marketplace.

We do not have to live in an environment that is eroded of its lives, skills and talents. Currently, the enemy is taking advantage of our children's frustration and turning it into anger and manipulating the news, to bring his evil agenda in our cities and nation.

But we do not have to see this division in our midst. We have to engage in more dialogue. We have to be the voice of hope in our cities and in the nation. It is our responsibility, as parents of all races and cultures, to unite, to speak life and truth to our children.

It is our responsibility to tell them that "not every white person is a racist". It is our responsibility to tell them that "there is hope for a black professional to succeed in Cape Town".

It is also our responsibility to prove that these statements are true, even as we, ourselves; embrace unity in diversity, in word and deed. We simply cannot look away. We cannot ignore the pain that is evidently there.

Back at the Pinelands High School music concert, as I was chatting to the parents of my daughter's friend, whom I have known for a couple of years, and who happens to be white, I was so encouraged and reminded of what it means to be our brother's keeper.

The mother told me she has assured my daughter, that whenever I was away from Cape Town, she would be there for her. She would be her mother. She would not replace me, but she would assume my duty in my absence, by adopting my child as her own, playing this life-giving role, without expecting anything in return.

I was deeply comforted by this. In my book *Life-giving Destiny Helpers* which will be released later this year, I have a chapter called "Who has borne me these". This chapter was birthed to awaken the Church to the spirit of adoption.

In this chapter I share God's heart concerning adoption, and remind us, how we, ourselves, have been adopted into the family of God, and how we are called to adopt children of all ages, including our young professionals – and let the mercies of God rewrite their lives.

“Heal Cape Town; make her a better place. If you care enough for the living, make a better place for you and for me.”

Isaiah 58:6-14