

learning for life



Taking responsibility for what you really want

No pessimist ever sailed a ship to explore new lands, nor invented something which would benefit humankind. No pessimist invented a more environmentally-friendly fuel, nor actively protested against violence or war. The pessimist has the belief that nothing they do can impact change. They carry with them a belief that there is little worth in pursuing dreams that inspire and transform. They only know how to complain because in the complaining they feel released from actually being accountable for what they are complaining about. So, to all the people out there that say that something cannot be done, please do not interrupt the others who are doing it.

I think of the Wright brothers, who proved that flying a plane was possible. I think of the athletes who proved that a mile can be run in under four minutes. I think of Mother Teresa, Ghandi and Nelson Mandela, who all kept doing what other people said could not be done. These people search out alternative ways of being and interacting with the world in order to find solutions to the things that are not working for them. They take responsibility to create a lifestyle that works for them. They believe they can make a difference, and they do.

My passion is education and human transformation and the two concepts are actually the same. Every day I come across parents who are complaining about the "education system" with great gusto and energy. "The standards are dropping and the children are just like products on a conveyor belt," they say. "I mean schools don't really give my children the skills they need. Something must change because we just can't go on like this!"

So let me introduce the 'Someone Theory'. If anyone is complaining about anything, they are basically saying, "I wish that Someone (not me), would do Something, Somehow, Sometime, about this problem."

I was at a friend's party the other evening, listening to a group of parents moan about their children's schooling. They sounded really concerned that education hasn't really changed much since their own school days and that they felt modern schooling doesn't really support their children much. "My child is sensitive and there just seems so much pressure on children nowadays"; "We just have so little choice here in South Africa. The government really needs to get its act together." I heard a lot of the 'Someone Theory' in their conversation. I wondered what they would actually put on the line (or be willing to give up) in order to get what they wanted?

After about 35 minutes someone found out that I was a School Principal and asked me for my opinion on the matter. I shared with them the underlying concepts of our schooling approach and how it opens up some really powerful environments for children to feel supported and develop in.

Their heads were all nodding in agreement on how an approach like this is really inspiring and meets so many of their concerns. They asked where we are located and I told them.

"Oh no, that's over the mountain. It's a 35-minute drive there. And then back." I noted to myself that she had just spent the same amount of time (35 minutes) complaining about her children's schooling problem and how she can't seem to find an alternative. I also decided that it would probably be of no use sharing with her

last week's story of the family who lived two hours' drive away, chose to uproot their business, and move house and community to be close to what they valued. Or of the family who are relocating from Pretoria because this is something important to them.

What are you willing to do to bring what is important to you into your life? The amount of energy you will put into changing something will clearly demonstrate how much you really want

it. And if you choose not about it, then please about it. Complaining are not willing to take what you want.

So I would like support for the people bring about change way they are able, You may be the sort your garbage 20 minutes to the depot (when it would be easier just to put out a or those who find there is no recycling depot close to home so you open one at the nearest school. You may be the ones who change old light fittings to energy-saving lightbulbs; or those who think carefully about how you impact your environment (maybe you use solar-panels, or build with eco-friendly materials) Maybe it is you who became a teacher so you could make a difference to the next generation. Because you know that in choosing to do this thing, you are making a difference, even a little one. You recognise that ultimately you are responsible so you stop complaining about it and you do something about it.

And this is what I wished for children to experience. Let them experience a way of being that empowers them to bring about change in their lives. Let them feel that they can engage the world in ways which are meaningful. Let them deeply understand that they do not have to take the world as it is presented to them, that they can make a difference in big or small ways. Let us create environments that empower children to become creators of their lives where their language is made up of words of passion, values, meaning and understanding. Let them proactively engage the world in ways which bring about constructive change while demonstrating their care and their compassion.

This was something that I wished for until I saw that I, too, was being held captive by the 'Someone Theory'. I had wished that 'Someone' would open up a school in which I could teach in a dynamic and integrated way. I wished that Someone would do Something. Soon enough I realised that if I really wanted to teach in an empowering way, I would need to take responsibility and do something about it.

So perhaps there comes a time in your life when you take away the crutches and the stories that prevent you from doing what you really want to do. "If only..."; "Maybe when I..."; "It would be nice if..."; "What I need is...". And all you are left with is: "I am, I can..." and you do! ✂

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no recycling depot

