

BEAUTY MKIZE.



My name is Beauty Mkize, I am a 62 year old Zoeloe lady living with HIV. I was born and bred in Amanzimtoti in KwaZulu Natal. I started working at Mr. & Mrs. v Heerden in 1992 in Durban. They moved to Kempton Park in January 1999 and I moved here with them. Mr. v Heerden is a very kind-hearted and loving person and has since taken very well care of me.

In 1996 when I was 52 years old I was involved with a man. I did not have a relationship with this man - I was fooling around. We had unprotected sex only once. He passed away in 1998 and at this

stage I was unaware of the fact that he was HIV+ and that I have contracted the virus from him.

During 2004 I became very ill and my master, Mr. v Heerden, took me to a doctor in Kempton Park. Without receiving any pre-test counseling blood samples was taken for testing. A few days later my master took me back to the doctor and once again without any counseling, the doctor dumped the news that I was HIV+, on me. I was devastated and felt like taking my own life. My master told me that he knew a lady that was involved with HIV/AIDS matters and that he would seek help from her.

Mr. v Heerden contacted Jana v Niekerk, who because of her work, had excellent resources. She had a friend, Dr. Neil v Schalkwyk, who is an HIV/AIDS clinician in Rustenburg. She immediately arranged with him to see me. There and then for the first time I was counseled by Jeanette Little and given information about the disease. I was also put on medication.

When I was younger I used to be a Christian but had fallen by the way. Dr. v Schalkwyks` wife, Marie, runs the counseling center. Both of them are Christians and being involved at this center I was brought back to God and is since a firm believer.

Dr. v Schalkwyk runs the Thapelogo Hospice in Phokeng, Rustenburg that is supported by the Roman Catholic Diocese. Since I was diagnosed I have been admitted there twice and received loving care and Christian inspiration by all the staff. I see my doctor on a regular basis.

My master has been there for me all the way, supporting me, giving me love, taking me to Rustenburg to see my doctor. I am so thankful towards God for had it not been for Him bringing all these loving and caring people in my life I am convinced that I would have passed on long ago. Having God in my life has made all the difference. There is no way one can fight this disease without God in your life. God gives me the strength to carry on. He has also given me the love in my heart to forgive the man who gave me the disease. What makes me even more grateful towards God is having the opportunity to share my story and maybe making a difference in someone's life. Fooling around, living an immoral life and not having God in your life is asking for trouble. I thank God for my life.

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Beauty would like to share her testimony at awareness sessions and church services. You can contact Jana at Tel. 018-4693429 (H); Cell. 0784590007