

Lebogang's story

By the time I was in Grade 12, I was arrogant and selfish. I became a womaniser, using girls as my sex slaves. I was addicted to sex and alcohol. I was under the control of friends and peer pressure. I even started to disrespect my mother, who was trying hard, as a single parent, for me to have a great future. I even started to fail my monthly tests. I had been a favourite student of teachers but since I changed, they started to turn their backs on me. They tried hard to change me but I never listened to them.

When I look back, I see this all started when my friends and I formed ourselves into a group in Grade 10. We were brilliant students doing well in our tests and exams. We did everything together. People used to call us "Mphakathi" which means "community".

Slowly we started becoming proud of our own capacity. This is where I started to be arrogant, ambitious and ignorant.

The months kept on going and I grew with that attitude. Instead of changing I became worse. I had been a churchgoer, but since I joined the group, I stopped going to church. I started to point fingers at other people, calling them names and hurting them. I was not aware of what I was doing, because at that moment, I was lost.

In Grade 11 our group grew and we still had the same attitude. By this time I had done three AVP workshops but there was no change; I was only interested in the food provided at the workshops and checking out new girls from other places.

In Grade 12 our group grew again and now we enjoyed being known and famous. We never thought of the after-effects of our bullying and our aggression. But we now started to lose our good performance and dropped down with our good results.

Then I facilitated my first AVP workshop. It was my first experience of standing in front of the participants. That's where I started to see I am now in the real world and I am lost, so I need to collect myself. What motivated me to change were some of the touching stories people told about themselves. That's when I saw that people are being hurt by what I am doing and that there are caring people out there. I started to feel pain, but I knew that it was never too late for me to change. As I changed, our group divided and a few came with me and two of them are my co-facilitators. I realised that I had been like I was because I had low self-esteem and I didn't have courage. AVP made a positive impact in my life and showed me that I can do it if I believe in myself and live a positive, loving, caring life. I am now back to my normal life where I belong; a respecting boy with a good future and perfect goals. I am not only back as a normal boy but I am back with more fire. I now have self-esteem, courage, love and pride to tell of who I am. I give myself a pure 100% for the changes in my life.

This is the Real Me

There can Only be One Me

All about the Real Lebogang – the non-violent freedom fighter!