

Motivational Speech for Women Councilors in Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality

Topic: Life beyond 2011 elections, what is the exit strategy, how to cope?

1. Introduction

- I have been asked to give a motivational talk this morning in the face of an uncertain future which lies ahead for many of us here today.
- There are so many questions without answers relating to what life would be after the 2011 elections, how to exit as swiftly as possible, if we have to.
- Some of us might be feeling like we are going to drown in an ocean of circumstances beyond our control
- Others might be feeling that all hell is going to break loose and all that they have is about to disappear
- We might be feeling our world is falling apart
- The evidence before us may be suggesting that the situation is going to get worse instead of getting better
- The heap of evidence before us may be pointing overwhelmingly to defeat

Let me be quick to say, the future is uncertain for everyone, including myself; no one knows what the future holds! Sometimes when you think you have something, then it is gone; sometimes when you think something is gone, you discover that you have it. Therefore the future is uncertain for everyone.

2. Why is the future uncertain? Because:

- For everyone, Life is like a book with many different chapters
 - Some tell of tragedy, others of triumph
 - Some chapters are depressing and challenging
 - Others are intense and exciting (There is a time for everything under the sun)
- For everyone, Life is like weather, it changes, it is not static, it is dynamic
 - Spring becomes Summer.
 - Summer becomes Autumn.
 - Autumn becomes Winter.
 - Winter becomes Spring
 - Life is about going through all these seasons; imagine how life would be if it was winter all the time
- In life there is a time for everything under the sun for every person, in every place, in every circumstance.
 - There is a time of entry and a time of exit
 - A time to give birth, and a time to die;
 - A time to plant, and a time to uproot what is planted.
 - A time to weep, and a time to laugh;

- A time to mourn, and a time to dance.

Therefore, if you have entered into a position; surely you will one day exit, it is only a matter of time

Every chapter of life has its own challenges for everyone. You need to dress for the occasion

The road without challenges probably leads no where. It is only in darkness that we see the stars.

Nurses and doctors are challenged to save lives, they have to dress for the occasion, they have to dress to kill sickness and illness. They have to be fully armed to perform their job, wear the right shoes to run for emergency, wear hygienic gloves not to transmit infections. If they do not dress properly, they will lose the battle, they will be defeated.

Police men and soldiers are challenged to protect society, they have to dress for the occasion, they have to dress to kill theft, violence, and any unlawful actions. They have to gird their guns on their loins, wear the bullet proofs, wear appropriate shoes to be able to climb, jump and run when the need arises. If they do not dress properly, they will lose the battle, they will be defeated.

Christians are at war, not against flesh and blood; but against principalities of the devil. **They** have to dress for the occasion, they have to dress to kill. Their outfit is prescribed in Eph 6:15-17

Loins girt about with truth and having on the
Breastplate of righteousness
Feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace
Shield of faith to extinguish all the fiery darts of the wicked
The sword of the spirit which is the word of God

Women are faced with challenges and let me cite a few examples and confine myself to working women.

- Women are relatively less recognized and less supported
- Women have to prove themselves before they are trusted;
- Women intellectual capabilities are usually undermined,
- Women productive capabilities are generally undermined,
- Women are not viewed as competent,
- Women sometimes face intimidation,
- Women are sometimes not trusted that they can make mature decision

- Women are sometimes labeled as weak and fragile
- Women are sometimes made to feel that they did not earn the position they hold, they have been made a favour (affirmative action)

We are in the struggle, we must dress up for the occasion.

How do you dress up to cope with challenges, how do you dress up to face an impending exit, how do you dress up to face life after 2011 local government elections

- There are things that you possess which no one can take from you, you have full ownership of them
- There are things that are timeless. They do not change no irregardless of the chapter of life you are in
- There are the things which can sustain you in any chapter of your life, in any season of your life, in any time of your life.
- For me, the exit strategy, is nothing else but to hold dear that which is not only timeless and eternal but I have full control over

A. I may not be certain about what life will be beyond 2011 but what I am certain of is that: “You are valuable for as long as you live”

- You are unique, there is no one like you that has ever been before or will ever come after
- There is none like you in the entire universe. There is no make of you in Japan, China, Taiwan, etc
- No one can speak with your voice, smile your smile
- Cars, no matter how expensive they may be, they are not unique
- You are the only unique creature in the entire universe – you have been fearfully and wonderfully made that way!
- Houses, no matter how beautiful they may look, they are not unique
- You are a masterpiece which cannot be found anywhere!
- The world is not complete without you
- The country is not complete without you
- The Eastern Cape Province is not complete without you
- The Nelson Mandela Bay Municipality is not complete without you
- Your community is not complete without you
- Your family is not complete without you

- You don't have to justify it, fight for it, prove it – it is just that way! It is an undisputable fact!
- You don't have to work for it or earn it – your value and your worth is a free gift that no money can buy!
- You do not have to have a “not so good enough syndrome” – I am not tall enough, I am not skinny enough, I am not intelligent enough”
- As a woman, you are even more special
- It was from the womb of a woman blessed by God that the human race descended
- It was the womb of the woman , untouched by man, that God used to cradle and bring forth the Savior of the world

B. I may not be certain about what life will be beyond 2011 but what I am certain of is that: “You have a critical role to play for as long as you live”

- None of us are in this world because we have accompanied others
- None of us is in this world just to fill up space
- None of us are in this world just to decorate it
- There is a purpose for which we are in this world
- No one can fulfil that purpose, only yourself can do it
- No one can take your place, it is yours alone to fill
- No one can shine your light
- The fulfillment of your purpose is not dependent on your position, it is dependent on your existence
- As long as you exist, you can fulfil the purpose for which live
- The achievement of your purpose is not dependent on the chapter of life you are in – you can achieve it in season and out of season
- If you are not there to shine your light who knows how many travelers will lose their way as they try to pass your empty place in the darkness?
- Nothing, no one can stop you from achieving your purpose unless you allow it
- No one can take over your purpose, therefore you don't have competition
- If you don't fulfil your purpose, an empty space which no one can fill will remain

The international community has created a conducive environment for you to play your part as a woman

- Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
- On 29 January 1993 it ratified the United Nation's Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, 1979 (CEDAW).
- The Convention on the Nationality of Married Women of 1957

- The International Convention on the Rights of a Child
- MDGs;
- The on AU Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa
- SADC Protocol on Gender and Development.

The country has created a conducive environment for you to play your part as a woman

- Section 9, SA Constitution
- Recognition of Customary Marriages Act
- Choice on the Termination of Pregnancy Act
- Sexual Offences Act
- Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act:
 - “No person may unfairly discriminate against any person on the grounds of gender including gender-based violence...”s8(a)
- The Domestic Violence Act of 1998;
- Sexual Offences Act

National Gender Machinery

- Ministry of Women, Children and People with Disabilities
- Commission on Gender Equality
- Office on the Status of Women
- Multiparty Parliamentary Women’s Group
- Committee on Improving the Quality of Life and Status of Women
- Women’s Empowerment Unit
- Other interventions:
 - Thuthuzela Care Centre (TCC) Model;

Women in the Bible have set an example

- Throughout the pages of scripture we find stories of women who have shaped the human history
- We know the names of some, for others we find only a non-descript – nameless line or two
- Women who with their **own hands helped rebuild the walls of Jerusalem** (Neh 3:12)
- Women who **led the nation in worship** (Ps 68:25, Ex 15:20,21)
- Women who successfully **lobbied for political change** (Num 27:1-11)
- Women who served as **prophets, judge and Queens** (Ex 15:20; Judges 4:4)
- Women **who risked their lives to save their children** (When the new Pharaoh of Egypt, who didn’t know Joseph, ordered the death of every male Israelite male child as he was being born, the two Hebrew midwives, at the risk of their lives, refused to cooperate and the nation of Israel was once more secure (Ex 1:16)

C. I may not be certain about what life will be beyond 2011 but what I am certain of is that: “You have potential for as long as you live”

- You have an innate resource that you were created with - potential
- Every human being has potential - a goldmine of abilities
- Potential is not what you are but it is what you can be. It is not who you are but who you can be. It is not where you are but where you can be.
- Potential does not demand your credentials (qualifications) ; it demands your willingness
- Potential does not demand your intelligence; it demands your persistence and determination
- Potential does not demand your possessions ; it demands your availability
- It has to do with doing all the good you can, by all means you can, in all ways you can, in all places you can, at all times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can (John Wesley)
- Potential has to do with being the best that you can be in all places you can, at all times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can; do not just be good enough – strive for personal and professional excellence
- Your potential is limitless, it is unstoppable.
- God's gift to me is my potential. My gift back to God is what I do with my potential.

3. Conclusion

Having said all this, I implore you to take off the unnecessary weight. There is no need to worry about what the future hold. T

- The army of Alexander the Great was advancing on Persia. At one critical point, it appeared that his troops might be defeated.
- The soldiers had taken so much plunder from their previous campaigns that they had become weighted down and were losing their effectiveness in combat.
- Alexander commanded that all the spoils be thrown into a heap and burned.
- The men complained bitterly but soon saw the wisdom of the order. Someone wrote, "It was as if wings had been given to them—they walked lightly again." Victory was assured.
- Lay aside every weight that is dragging you down
- Accept every season, accept every chapter, accept the things you cannot change
- Celebrate your worth in every season
- Fulfil your purpose in every season
- Exploit your potential in every season
- Explore new paths that await you.
- Plough the unplowed ground!
- New life awaits you!
- Stay positive – Hitler, this are just but little worms!
- That is the exit strategy I recommend to you