

A portrait of Ms. Karabo Elizabeth Nyalungu, a young woman with a colorful beaded headband, wearing a dark brown blazer over a yellow top. She is looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background shows a building with grey siding and a window.

THE YOUNG CAPABLE

Ms. Karabo Elizabeth Nyalungu

**AUTHOR | BROADCASTER ASPIRANT |
CONVERSATIONALIST | LEADERSHIP
ENTHUSIAST**

Karabo Elizabeth Nyalungu is a 21-year-old young lady who is an expert in the use of words. She was born and bred in Pretoria, Nellmapius until she was 15 years old, and that was when she moved to Mamelodi, which is also a township situated in Pretoria. She went to Nellmapius Primary and Secondary schools, and is currently studying at the

University of the Witwatersrand, Joburg pursuing a Bcom Degree with majors in Philosophy, Politics and Economics.

Karabo is a self-publishing bookwright! Growing up, she was exposed to the company of great individuals who had a hand in her venture as a writer. From as early as her primary school years,

Miss Nyalungu had been involved in fundraising projects in her school that opened her world to entrepreneurship. She then took advantage of her acquired skills in secondary to start her own project, "*Ngwala-pono*" where she gave away pens during exams season- she was selling snacks in order to raise funds to purchase the pens, with the aim of encouraging the culture of writing. This was the seed behind the whole idea of writing, and eventually publishing.

Her quest to write was originally inspired by the demand from people who had actually seen and heard her delivering public speaking. It seems to be a matter of modesty? Miss Nyalungu writes focusing on both negative and positive aspects of life, with the primary motive to better prepare people who haven't gone through the things she's touching on, to comfort people who have been through them already, and to be a support system to people who are currently going through them.

She does not see herself neither writing nor publishing any more literary works as she believes the process was only seasonal and it was never her dream to be a well-known author. She is more into broadcasting, preferably in the Radio industry, but Television is still an option for her. She facilitated a leadership seminar at her school and that grounded in her, the idea of the path she would like to follow in.

"I don't think that I put an art into writing- that I am gifted, as far as writing is concerned but I am merely sharing my thoughts about how things should or could be"

In as much as everyone has their own jam, their own beat, be it entertainment and lifestyle to mention a few, her's is talk; with a focus on substantial and educational conversations.

Her obsession lies in leadership-inclined content that facilitates conversations that stimulate measures that can be implemented in order to bring about change and are thought-provocative.

Her journey has not been quite a smooth one owing to the fact that when a person perceives themselves as a leader and they are originally from the township, they are prone to suffer from an identity crisis, as a result of people from the township who are misinformed and who do not view leadership as a familiar concept, but rather as means for individuals to present themselves as better than everyone around them.

Growing up in a township also means that you are exposed to and grounded in daunting circumstances such as teenage pregnancy, gangsterism, blessers, and crime.

There is no proper guidance, reference, and role-modelling, so this means no one is there to affirm whether you are on the right path or not, and when you set out on your path to lead, people begin to feel threatened by the exposure to someone who is a different breed from them, whose views and values are not in alignment with what they considered as the norm for a long time. Furthermore, and arguably, South Africa can be said to not be much of a reading nation, so her books do not sell as much as she was thinking they would, even though her initial aim was not to make massive profits from them. Her focus is lying on the impact that her books make to the few people who actually purchase, read and spread them.

Also, she is not under any publication, and the costs of publishing her own books is also a contributing factor, especially considering that their turnover is not that big. Her means of leadership have also been from a defensive and protective mode, causing her to build high walls around herself, and being guarded, which is as a result of childhood trauma. Having a close relationship with just her father, and not her mother affected her relationship

with women, resulting in her mind going into defense mode whenever she had to interact with female persons, thinking that it could end in turmoil's and she is presently trying to unlearn that while working towards having a stable relationship with her mother.

She had to be daring enough to face all these challenges, especially the emotional ones. Thanks to the lockdown, she got to learn more about herself and digest her emotions, deal with them, let go of grudges and go through a healing process and go easy on herself. Her perfectionist nature was also daunted when she realized that her first book had a few faults in it, but she got to bounce back from that after making peace with the fact that she is human and is bound to make mistakes.

"I am at a point where I am really confident in my own skin. I have always been but at the time it was just a protective measure because the inside was broken and now the inside is healed and it correlates with the outside"

Miss Nyalungu gets her source of motivation from how she perceives where she comes from as a place of lack, although not necessarily that the socio-economic status is low, but rather that there is so much narrow-mindedness, no inspiration, and a lot of mediocrity that is normalized and she fears being a part of it and that challenges her to go against all odds to be better and to become living proof that there is so much more than what people see in the township, that there is a world out there awaiting to be explored than just being stuck up in one place.

Her fear of being average has led to her being a very hard-working opportunist that even when she attends events, it is not necessarily for social media updates, but to network and preserve longevity relationships with people who can challenge her to rise higher, and shape her into a person who won't be consumed by her home environment.

She looks up to Miss Anele Mdoda because she displays the type of woman she also wants to be in life- her work ethic, her strategic thinking and the manner in which she delivers her content. In the football space she draws motivation from Mr Rulani Mokwena, for his emotional intelligence.

Lastly in the academic field she looks up to Prof Mamokgethi Phakeng for how unapologetic she is, how she shows up,

takes up space and still be herself, how she challenges the status quo, as well as how she defies norms, and this is one attribute she shares with her on a personal level. Miss Nyalungu believes that her purpose is to challenge what people have said and known to be normal and redefine what normal means for herself, given her individual journey. These are her recent inspirations and are just as important as the ones from back in high school whom she looked up to. Among them is Mbuyiseni Ndlozi who was eloquent, and whose content motivated her to want to pursue a political career, but now she has a change of heart. Mr JJ Tabane is also worthy of mention, a broadcaster that played an influential role in how Miss Nyalungu conducted her public speaking.

Vusi Thembekwayo is also someone who motivated her, but the impact he had was not to a great extent due to the fact that he had gone to a multiracial school, whilst Miss Nyalungu went to a public school, so they did not relate on a broader level, unlike the former two. She read a lot of leadership books, by Norman Peale, John Maxwell, to mention a few, and these also shaped her ways of thinking, and this is thanks to her mentor, Mr Sanele Zulu, who made sure she was exposed to such books, and who defied societal stereotypes of men being known to take advantage of women and went above and beyond in shaping her future.



Among these people, there is only one female who at the time Miss Nyalungu managed to warm up to considering her then relationship with female figures, Miss Kedibone Sekgethela. Miss Sekgethela was the one who helped her to gradually change her perspective on women and is still a huge part of her life to this day because of that.

Miss Nyalungu is a social butterfly and loves spending time with her friends. However, she cautions against having fun with people who have got nothing to lose, advices to observe the kind of people and energy one allows in one`s space. Some private moments and actions that are even normal for any other person, be it videos of people drinking, or at the worst sex-tapes tend

to trend because someone in the circle of people you consider as friends found it suiting to leak it taking into account that they themselves would not be negatively impacted. So she believes that being around people who have as much to lose as you can help prevent this from happening even if those people are not in the same field or status as you, as long as their principles are in alignment with yours.

She urges young women to be very intentional with who they are, whether in person or even on social media. To not be swayed by current trends, what other people do to be who and what they are in order to trend. If you are going to make an educational impact and lead conversations that are intellectually stimulating, you cannot be following in the footsteps of 'slay-queens' and influencers and people who reveal their bodies and earn a following by promoting nudity.

Not to say that all these things are wrong, but it is wise to pick a stand and stick to it because you just cannot be everything and people who follow you will expect from you what led them to you and under-delivering can cause chaos for you. Be unapologetic about yourself, but meaningful about it as well. This helps you not to avail yourself to platforms that are not in alignment with what you aim to achieve. Understand who you are, be easy on yourself and be wary of defining your



success according to others success definitions. Knowing who you are will help you to not judge your decisions based of someone else's choices.

Be easy on yourself, make use of the little you have to elevate yourself at the correct pace, be intentional, and know that you are Young and Capable.

