



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

December 2015

Parents hug their children good-bye for another day at the Ububele Pre-School. Childcare workers arrive for training in the Working with the Parent/Caregiver-Infant Relationship course. The Ububele Ubuntu Bus rolls into the parking lot, ready to take fieldworkers to the Alexandra community. Staff members depart for the Ububele rooms at the Alexandra Community Health Centre to run mother-infant and parenting services. Psychotherapists meet parents in the Ububele waiting area. Community Home visitors phone pregnant women and new moms to arrange visits. Someone puts on the kettle for a cup of tea before a Working With Groups meeting. This is the beginning of another typically busy day at Ububele, something I will sorely miss from January, when I will officially retire from my role as Executive Director.

Ububele will be in the capable hands of Katharine Frost, who will be Executive Director from 1 January 2016. Katharine joined Ububele 11 years ago after qualifying as an Educational Psychologist. She had previously worked as a teacher and she has been part and parcel of all the activities and developments within Ububele. We have worked together successfully for all these years and I am absolutely confident that the objectives, ethos and culture of Ububele are in most capable hands. This transition is a logical and planned move. She has been my official deputy for the past year, a transition strategy approved by our Board of Trustees. Katharine has the confidence of all Ububele's staff and is considered a fair and ethical leader. I ask all who will be dealing with Katharine to support her in every way possible.

Katharine has been significantly involved in developing the Umdlezane infant mental health projects, research and programmes for the past 10 years. The importance of this field of work was recognised by Ububele very early on, in fact 10 years ago. Supporting parents, care-givers of infants during the vital first 1000 days, is now in the forefront of mental health work internationally. Ububele presented papers at many local and global conferences concerned with this important work.

Over the years Ububele has continued to deliver a high standard of community-based psycho-social services to the Greater Alexandra community in innovative ways. Further afield in South Africa, Ububele has also provided a variety of "home developed" trainings and interventions for professional and lay workers to assist them to support families and caregivers to better understand and support the developing infant and child.

For 11 years the Ububele Group Courses have had a devoted and skilled faculty offering introductory and advanced courses on analytic group work. The participants are multi-racial and during the life of the courses many highly emotive and delicate cultural, political and racial issues have been articulated. These courses aim particularly to empower group facilitators to work in community and public settings. To date 3 of our faculty have been internationally accredited as group analysts joining our present senior training person.

So many exciting developments have taken place in 2015:

- the opening of our rooms at The Alexandra Community Health Centre in February;
- our training for the Newborn Behavioural Observation System (NBO) in April accrediting 17 practitioners;
- the screening and distribution of our advocacy film Umdlezane: *the First 1000 Days* in May;
- the launch of our Ubuntu Bus in September to take more of our services to the people of Alexandra.

When my wife and fellow psychologist Hillary Hamburger and I founded Ububele 15 years ago, we had no idea what Ububele would grow into. We had a vision and limited resources, but fantastic staff members grasped the objectives and enabled Ububele to punch way above its weight.

As I move to the position of founding trustee, advisor and a willing professional volunteer, I feel very gratified seeing Ububele mature into a valuable contributing and significant NGO.

I would like to thank our funders and partners, the Board of Trustees, in particular our Chairperson Professor Chabani Manganyi, and all our present and past staff and volunteers for their support. I would like to acknowledge the people of Alexandra many of whom have trusted Ububele: a most remarkable community made up of remarkable people.

Ubuntu in action

Warm regards

Tony Hamburger
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Registered Group Analyst
Executive Director