



BARBARA KINGSLEY

Based: Cape Town



Description: Motivational HIV+ Guest Speaker, a published author:

1 December 2023 marks my 23rd year of living with HIV. In December 2000 I was diagnosed HIV positive. I was devastated. At the time of my diagnosis, there was no affordable treatment available in South Africa. For years I lived in utter denial. I had support from family and a few friends who I disclosed to but no one who could really stand beside me and show me the way. As a result I nearly died. My cd4 counts ended up dropping to just 86 and I became extremely ill. Exhaustion became my faithful friend and simple daily tasks became insurmountable obstacles. I honestly believed that I was going to die. But I chose to fight. I fought so hard for my life and had no choice other than to face up to my worst fear, which was eventually getting ill one day. How was I to know how easily this could have been avoided? I didn't know then, but I know now.

Once commencing ARV treatment, I began to feel so remarkably better in a very short space of time. I subsequently drew upon a new found strength that I never knew I possessed. I rose so high above my circumstances and began to speak out. With this new found energy that I had discovered, and the inner strength that I had found, I watched the Comrades marathon that year on TV (2008). From nowhere, I acquired a burning desire to run. Despite never having run before, and having no natural running ability I began to run slow 5kms. From barely being able to walk 100m when I was ill to running 5km was a miracle to me. I went from strength to strength and ultimately went on to successfully complete the Comrades marathon in 2013. I ran as an openly HIV positive runner to show what can be done. Running over the finish line will remain one of the most incredible moments of my life. Finding my strength was life changing for me and radically transformed my very existence in every possible way..

I have also travelled the country doing outreach from corporate and hospitals to the most rural schools and clinics in the townships. I have appeared in numerous magazines, newspapers, on line magazines etc. and been featured on various TV programs –

In 2020, I published by book, entitled I am Human, by Barbara Kingsley, - From HIV/AIDS to ultra-marathons and beyond, "I AM HUMAN" is the story of hope, courage, persistence, vision and of course greatness. Lesedi House Publishers (1 December 2020) Foreward written by Edward Cameron



I counsel and stand beside thousands, as a way of giving back so that others don't need to go through what I did.

Hope is a powerful gift indeed and I feel privileged to be able to offer this to those who have lost theirs.

BARBARA KINGSLEY IS A LONG TERM HIV & AIDS SURVIVOR, 3 X COMRADES RUNNER, INSPIRATIONAL SPEAKER AND PUBLISHED AUTHOR

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