

S O L ' ,

Edition Two | 2024



S O L ' | STYLE FROM WITHIN



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FROM THE EDITOR

We are in the second quarter of the year. I do not know about you, but I feel like time is rushing somewhere, and I would love to know where. Hello, hello, we are back. I am excited, nervous, screaming and have mixed emotions just like in “Inside Out 2”- one of my favourite animations at the moment.

My tribe, when I finally got ready to write this Editor’s note, (S/O to my editor who proofreads my notes for her patience) I looked at this body of work, and numerous things came up. Still, the one thing that kept coming up was that the Lord, the Lord my tribe is always always with you. And believe it or not, when it is right, He will make it happen. Before I talk about the cover and who is on it, I know you are screaming just like I was when I heard her say, “I would love to be part of S O L”. I would like to take a step back and reflect on how God is always there, how when it is

dark and you do not have another move, the Lord is there, when doors start opening the Lord is there, when friendships die and rebuild themselves in different shapes, the Lord is there, when you have been working on a something for more than ten years, the Lord is there.

My point is this, life is funny, you never know when you are going to be getting your next contract, when you will find your true love or when you will realize that through all you have worked for, and you did not think it would come to fruition, God has been cooking up something real good. The Lord is there in the dark when it shakes and things flip in a heartbeat when you look around and things are not as they were two, three or six months ago. At the moment it may not feel like it, but the Lord is there.

My note in this second edition tribe is that, learn to have the Lord at the centre, learn to say, “It is well”. Learn to praise the Lord when you do not know how you got so busy or how things just started to feel so good in your relationship, when you build a brand and you look around and it is no longer just you, your editor/advisor and your sister, that you had to beg to take pictures for your Tumblr blog. I want to ask you, my tribe, to name one thing in your life where you can say, “The Lord is with me”. I want to challenge you in this because sometimes, when you get into that job and the boss is not what you expect, you build that friendship and it ends in a way you did not expect, you get into an accident and when the prayer just is not coming to life and it has been a prayer point since 2013. We are quick to forget that the Lord is with you and I want to challenge you as we draw the second quarter to a close and head over to the third, where can you say, “The Lord is with me”.

I want to challenge you in this statement because for me, when people ask me, “Mwenya how are you?” and I am always quick to say, “I am doing okay, thanks, and you?” and sometimes I forget to acknowledge that God gave me a new day, He has given me opportunities, I still have my family, and sometimes I am funny to a selected few. Is that not the Lord with me, my tribe? I know we have a problem, a thorn in our side, something that is just stagnant. We feel God is no longer with us, but I want to encourage you to pick up our magazine and our previous editions and remind yourself that, simply, the Lord is with you.



JEHOVAH IMMEKA

When deciding on the theme, I sat with the Lord for some time, and first came the verse Matthew 28:20. What stood out from that verse was, **“And behold I am with you to the end of the age”** I was like, end of age Lord, “end of the age” and after some prayer, I realised that the Lord is faithful with you till the end of the age. We do not know it because we can box in with our lives and situations, but His word is so accurate. Tribe, when I started S O L’ it really was a gift that the Lord gave me and there have been many times when I wanted to give up and throw in the towel and no one would even know the brand was gone but I think the vision gift of S O L’ is till the end of age, that blooming friendship that God gave you when you lost hope in the concept of friendship, can be till the end of age. That love is until the end of age, God and His promises are literally till the end of age. The sooner we realize that the better, because we think that Jesus comes and goes and that the promises He made have an expiry limit, that habit He told you to break is never going to go away because you are constantly failing and repenting, but He is with you till the end of age. As people, we need to understand that end of age means that He is not going anywhere, He is going to be with you, when you are high, low, confused, watching Bridgeton and even when you are getting inspiration from our cover girl. At the end of age, the Lord will never go back on His promises. They stand, ‘til the very end of time.

Oh, you did not think I would leave you all, not speak about our cover girl, and give you the tea. Tribe, every edition of S O L’ is so important to me. It made me realize that dreams come true, and you need to keep working on your dream, and God will be with you till the end (you see what I did there). Our cover girl is Candice Modiselle. Yes, I know you are screaming, just like I did when I called her and asked if she would like to be on the cover. I am truly blessed she was so gracious to be on the cover, and I say this to all the team. Still, I would be nowhere without my team, from the suggestion to my stylist, photographer, and proofreader S O L’, which is a blessing. The people involved are a blessing, I hope you enjoy the work we put in to make this happen. We were inspired by the season, but also we wanted something cool.

JEHOVAH IMMEKA and I am forever grateful for that!

FOUNDER | CHIEF EDITOR
MWENYA CHITAMBALA





Cardice
MODISELLE

Photographed by: Mziie Mncube

FINDING EXTRAORDINARY IN THE ORDINARY: A JOURNEY OF FAITH, GROWTH, AND SELF-DISCOVERY

WRITTEN BY MWENYA CHITAMBALA
PHOTOGRAPHED BY: MZIE MNCUBE

1. What would the title of your autobiography be?

Ordinary Life, Extraordinary in Christ.

As I have been reflecting on the past two years of being surrendered to Christ, I have come to the realisation that my life has become ordinary, though rooted in God's presence. Contrary to how seemingly busy it once was, it is not populated by industry work, my career, social activity and the likes. It is fairly ordinary by worldly standards, but extraordinary in my time spent with loved ones, friends, my church community and spaces I consider meaningful. I am so blessed to finally have the grace to yield and not be fixated on the possibility that I am "missing out". I am in awe of how God has sustained and provided for me and my family in the midst of the stillness. The greatest reward is having the heart to pursue Him first, knowing that He is true to His word when He says **"seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all else shall be added unto us."**

2. You recently turned 30, can you please give us an insight into what this new era means to you?

I have absolutely no idea! I would love to have some profound nuggets of wisdom to put into this answer but I do not think I have had time to process 30. Mainly, because it was such a grief-stricken and heavy season, due to the loss of a close and good friend of mine the great Mpho Sebeng. My health was also compromised and I only recovered at the beginning of June, I do not think there was time to fully immerse myself in the transition.

If there is one thing that I have become aware of is my mortality, my insufficiency. I have never been more clear of how deeply reliant I am on God. I believe the season He is taking me in requires me to be postured in that, to be positioned in that. Where the things that He has purposed me for can not be done independently of Him. John 15 says:



"No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

It rings true to me more and more daily. In struggles, the hurt, the disappointment, obedience is non-negotiable. 30 looks like obedience. Surrendered to Him that His will for my life will be fulfilled. It is a season where I am decreasing so He can increase.

3. Who or what are some of your greatest influences and why? What are some of the key tools or skills they have given you and that you have held on to?

My mother is number 1, and my first contact person, next of kin, in case of emergency (ICE). She is my first introduction to God. She has taught me in essence, what love should be modelled like. Not just love for your family, but love for your community and those that encounter you. We lived in a home that had its doors open for anyone in need and my mother, was always ready to serve. In addition are my sisters who have been able to whisper words of wisdom to me. And I deliberately say whisper because they do not tell me what to do, but give me the autonomy to make decisions while still guiding me. From their vast experiences, I have the privilege to take bits and pieces that I think are valuable and incorporate them in my own life. Last but not least, and the most obvious of course, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is the standard!



4. Please tell us what struck your interest in your career path and what keeps you going.

There are two things. Number one is how I was the resident entertainer in the Modiselle household growing up. I would always do impersonations, I had an affinity and a love for art. At the time I did not know what it was and what it meant. My mom and my sisters were my first and favourite audience. So I always had a full house. If I had all four of them, then that was all I needed. My mom instilled a love for performance and the arts unknowingly by asking me to do those impersonations for other church members as well.

My interest as a career was piqued in school. I had my first lead and stage performance when I was 10. That passion was carried through to high school. During my high school one of the teachers, Ms Courtenay, was a drama teacher in Grade 10. She, also one of my great influences, inspired me to pursue it as a long-term career path. Her constant support and training solidified that I not only loved the craft deeply, but that I was truly talented in it.

5. What were some of your biggest fears in the entertainment industry and how did you overcome them?

My biggest fear was not amounting to what I believed I had the potential to become. Not fulfilling the dream. The thought of not being able to justify the passion I fought for was almost debilitating. I was a smart kid, straight A student and that resulted in people projecting career options on me, assuming that I would follow the career of being a politician, lawyer, or doctor. They were wrong. You can imagine the surprise when I would share my aspirations to pursue a career in entertainment. I will forever be grateful that my mom is someone who never questioned me. Needless to say, I think I am doing alright.

6. Looking back at your career, what are some of the things you wished you embraced more and why?

I wish I had embraced my uniqueness. I am a very quirky individual, I am what some would consider as peculiar. I wish I would have embraced my humour and my comedic timing earlier and not leaned into the low hanging fruit that was (and still is) my looks. Speaking of looks, I wish I had embraced my blackness more. At some stage, racially ambiguous women were widely celebrated and that created an insecurity within me. Something that I am struggling with now is language. I communicate better in English. To create a more rounded approach to my various skills, it would have been great to have cultivated my strengths in various languages.

I would have loved to see how my career would have panned out had I said "no" more. If I had embraced and validated my no, to say "I am not comfortable with this", a boldness to believe my voice matters and to not be afraid if it was seemingly offensive. And to also embrace and honour my relationship with Christ, even in my craft.

My relationship with “no” is very healthy at the moment, I have set boundaries. Something that I never thought I would be able to assert myself in. I do not feel guilty when I set boundaries. After the height of COVID-19, I finally understood what capacity is and understanding when I have reached mine. Now I am self-aware of where I can pour in and where I can hibernate to recharge.

7. What is the best business or life advice you have received?

There are a few, but something I have enjoyed that came across recently within the business space, was a snippet from a Trevor Noah interview along the lines of: “So many people are so concerned about making it big, why not make it real?”. Make it real.

8. Our theme for this edition is, “To the end of age He is with you”, please tell us what that scripture means to you.

Every time my prayers have been to feel God’s tangible presence, I have had this preconception that it will come with a certain feeling of warmth and comfort. What I am realising now is that God is with me simply because the issues of life have not consumed me. He is with me because the weight of the world has not crushed me. He is with me because the struggles I have faced have not broken me. We even recall in Mark when He was in the boat with the disciples when He said peace be still. When the storms were raging, He was still with them in the boat. He is with me in the boat. In the storm, in the grief, in the confusion, in the hurt, He is with me.

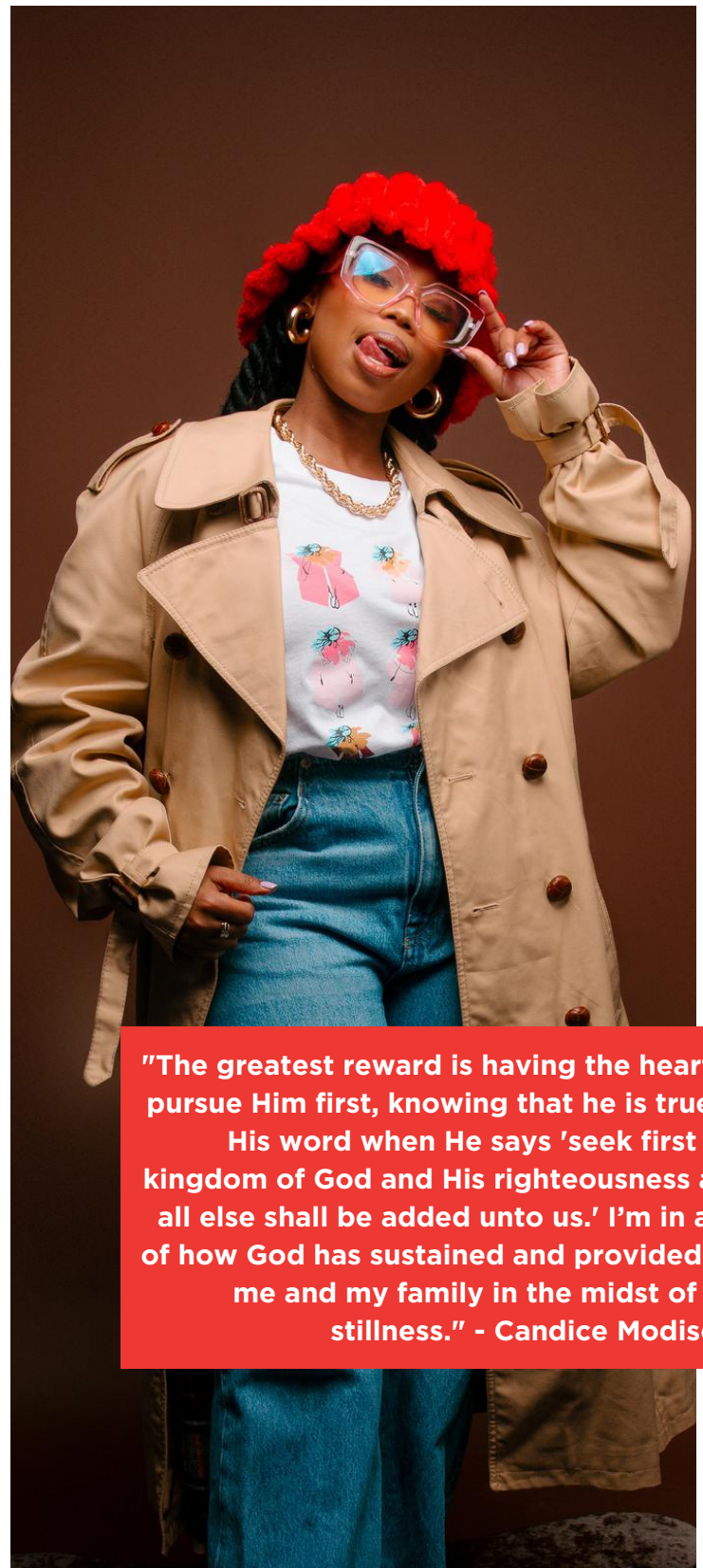
9. Describe your journey to becoming a Christian

I was raised in a Christian family. We lost my dad in 1997. Although my mom has been Christian her whole life, the weight of the tragedy caused her to rebuild her faith on a new level, without the father of her children and the love of her life. I watched my mom model and walk out her faith from the ground up. She was relentless about having us there. I was on the receiving end and witnessing someone whose fire had just been sparked. A fire was lit under her and a hunger and appetite for Christ were deposited in her. Through counsel she was receiving from her older sister, my aunt, she surrendered her brokenness to Christ and true to His word, He drew nearer than ever before. She was carried and kept by His grace. She was determined to take us to church with her at every opportunity. We would take three taxis to go to church. We had to travel almost an hour to go to Pimville. Many sacrifices were made to get 4 people to church weekly, but she understood that it was all worth it.

I grew up knowing that church was non-negotiable, until I was old enough to land the choice. I chose indifference and on most Sundays, I opted to stay home. Being a teen, you are exposed to different cultures and lifestyle. Christ just did not fully fit into mine and the identity I was creating. As a result, I had become more distant and my priorities shifted, like most teens who adopt a self-centric approach to life. Where my relief is, what that in my high school, we had a subject called Religion where

we would study the bible. I was never too far from God.

I would still go to church occasionally for Easter, Christmas and spontaneous moments. When I was experiencing heartbreak and chaos, church became my refuge again. I later recommitted my life to Christ at 21, and again at 24. The 16th of January 2022 was the fourth and final time I submitted my life to Jesus. And it was not an emotionally charge moment, it was a true



"The greatest reward is having the heart to pursue Him first, knowing that he is true to His word when He says 'seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all else shall be added unto us.' I'm in awe of how God has sustained and provided for me and my family in the midst of the stillness." - Candice Modiselle



spiritual conviction. In this moment, the Holy Spirit revealed to me that regardless of the height, length and depth of the validation from man I received, something was missing. A void that no accolades could fill. This gaping hole could not be fulfilled by anything but Christ.

10. What is a relationship with God according to you? How do Candice and God chill together?

We relate through conversation, we are in constant communication. It does not always sound like words, or a profound prayer either. I love my vulnerability with Him. God is my father, God is my friend. He is not this harsh male figure waving a finger at me, constantly reprimanding me. Are we called to fear Him? Of course. But the fear that brings reverence, not separation. Because I was raised without my father, that position had never been occupied. This allowed me to know God as a father figure without any negative reference or preconceptions. It meant starting on a clean slate. In moments I find myself chuckling or even side eyeing Him because boy is God's character complex. And He has a brilliant sense of humour.

11. Knowing what you know today, what would you tell younger Candice?

Devotion to God is not only for the pulpit. Cling on to Him. It is not uncool to love Christ. Surround yourself with people who reflect His love. Secondly, girl, stop putting yourself on the clearance rack. Before I was devoted to Christ, I was so easily accessible to anyone, like an item on sale. Being a recovering people pleaser, I know the ignorance that that came with and the subconscious need to be liked by everyone.

Another thing, set hard boundaries unapologetically and abide by them. Consider it like this: when you are an ambassador of a country, you are to abide by the standards of the country you represent, not the standards of the country you are in. That is what it means to be an ambassador of Christ.

Lastly, I would also say: That man is cheating!

12. How does your style and your relationship with Christ blend into your daily life?

I am still figuring that out. I can tell you about my journey with clothing to contextualise. When I was 18 or 19 and I first got to varsity, that was the first time I was exposed to my femininity, the shape of my body and the attention that it was bringing. I went to a girls' school and it did not matter to me that my body was shaped the way it is. My body was considered desirable though I had not fully grasped what that implied. From that, my style then became more provocative, purely for the attention and as a means to remedy my heartbreak. My clothes became tighter and shorter and this continued for some years. From media influence to a false sense of confidence, I was led to believe that I was claiming my femininity and declaring my boldness. I realise now that I was hiding in plain sight. Accentuating my assets helped me mask my insecurities and fears.

But then the Holy Spirit!! Conviction. For years I used to struggle with the concept of modesty politics. I say modesty politics because that is how I perceived it- a political misogynistic ideology with the sole purpose of restraining women and policing their bodies. The expectations placed on me as a curvy woman almost felt unfair in comparison to slimmer girls. That was the source of frustration for me. I am so glad I have graduated from that thinking now.

I enjoy how I dress now and I am more experimental. I am in my more is more era. Street wear on some days, elegant on others, but mostly comfortable softer linen and flowy materials.

13. What do more Christian followers need to hear more of?

The Word, the truth. We are going to church to hear more of what we are capable of than who Jesus is. We need to see more Jesus and hear more Jesus. People are coming to church for Jesus, they are not coming to church for Jesus.

14. Please share 5 fun facts that most people do not know about you

1. I still have a baby tooth.
2. I was afraid of the dark until 3 years ago.
3. I hate oysters.
4. I get very bad stage fright when I have to sing in front of people.
5. I do not know how to swim.



FITNESS IN FAITH: EMBRACING WELLNESS WITH GOD

WRITTEN BY AMO KGORI



GET TO KNOW THE AUTHOR AMO KGORI

In 2017, Amo Kgori embarked on a transformative journey, overcoming weight issues, depression, and unemployment. As a wellness coach, she has guided over 100 clients toward holistic wellness, emphasizing healthy habits and spirituality. Motivated by South Africa's unhealthy lifestyle rankings, Amo aims to inspire positive change, envisioning a future where self-love and wellness are integral parts of society.

Hello, my faithful fit family ❤️

Welcome back to the second edition of the Fitness in faith segment of S O L' 2024, where we honour God through fitness and wellness.

We are more than halfway through the year and thank God we made it this far with our fitness and wellness journey, for those of us who started after setting our New Year resolutions and for those who have not started yet, it is never too late to start!

One of the biggest challenges with starting your fitness and wellness journey is thinking that you have to do it alone, I am here to gently remind you and my clients that you do not need another workout plan, personal trainer, a group session, or do you need to join a running club, attend a wellness day or anything that you think will motivate you further to get started with your journey. You only need God -"Jehovah Immeke (Lord is with you)." - which happens to be the theme for this edition based on Matthew 28:20 **"I am always with you, to the end of age."**

Personally, I have learnt that anything I do outside God, in my understanding and capacity no matter

how good it may seem, will eventually become hard to sustain over a long period. Submitting and surrendering to God and allowing Him to carry me. Honouring Him is a radical act of obedience and I am here for it.

Serving God looks different in different seasons of our lives, but in honoring God through our fitness and wellness and in all other areas of our lives, we should never cease nor tire. I recently read a quote that read: "Physical training is the rent your spirit pays to live in the physical vessel called the human body. If you do not pay the rent, hospitals will collect the arrears with high interest and fines. Pay your rent daily" I hear what this quote says, but let us look at what scripture says in 3 John 1:2 **"Beloved, I pray that in every way you may succeed and prosper and be in good health [physically], just as [I know] your soul prospers [spiritually]"**.

Not only does God want you to be doing well spiritually but He also wants you to be doing well physically. God cares about all of you from the physical to the mental and right through to the spiritual. The sooner you partner up with God in your fitness and wellness journey the more it becomes less about achieving your desired summer body goal, but achieving a lifetime body goal that will carry you through sickness, and old age as you serve God with your gifts and talents and in turn earn yourself a purposeful driven life of consistency and discipline which usually translates in all other areas of our lives. Well, at least it has in my life.





God made us to move, and physical training makes us happy and healthy. God Himself made humans to be happy and healthy in Him. However, according to 1 Timothy 4:8, **“Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come”**. God also made us embodied creatures, therefore the physical body has an important role to play in our spiritual and holistic wellness and ultimately our happiness.

Personally, I have found that exercise serves my body, mind, and soul holistically and I am at my happiest and healthiest when I am consistent with my physical training schedule and I am eager to encourage you and others. According to 1 Corinthians 10:31 **“Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God”**. As you incorporate God in and throughout your fitness and wellness journey information, becomes revelation, goals, reality and most importantly we fall in love with the process. As long as we are still alive physical training should continue to be incorporated into our daily routine as though it is devotion to Him.

Here are some particular ways to remind you that: “Jehovah Immeka - Lord is with you” in all that you do including Physical Training:

1. Pray without ceasing

Ask God to carry you through every session, seek Him first in all you do and He will carry you. When you seek Him, you are reminded that He already went before you.

2. Affirm yourself through scripture

Say this out loud - I am fearfully and wonderfully made, I am a child of God, I am clothed in strength and honour. Affirmations are positive statements that can help you to challenge and overcome self-sabotaging and negative thoughts.

3. Music choice

Listen to music that will help you stay inspired and motivated. I personally listen to a lot of gospel during physical training or faith-based related podcasts. My prayer as we embark on the second half of the year is that this article served you in reminding you to stay or start your journey of honouring God through your fitness and wellness journey. I urge you to partner up with God, for He is always with you till the end of age.

A *Spring* GLAM STATE OF MIND:

**SPRING-INSPIRED MAKEUP TRENDS FOR A
RADIANT WINTER**

WRITTEN BY HAJIE

Winter might still have its firm, icy grip on us, but just like 'summer bodies', perfect spring glam faces are made in winter—or at least they should be. From pastel eyeshadows to dewy complexions, get ready to light up your chilly days. With a pop of colour here and a stroke of sparkle there, we are brightening up this winter with some fun and fabulous looks straight from the heart of spring!

GET TO KNOW THE AUTHOR

HAJIE

Hajie, a born-and-raised Pretorian writer and content producer. She was born on December 15th, she is deeply passionate about self-care, film, and television. However, music holds a special place as her foremost love. Her overarching aim is to glorify God through navigating the complexities of life with purpose and intention.



1. PETAL SOFT BLUSH

Spring is synonymous with blooming flowers, and this season's blush trends are all about mimicking that fresh, floral flush. This winter, it is not just about adding a hint of colour to your cheeks but making them the focal point. Bright pinks and warm peaches applied liberally can brighten up your entire face, making you look fresh and lively despite the cold. Try Essence Baby Got Blush for a long-lasting, natural flush.

Pro Tip: Layer a powder blush over a cream blush for added dimension and staying power. You should also apply blush not only on your cheeks but also on the bridge of your nose and a bit on your forehead to create a cohesive, sun-kissed look even in winter.



2. KEEP IT GLOSSY

Gloss is not just for lips anymore. This winter, gloss is making its way onto eyelids, cheeks, and even brows for a fresh, dewy look that screams hydration and health. Clear glosses and subtle shimmers are perfect for creating this effect without looking greasy. Products like MAC's Clear Lipglass can double up as an eyelid gloss to keep your makeup kit versatile and efficient.

Pro Tip: Use a small amount of gloss to avoid creasing on the lids and to keep the look chic, not sticky.



3. PASTEL POWER

Pastels are a perennial spring favourite, and 2024 is no exception. Soft lavenders, baby blues, mint greens, and buttery yellows are taking over eyeshadow palettes. These light, airy colours are perfect for adding a pop of fun to your look without overwhelming your features. Fenty Beauty's Snap Shadows in pastel shades can help you create endless spring-inspired looks.

Pro Tip: Use a white eyeshadow base to make pastel colours pop and stay vibrant throughout the day.



4. SKINIMALISM

The "less is more" approach continues to reign supreme with 'skinimalism'. This trend focuses on minimal, natural-looking makeup that enhances your skin rather than covering it up. Lightweight foundations, tinted moisturizers, and spot concealing are key components. Products like Maybelline Super Serum Skin Tint and Kosas' Revealer Concealer are perfect for achieving this barely-there yet flawless look.

Pro Tip: Focus on skincare to ensure your natural complexion is at its best, as this trend relies on healthy, glowing skin as its base.



5. GRAPHIC LINER

For those who like to play with bolder looks, the graphic liner is making a huge comeback. From negative space designs to bold, colourful wings, this trend is all about creativity and self-expression. Use bright shades like electric blue, neon green, or classic black to make your eyes stand out. NYX Professional Makeup's Vivid Brights Eyeliner offers a range of colours perfect for experimenting with this trend.

Pro Tip: Use tape or a stencil to help achieve precise lines and symmetrical shapes.



6. FLUFFY BROWS

Bushy, feathered brows are here to stay. This winter, embrace your natural brow shape and enhance it with a little grooming and tinting. A great volumizing eyebrow gel can help you achieve that perfectly imperfect look.

Pro Tip: Brush brows upwards with a spoolie and set them with a clear brow gel for a natural, lifted effect.



7. HIGH-SHINE LIPS

Glossy, juicy lips are back in the spotlight. Whether you prefer a subtle tint or a bold colour, the key is a high-shine finish that catches the light and makes your lips look fuller. Fenty Beauty's Gloss Bomb and Dior's Addict Lip Maximizer are perfect picks for that luscious, hydrated look.

Pro Tip: Exfoliate your lips before applying gloss to ensure a smooth, even application.

8. JEWEL-TONED EYESHADOWS

Add some warmth and depth to your winter look with jewel-toned eyeshadows. Rich emeralds, sapphires, and amethysts bring a luxurious vibe to your makeup. These shades work beautifully on all eye colours and can be worn alone or blended for a smokey effect. Pat McGrath's Mothership Palettes offer a range of stunning jewel tones that are perfect for winter.

Pro Tip: Pair your jewel-toned eyeshadow with a neutral lip to keep the focus on your eyes.



Whether you are a soft pastel or bold liners girly, there is something for everyone to enjoy. So, refresh your makeup bag, experiment with these trends, and face the cold with confidence and style!



INTRODUCING TOKELO

EMPOWERING WOMEN IN THE DIGITAL AGE

WRITTEN BY MWENYA CHITAMBALA
PHOTOGRAPHED BY MWENYA CHITAMBALA

Could you please introduce yourself?

I am Tokelo Tsatsi, formerly Tokelo Motsepe. I am a social media-loving digital marketer. I own a content marketing agency called Afredigital. This is my way of using my talents to help others.

What is a 10-year goal that you have as a businesswoman?

To empower as many women as I can for them to use digital spaces to elevate their businesses. I want to create a platform for us to connect, work together and make our dreams real. And to build and to pay it forward by creating jobs and just changing our communities, our families, our spaces and ultimately our country.

Can you please tell us about Afredigital and what was the need that you saw in your business?

I studied the Business of Fashion through Lisof and worked as a fashion buyer for some years thereafter. It was in that time, while traveling and engaging with fashion platforms from all around the world, I realized how African brands did not have a platform to access the global market, in the way Europe had Asos or the US has Revolve. And many of the African brands I came across were based in or owned by companies based in Europe, America, Canada and Australia, not on the African continent, meaning those profits would not impact the economies and families here.

In 2017, I created AFRENAI (a combination of the 'African Renaissance'), an online marketplace for our local brands to share their stories, promote their brands and sell online - to a local and global market.

While onboarding brands to the AFRENAI platform, I found that a lot of brands that I connected with at markets and expos did not have much of a digital presence. For me to get the pictures required was a challenge, which is how our online marketing services were launched in early 2019 under Afredigital; which was in our original business plan, but planned for later. The aim was not simply to promote our platform but for the brands to grow and build their own platforms too, thus making them more sustainable in the long run.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic that hit in 2020 affected more than the physical health of many people. With salary cuts and job losses,



people cut down on spending and many of us focused on the essentials. Many of the brands I worked with died and with shipping costs skyrocketing, the AFRENAI platform had to be paused indefinitely.

Afredigital thrived during the pandemic, with business owners looking for alternative ways to do business and needing to connect with a wider audience to stay alive and in a bid to stay alive myself, I started offering inexpensive virtual masterclasses every week, to help my fellow business owners adapt and learn how to use the digital platforms available to them more effectively and build their business or personal brands online. It was a challenging time that pushed many of us to step out of our comfort zones and connecting with people, live, every week was just that for me. It unlocked a new passion for me, because I have come to love imparting my knowledge with others and that has since become an unplanned part of our service offering at Afredigital.

What did the first business teach you that you have implemented into Afredigital?

I would say “Let us do it differently”. AFRENAI taught me that, firstly, do not make assumptions about your customers and what people want. Keep an open mind and listen to people. I had a 20-page business plan based on research and insights into where people are globally and where the digital market could potentially go for the emerging markets in South Africa, East Africa, and West Africa. A lot of the *what* was on track but the *how* took shape was somewhat different. For example, in the US, online payment tools like PayPal, are great avenues for them to use but not so much here. In Africa, M-pesa and other digital payment tools like e-wallet or cashsend are probably better suited to small business owners who do not have business bank accounts or the proper infrastructure in place. Keeping an open mind to transacting and doing business in a way that better suits your customers is what is going to get you more customers and ultimately grow your business, versus trying to force what you want.

If you could give everyone one piece of advice for them to crack the code of social media, what would you say?

The first would be to put yourself out there and do not overthink things. A lot of people are very nervous about it. What are people going to think? Am I doing it right? Why would anyone listen to me? Do I look silly? Get out of your head and just post whatever it is.

I rarely delete anything on my own social media. I may archive some that are not relevant anymore, but I do not delete. It is nice for me to look back at how I have evolved and grown in how I share and connect with others. Before the archive function, everything was just there. The quality of work I put out back in 2014 is very different to what I share today in 2024, I might cringe at the quality and captions from back then, but at the time I was proud of it; and looking back, I am proud of how I have grown over time.

The second is that do not assume that when you get success or when something works and you can just do that forever. Things change very quickly in digital and the spaces evolve at a faster pace, so you cannot rest on your laurels. Consider how, back when Instagram started, it was just squared pictures being shared, then long-form vertical videos became a thing [because of Youtube] through IGTV. And now square pictures are out because phones are longer and the shorter the video the better since attention spans are dwindling. Thinking you have things figured out could prevent you from staying open minded and adapting to or growing with your audience, though having a strategy as your blueprint can go a long way in helping you stay true to your brand throughout the rollercoaster ride.

Ultimately finding your voice and what you want to be to people is the most sustainable way of doing things that will not leave you prone to comparison. If you are looking at what other people are doing and copying them, then you are just going to be like, “Oh, but I did this and it did not work for me”, and that is going to cause you to spiral. You can start by taking inspiration





from others but your aim should always be to find your own voice and by sharing who you are. Even if it is not you being in front of the camera. Find someone, some way to tell your story. Be creative, and have fun with it. But ultimately be yourself and find your own way of doing things.

What do you think black women need to hear more of?

That you can do it. We lack the audacity to think that we can make those big audacious dreams real. I am not sure if it is a confidence thing or if it is a lack of belief because of where we come from. Maybe it is from a lack of examples of our people taking up space, owning businesses and making an impact outside of corporate. And more of those people showing and sharing how they built their success. Maybe that is what we need more of. Maybe that will remind our young ones that they too can do it too, as they grow up. And remind them that there is nothing wrong with how you look or how you talk because there are many other people like you out there who will be for you!

TikTok is a perfect example of that because Instagram is very curated. On TikTok, it is not about you or your life being perfect, having the right clothes, the right look or whatever. Many people have seen great success in building an audience from just being who they are - with Happiness Thabile being one of my local favourites to watch. So that needs to stop being the excuse for why we are not doing showing up like

you need to, and that includes money and means being an excuse because you can start where you are and improve things from there. You need to stop standing in your way, figure out a way forward and just start.

What would the title of your autobiography be?

The first thing that comes to mind is "I came, I saw and I captured". I cannot remember who said that, so I will not take full credit for it. I love content in all its visual and written forms and I would like to capture the attention and hearts of those who consume the content I create or that which is produced for others through Afredigital or even those who learn from me and go on to create on their own. I am not a photographer but an ever-evolving creator and I think that may be the perfect title for my autobiography.

Define what a relationship with God is to you.

With where I am now, I would say it is to simply try to walk in his footsteps. Using my skills and talents to serve others daily, treating others as I would like to be treated. Being his hands, essentially.

Describe your fashion sense and who your inspirations come from.

I would say it is currently under construction. I work from home, so that influences how I dress and I am not one of those "get dressed up like I am going outside to work at home" kind of people but comfortable and easy is key. So, I am either in a hoodie and leggings and not leaving the house or looking casual chic for a meeting with a client or brunch with a friend outside somewhere pretty. I am often floating between those two.

Over the years I have always enjoyed being on-trend and stylish whether it was for work or with friends. I do not know if being in my mid-thirties has anything to do with it but now it is definitely more about comfort and I am still defining the details.

Our theme for the magazine's second edition is "To the End of the Age He is with You" What is a moment where you were reminded that He is always with you?

Last night, when I talked about this with my hubby I felt I was going to skip this question and he tried to show me how there may be a different approach that allowed me to answer while remaining true to where I currently am in my faith. Without getting into the details of that conversation, I will say thinking about that now, I realize that I am reminded through the people in my life. The people that show up for me, when it is needed and I do not realize it.

Give us your top five songs on rotation

Live Your Life - T.I. & Rihanna
 Moment 4 Life - Nicki Minaj
 New Romantics - Taylor Swift
 Renegade - Jay-Z & Eminem
 Up All Night - Drake



YOUR ROAD

WRITTEN BY S O L'

Regardless of how forbidden and taboo the conversation may be, at one point we have all wished to have a different life. A life that is less difficult and less tiresome, one where all your dreams come true simply in the blink of an eye. Thoughts of changing and readjusting our lives for what we think is better always linger in our minds. Amidst the chaos, we tend to forget that, in imperfections, that is where God works.

There will always be something you lack. People are never entirely satisfied. It is against human nature to reach a point where you are fully satisfied and feel no need to become better or improve. This is because God does not give you a perfect life. He gives you a life that needs to be centred around Him.

As you are reading this, most of you already have a picture of that "perfect" individual pop into your mind. You think you are well informed of their lives because they post every moment on social media, but here is a question; have you ever seen them bow their head or go on their knees? "He has an IQ that is out of this world and therefore can not comprehend this religious thing". "The family looks perfect consistently on holiday, having the latest everything, all they understand is hard work and family time pays off". As unfortunate as it may be, we all have opinions and thoughts about other peoples' lives and how they are living them. Forgetting that firstly, we need to have respect for one another. Also, we need to understand that our destiny is not the same as our friends. Unpleasantly so, sometimes you will have to wait, and sometimes the ball is not going to go in your corner. You are going to be exhausted but luckily for you, you have a God who will handle all that. Life is hard, life is unfair. There are people completely lost and seeking something, and ironically, some people have that thing they are searching for. People also think if they were someone else or even a 2.0 version of themselves, they would find that missing link they have been searching for. And for those people, I would like to underscore:

Deuteronomy 7:19, "The great trials that your eyes saw, the signs, the wonders, the mighty hand and the outstretched arm, by which the Lord your God brought you out. So will the Lord your God do to all the people of whom you are afraid"

I would like to dissect this verse into two parts. Let us talk about the Lord as your defender. It is feasible for

anyone to say "The Lord will protect/guide/help me" but unless you believe it, live it, you will always be longing for someone's life because of how it looks from the outside. Your trials are your testimony. It is evidence that in unfortunate situations you were able to overcome because the mighty hand and the outstretched arm were God, He brought you out of that.

Sometimes in unprecedented events, things do not get better. We do not heal from the inhumane things that should have never happened to us in the first place. This results in you questioning your existence and also your stature in God's will. You wonder when your big break will come, when will God answer your prayers as He has others. In these instances where the Lord is telling us to wait, does that mean we should sit and daydream about an easier life we wish we had? Absolutely not! We fight another day.

The second part of this verse, "So will the Lord, your God do to all the people of whom you are afraid". God is trying to say in this verse, that He will defend all the people you wish would not be defended and go to heaven. There are always people who want to try you, testing your patience and you find yourself asking God to forgive you for that evil thought you are having about them. God will be a defender and it is not only written here but even in the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who trespass against us" rings a bell?!

Instead of focusing on your personal journey with the Lord understanding that stuff does not happen, we pray and fast for the promotion in life and unfortunately, it has not come to pass as of yet. The thing about being in this relationship with God is that you will see the great trials and God will have His arm stretched out to you and help you but it does not tell you when. As long as you are in the relationship and you see the great trails with your God, there is a guarantee that you will come out of it, you will see the sunshine and feel its warmth on your face.

Stop being envious of someone else's life. Yes, there will be people doing better than you, and yes there will be people worse off than you but God has them in His sight and as long as you have your eyes fixed on Him, you will grow in your faith and love for Him which will show on the outside whether or not someone is envious of you at all.



THE DIVINE PRESENCE IN THE INTIMACY OF MARRIAGE

WRITTEN BY ANONYMOUS

Sexual intimacy is a sacred bond that unites two individuals on a profound level, transcending mere physicality and touching the realms of emotional and spiritual connection. For those who walk in faith, this union is a personal experience and a divine blessing from the Lord Himself. Jehovah Immeka, which means "the Lord is with you," beautifully explains this sacred presence in every aspect of our lives, including the intimate moments shared between a husband and wife

The divine design of sexuality

The Bible eloquently portrays the beauty and sanctity of sexual intimacy within the context of marriage. In the beginning, God created man and woman and designed their union to be pleasurable and purposeful. Genesis 2:24 states, **"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."** This oneness signifies a deep, spiritual connection that is both a

gift and a blessing from the Creator.

Sex within marriage is a celebration of this divine design. It is an expression of love, trust, and mutual respect. Proverbs 5:18-19 rejoices in the love shared between spouses, saying, **"Let your fountain be blessed and rejoice with the wife of your youth. As a loving deer and a graceful doe, let her breasts satisfy you at all times, and always be enraptured with her love".**

The presence of God in marital intimacy

The concept of Jehovah Immeka reminds us that God is always present with us, even in our most intimate moments. This divine presence adds a layer of holiness to lovemaking, transforming it from a physical act into a spiritual communion. Hebrews 13:4 underscores this by saying, **"Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral".**

When couples approach their intimate relationship with the awareness of God's presence, it enhances their connection. It encourages them to treat each other with kindness, patience, and unconditional love, mirroring God's love for His people. The Song of Solomon, an often overlooked book, celebrates the passionate love between a husband and wife, showing that God approves of and delights in such expressions of love within marriage.

The blessing of sexual intimacy

Sexual intimacy is a divine gift that fosters emotional closeness

and strengthens the marital bond. It is a channel through which couples can express their deepest affections and vulnerabilities. 1 Corinthians 7:3-4 highlights the mutual giving in marriage, saying, **"The husband should fulfil his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. The wife has no authority over her body but yields it to her husband. In the same way, the husband does not have authority over his own body but yields it to his wife".**

This mutual yielding and sharing reflect the selfless love that God exemplifies. It reminds us that in giving ourselves to our spouses, we are participating in a divine act of love that echoes Christ's self-giving nature.

Embracing the sacredness of sexual intimacy

Understanding that Jehovah Immeka—"the Lord is with you"—in the realm of sexual intimacy elevates the experience from a mere physical encounter to a sacred act of love. Couples who recognise this divine presence can approach their intimate moments with reverence, gratitude, and joy. In a world that often distorts and devalues the beauty of sex, it is vital to reclaim its sacredness as intended by God. By embracing the belief that God is with us in all aspects of our lives, including our sexual relationships, we honour Him and strengthen the divine bond within our marriages. As you cherish the gift of sexual intimacy with your spouse, remember the comforting and empowering presence of Jehovah Immeka. Let His presence guide you, enrich your relationship, and bless your union with the depth of love and connection that only He can provide.

CLING TO HOPE

WRITTEN BY LINDSEY CELE

In the quiet of a dimly lit room, a couple sits facing each other, their hands clasped tightly together. The weight of their shared journey hangs heavy in the air, each moment pregnant with unspoken fears and uncertainties. "This is the end, I knew it. I knew we would not make it to forever," she whispers, her voice heavy with resignation. He feels the weight of her words like a punch to the gut, the sting of defeat gnawing at his resolve. "I need to say it first, I need to bring up divorce before she does", he thinks to himself, steeling his nerves for the conversation ahead.

They have weathered storms together, battled demons, and emerged scarred but unbroken. Yet, at this moment, they find themselves at the crossroads, grappling with the daunting question that looms over their union: What does it truly mean to build a marriage on the foundation of Jehovah Immeke?

As they sit in silence, the words of Matthew 28:20 resonate in the depths of their souls, reminding them of the solemn vow they made to each other and God when honey was still mooning and their smiles

swooning. But their thoughts are too invasive and way louder, they bust in through every opening like a police force barging in to arrest any good existing there. "Lord, but I am beginning to resent every bone in his body!" she confesses, her voice trembling with pent-up frustration. "God, this woman is disrespectful and ungrateful!" he retaliates, his anger boiling over like a pot left unattended. "He is a bully! He never listens!", "Lord, she is hardheaded, she does not consider me in anything she does!". The accusations fly back and forth like arrows on a battlefield, each landing with deadly accuracy.

And then, amid the chaos, a voice breaks through the cacophony of their thoughts. "Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Silence descends upon the room like a heavy blanket, wrapping them in its comforting embrace. "I am," the voice declares, cutting through the darkness with the brilliance of a thousand suns.

Hope blooms like a solitary flower pushing through the cracks in concrete. What was once a dimly lit room has





now become a beacon of light, illuminating the path ahead with uncertain certainties.

The promise of God being with us always, even to the end of the age, could very well be one of those promises that stretch the limits of our comprehension. To understand this, we will have to comprehend the end of the age first, and even though we do not tend to do that very well.

When we encounter such profound promises in Scripture, like the assurance of God's constant presence, it is easy to overlook the weightiness of His words. We skim over them, failing to grasp their significance. Take, for instance, Job 9:19, "If it is a matter of strength, God is indeed mighty". What does that even mean? It is a reminder that in moments when we feel weak and powerless, God is the ultimate source of strength.

Similarly, when Jesus assures us, "I am with you always," it is easy to overlook the magnitude of His promise. Yet, when we dive deeper into the original Greek text, we uncover layers of meaning that resonate with profound truth. The word "always" in this verse is translated from a unique Greek phrase, "pasas tas hēmeras," which literally means "the whole of every day." It is a reminder that God's presence is not limited to specific moments or circumstances—it encompasses every aspect of our lives, every minute of every day.

In dire seasons of our marriage, and believe me, they come, it becomes increasingly easy to forget Jehovah Immeke. Surely, I am always with you, the whole of

every day. We begin to entertain thoughts that justify our hardened hearts forgetting the great commission. It was after the great commission of making disciples of all nations, that Jesus made this promise to His disciples. Lest we forget that marriage is a means of discipleship because marriage exposes our need for grace. Marriage is about a flawed person living with a flawed person in a fallen world but with a faithful God. I can not look to my husband or my wife to be my own personal messiah, you will be sorely disappointed. I can not ask my husband or wife for identity, meaning or purpose, I cannot ask for an inner sense of well-being. I cannot ask for happiness. When we begin to do that, we begin to replace God with our spouses and spend less and less time with Him. But He promises that He is available to us. Every minute of every day. We just need to tap into our resources. Our greatest one yet. So in your dimmed moments, clenching your fists and screaming their weaknesses at God, know that He is with you always. He is not just a distant deity but a living breathing presence in your midst. You may not want to surrender to your spouse but when you surrender to Jesus, you will find more than happiness. You will find a peace that surpasses all understanding, a joy that knows no bounds.



GET TO KNOW THE AUTHOR LINDSEY CELE

Lindsey Rose Cele, a 29-year-old from Atlantis, Cape Town, began as a worship leader and pursued a successful career in performing arts, including a role in a top South African telenovela in Johannesburg. Despite her entertainment industry success, Lindsey remains dedicated to uplifting young women through worship and community work. Rooted in faith and family, and happily married for three years, she exemplifies empowerment and compassion.

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