



# GR@ILVINE

## GRAIL PROGRAMMES NEWSLETTER

Kleinmond, South Africa, September 2016



*"I have become very sure of myself as an African Muslim Woman."* Jumana Eltigani, Tft graduate.

### **My story of "Becoming"**

By Jumana Eltigani, Tft graduate 2014-2015

Training for Transformation has been one of the most significant experiences in my life. It has reshaped me and helped me grow to be the self-assured African Muslim woman I am today.

Although I studied Chemistry science, as a Sudanese woman experiencing and witnessing violence against women in Sudan, my desire for achieving social justice in my country and my passion towards working directly with communities, led me to work for a non-profit organisation that provides services to children and women victims of Gender-based violence. SEEMA Center for Training and Protection of Women and Children's Rights provides services that include legal aid, health services, psychotherapy and social support. SEEMA also acts as a training centre where activists, potential service providers to victims, as well as partners can receive training in different areas related to GBV. I felt there was a huge gap between what I originally studied and the work that I was doing and Training for Transformation provided the opportunity for me to link theory with action.

My story of "becoming" started in March 2014, when I was at Khartoum airport travelling to South Africa to participate in the Training for Transformation course. At that moment I was thinking deeply about whether I was really ready to participate in the Tft programme.

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I doubted and questioned my ability to engage, to receive and to give. I lacked the confidence to be in a new place, studying new things in a different language. I was also concerned about being judged because I am Muslim. At that time I was also grappling with my ethnic identity, asking myself: "Am I Arab or African?!" Many thoughts were running through my mind and I was scared. Today I think I am no longer scared, but I am scaring my family for the new way I am thinking, I am scaring my organization for the way I am challenging and I am scaring the system for the way I am engaging in the community.

Tft has assisted me to discover new abilities in myself. I am currently one of the main facilitators in my organization and have facilitated workshops on Gender Based Violence and service provision for about 100 service providers. Using a participatory methodology in workshops was initially a challenge for me since my organization was used to a non participatory approach. Because I had learned the importance of engaging communities in process of dialogue, I started to influence a change the training culture of my organization, assisting my colleagues in facilitating in a different way. For starters, we began to call ourselves "facilitators" rather than "trainers". We started practising how to engage people in a participatory way and this new approach is slowly becoming part of the training programme. It was a great moment for me when I was preparing for a workshop with the director of the organisation and she said "The discussion with you today made me feel that



we are doing genuine work for the real benefit of the community”.

My worries about how my identity as a Muslim would be received also turned to be a lesson for me. Together with my fellow participants we got to a place of genuinely believing that no matter which faith we belong to, we can make the world a better place. It was also a lesson for us to give ourselves a chance to understand others by engaging with them, not relying on assumptions and projections we receive from others. I subsequently participated in a Cross Culture programme in Germany, in a programme that aims to strengthen the networks between Germany and the Islamic world. At the time I was representing Sudan as a Muslim woman and I was proudly showing the world that I am Muslim, not afraid to be judged but ready to tell people about my Islam. Through my engagement with different organisations in Germany, a fund was raised for my organisation in Sudan. This money was used for ten Sudanese women to start income-generating projects in different areas in Khartoum, to meet their basic needs and improve their lives. This idea was a result of a significant learning I had early on at Tft about the importance of self-reliant programmes.

Another area of challenge for me initially was the issue of language. I remember the first day when I met the Tft programme director, Ntombi, I told her that my English was not good. By the time I went back to Sudan (after two months of writing weekly academic papers at Tft), I was able to translate documents and edit proposals for the Diabetes Programs Promotion Organization. Currently, I am also editing the translation of the Tft books from English to Arabic, an important job that will make the book and methodology accessible to an audience from Sudan and other Arabic speaking countries.

Although I speak Arabic, I was born in Saudi Arabia, and pushed by the system to adopt the Arabic culture, I slowly started to claim my African identity by being in an environment that allows me to be who I am. Since that time I have become very sure of myself as an African Muslim Woman. For me, Tft is an experience of “continuous becoming” and a journey of self discovery that has impacted my life positively and continues to do.



Spring at the Grail Centre. By William Scrooby

## **25% midweek discount at The Grail Centre**

It is springtime. It is time to get out of our cocoons and enjoy the blooming wonders of nature. During this unique season, The Grail Centre offers you a 25% midweek discount (Monday – Thursday). The available dates are between the 10th to 30th November. Don't miss on this great seasonal offer.

## **Changemaker Training for Young Women**

By Lindia Trout

As part of their skills development programme, Mthimkhulu Community Development is facilitating a young Women's Changemaker Workshop from 4-6 October 2016. The workshop is aimed at young women in Kleinmond between the ages of 18 and 25.

The curriculum design is based on an experiential learning model in which young women are encouraged to reflect on, question and analyse their own experiences and lives. This includes exploring who they are, what is happening in their communities and the positive and negative impacts on their lives. The workshop activities will also engage young women in sharing ideas and opinions about how they can make positive changes in their lives and communities. Follow-up sessions will be designed around the young women's emerging needs in alignment with identified campaigns. Support, communication and mentoring will be setup via the participant's choice of communication, including the option of social media.

Mthimkhulu looks forward to this workshop, the first of many more learning events designed with and for young women in the Kleinmond Community. For further information email [admin@grailprogrammes.org.za](mailto:admin@grailprogrammes.org.za) or call +27 (0)28 271 5213.

## **ABOUT US**

### **THE GRAIL CENTRE TRUST**

The Grail Centre Trust is based in Kleinmond, Western Cape. This Not-for-Profit Organisation delivers two programmes, namely Training for Transformation and Mthimkhulu Community Development Programme. In addition, the Grail Centre Conference and Retreat Centre can accommodate groups up to 50 people. Our work is not possible without the support from funders and donors. You too could help us today to expand it. If you so wish, contact Eunice at [eunice@grailprogrammes.org.za](mailto:eunice@grailprogrammes.org.za).