

Inspirational
Episode 39

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*This episode of **INSPIRATIONAL** features a “True Story” from the life of **Ms. Valentina Hynes** (Specialist – Holistic Wellbeing & Happiness at Work, Professional Speaker)*

“I don't quite remember when I started to practise symbolism. Not that I spend any time trying to pinpoint when I did, but one of my strongest memories of symbolism in the meta physical sense was 2012 New Year morning.

I had spent the months of November and December 2011, in a deep cloud of despair and barely concealed desperation. The closer the end of 2011 got, the more desperate and forlorn I became, as I ruminated on my unaccomplished 2011 New Year resolutions.

Another year done, and nothing remarkable to show for it. My mates were settled in successful careers, travelling abroad for their Masters degrees, driving cool cars, wearing fancy clothes and had money in the bank. They could afford to go to restaurants, bars and other ritzy places. I could only come up with excuses.

Comparison is the highway to self-destruction, but could also spur self-reflection and motivation. The end result I've learnt lies in the driving force. Is it envy or curiosity?

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So that New Year's morning of 2012, I woke up to a random memory of my younger self climbing trees, and I resolved to begin my New Year as I meant to go on - climbing up the ladder of success, literally and figuratively.

I got out of bed and picked a fruit tree in my father's compound to climb, much to the astonishment of my family.

I plucked the ripe fruits and declared to my family that I was starting my new year as I meant to go on, putting in the work without shame or reservation, going the extra mile and staying true to myself and my roots.

Someone took a photo of me on the tree, I posted it on my BlackBerry messenger profile, and some friends and associates reacted by either messaging me with laughter or scorn.

I didn't care. In retrospect, this was my first experience of the healing and motivating effect of metaphysical symbolism or representation if you wish.

Symbolism or representation is the using of a word, action, item or place to symbolise or represent metaphysically a thought, desire, prayer, decision or goal.

Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that studies the first principles of beings, identity and change, space and time, causality, necessity and possibility (Wikipedia).

2012 didn't start rosy. There was a fuel crises, a strike and then a national protest that lasted a month. All in January!

Yet, 2012 stands out as the year my life and then business started to turn around.

It's the year, one of the contacts on my BlackBerry messenger, a woman I had never had a one-one exchange with, reached out to say she had been watching me and was always impressed and inspired by my messages of positivity, cleverly embedded in my creative marketing broadcast messages (it was in the BlackBerry era, before WhatsApp, Instagram and the rest became a thing). BlackBerry messenger was to us then a combination of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. It was the way to be connected and for savvy business minds, like mine, perfect for finding and connecting with an engaged audience.

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A seemingly absent-minded enquiry from her, a sincere willingness to be of service from me, catapulted my small business that was struggling to get clients monthly, all the way to the office of the President of the country, to international banks and huge global corporations.

By the end of June, I too went abroad for a much deserved holiday, even though my experience there put to test my New Year declaration to keep going, staying true to myself as I lost all of my money on Day 1 of my holiday. But that's a story for another day.

As a holistic wellbeing and happiness at work specialist, I look beyond the regular to create protective factors for improved well-being and mental health, by fostering resilience.

Metaphysical symbolism or representation may be argued to have a placebo effect, but it cannot be argued that it is a huge boost for wellbeing, mental health, resilience and productivity.

Have you ever tried metaphysical symbolism?”

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