

Hein von Hörsten

# Health Focus

**The most significant conversations of our lives occur in silence**

- Simon Van Booy

Walk with me and work with me—  
watch how I do it. Learn the  
unforced rhythms of grace. I won't  
lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on  
you. Keep company with me and  
you'll learn to live freely and lightly.

Matt 11:29 The Message

**Y**ou will recall that in the previous issue of Health Focus, I encouraged you to enjoy some rest and special family time during the Festive Season. I trust that this bonding time was indeed a blessing.

But we're back on track and once again realise that we're living in a world that is increasingly occupying our time, money and energy, I have become aware of a greater necessity in my own life to withdraw from the rat race at regular intervals as a means of regaining serenity and sanity.

Someone referred to this rat race as *life-sucking busyness ... with ten pounds of things to do, but only a five-pound bag of time*. This is a language we all understand. It seems that being caught up in this life-sucking busyness, we need to find ways and means of withdrawing to quiet places where we hear God's call ... *where stark emptiness strips us of pretence and silence wraps itself around us ... where we relinquish baggage ... (and) receive fresh vision*. (Elizabeth Canham)

Often people are reluctant to silence, simply because they have not acquired the skill to let go and let God. Some avoid quiet places as they are afraid to be confronted with themselves. Solitude to most people in life's demanding race is a frightening and threatening experience.

Do you have a special place of solitude? A place where you can allow God to renew your weary spirit and satisfy your soul? A place where you can release control and allow God to penetrate your thoughts? A place where you can let go and let God?

*For it is indeed when stark emptiness strips us, that we create the opportunity for God to promote the ongoing process of growth, renewal and transformation in our lives. (John Lionberger: Renewal in the Wilderness).*

May I challenge you to create a place of solitude in your busy schedules, a time of letting go and allowing God. And in the experience of silence wrapping itself around you, you may in actual fact feel God's arms of assurance and comfort - a God that promised never to leave nor forsake us.



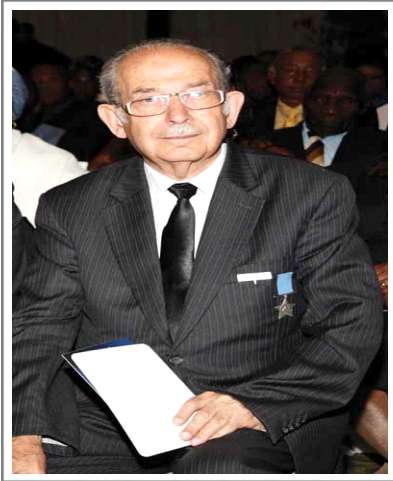
## Walking breaks counter the effects of sitting

By **Matthew Solan**, Executive Editor, *Harvard Men's Health Watch*

Mounting evidence suggests that prolonged sitting may be as dangerous to your health as smoking. But a small study suggests that doing five minutes of light walking for every 30 minutes of sitting can help offset the harm.

Researchers asked 11 adults, ages 40 to 70, to sit in an ergonomic chair for eight hours on five separate days. Participants were allowed to work on a laptop, read, eat, and use their phones during the sitting time and were provided standardised meals. On one day, the group sat for the entire eight hours with only short breaks to use the bathroom. On each of the other days, they followed a different pattern of light walking breaks on a treadmill: one minute of walking after each half-hour of sitting, one minute after each hour, five minutes after each half-hour, and five minutes after each hour. Their blood sugar levels and blood pressure were measured every 15 and 60 minutes, respectively.

The researchers found that five minutes of walking after every half-hour of sitting was the only duration that significantly lowered both blood sugar and blood pressure. Still, any amount of walking after sitting for a long period is better than nothing. All break patterns reduced systolic blood pressure (the top number) by 4 to 5 points compared with sitting all day, an amount comparable to a 13% to 15% decrease in cardiovascular disease risk, according to the researchers. The results were published online Jan. 12, 2023, by *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*.



DR KARL SELIGMANN  
(1929-2023)

**Daily**<sup>BOTSWANA</sup>**News** THE PAPER THAT INFORMS AND EDUCATES

Tuesday February 7, 2023 No. 017

By Lesedi Thatayamodimo

# Masisi pays tribute to Dr Seligmann

*GABORONE - Tributes continued to pour in for well-known missionary and medical doctor Karl Seligmann, with President Mokgweetsi Masisi leading the funereal salutations.*

*In a message read by the Gaborone District Commissioner Ms Grace Seitshiro during the funeral on Sunday in Gaborone, President Masisi said Dr Seligmann would forever be remembered for his contributions to the development of health and medical services in Botswana.*

*The president remembered Dr Seligmann as Botswana's medical practitioner. He said his outstanding work saw him being awarded the Presidential Orders for Meritorious Service in September 1980 and the Presidential Order of Honour in 2009.*

*"The government and people of Botswana are forever indebted to his sterling service and I convey my condolences to you on behalf of my family and Botswana."*

*The good doctor was a humble, highly principled philanthropist who set an example for young and old alike.*

*His caretaker Dr Jemuel Frias said one way or the other, most people were impacted by Dr Seligmann's life and therefore acknowledged God for his life.*

*Dr Frias said Dr Seligmann as a colleague, medical professional and missionary, had lived a purposeful life to inspire hope and health in Botswana.*

*He said even when his term to serve ended, he did not return to his country of origin, but stayed to serve, adding his health care skills were exceptional.*

*"In the midst of consultation, he would preach and pray as he attached healing to God," he said, adding that his fluency in Setswana and Sekgalagadi drew many to him as a doctor and missionary.*

*He also described him as an outstanding citizen whose passion and commitment to health care surpassed expectation, as he dedicated his entire life to serving God and his people, which he showed through his philanthropy.*

*"We shall forever remember him for his outstanding and inspiring leadership and commitment to health and I hope we continue his legacy," said Dr Frias.*

*Dr Seligmann arrived in Botswana in 1954, serving as a medical superintendent at Kanye SDA hospital and moved to Gaborone in 1980 where he practiced privately until October 2022 when his health deteriorated.*

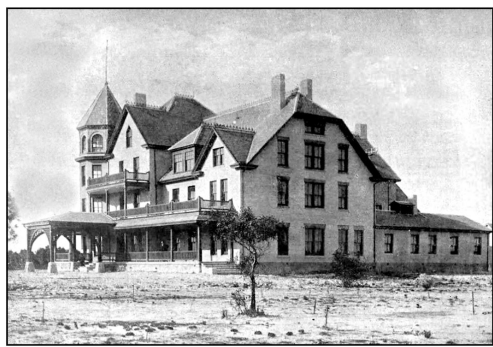
*He served as chairperson for the Association of Medical Missions of Botswana; was the founder and director of Botswana Adventist Medical Services; a member of the High-level Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Health; a member of the steering committee for the establishment of the medical school at the University of Botswana as well as a member in different many committees.*

*He leaves behind his wife, Sonita Seligmann, daughter, grand and great-grandchildren.*



## THE BEGINNING OF THE HEALTH MINISTRY OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH IN SOUTH AFRICA

*In our last edition of Health Focus we looked at the early eighteen-nineties when a number of South African Sabbath believers visited the headquarters in Battle Creek. On their return they were impressed to start a medical work in South Africa. The establishment of a sanitarium was high priority, but it was the chemist Fred Reed who built an orphanage, dedicated in 1895. In this edition we are going to focus on the establishment of the Claremont Sanitarium.*



THE CLAREMONT MEDICAL AND SURGICAL SANITARIUM.

Meanwhile far more ambitious plans were being laid to establish a sanitarium in South Africa which would be as much like the famous Battle Creek Sanitarium as they could make it with the funds available. A tract of land was secured on the Belvedere Road near Claremont which, in the opinion of S. N. Haskell, was "not very inviting. It is on a dry sandy place where there is neither water, decent drainage, nor trees or anything that would make me think it was the place."

No pains were spared to make it one of the finest buildings of its kind south of the Equator. Expensive furniture was imported from Europe and America. The total cost of the sanitarium when completed and equipped amounted to fifty thousand pounds, of which the Wessells family gave thirty thousand! It was a four story building and contained fifty-one rooms. There was a laundry and bakery in the building.

The first doctor to take charge was R. S. Anthony who had gone with Elders Boyd and Robinson to Africa in 1887 to engage in colporteur work and who had since taken the Medical course. John Wessells was appointed treasurer; A. Druillard steward and Mrs Druillard was the first matron.

The Sanitarium was officially opened on January 12, 1897. Mr. T. E. Fuller, a member of the Cape Parliament was the guest speaker. Every room in the sanitarium was filled within a week and the patronage became so heavy that it became necessary to rent adjacent buildings. During the eight months after the sanitarium opened, Dr Anthony made 1798 professional visits in the city as well as caring for the regular patients in the institution.

As the work was much too heavy for one Doctor, Kate Lindsay, who had been for some years a physician connected with the Battle Creek Sanitarium, went out to assist. There were also twelve nurses, most of them Battle Creek graduates, and a further fifteen employees of the institution.

As was the case of other lines of work in South Africa, the medical work thus started in grand style. For a time the instruction which had come to us as a peculiar people through the Spirit of Prophecy was faithfully followed and the institution prospered accordingly.

The Anglo-Boer war broke out near the end of 1899, and early in 1900 the British Imperial Government requisitioned one half of the Sanitarium building to use as a hospital for its wounded soldiers who were arriving from the battle fields in the north. The military officers had their meals in the general dining room mixing freely with the patients and workers of the institution. In their part of the Sanitarium, the officers set up a bar where liquor was sold. It was during this time that wickedness came in like an overwhelming flood.

Source: <https://africansdahistory.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Third-Angel-Over-Africa-by-Virgil-Robinson.pdf>

# DAILY MAVERICK



## Dr Mfundo Mabenge has been honoured for the remarkable turnaround at Dora Nginza Hospital's maternity unit.



By Estelle Ellis

30 Jan 2023

**B**ehind an enormous desk in a tiny office with walls covered in certificates showing his many academic achievements, Dr Mfundo Mabenge has for more than a decade been fighting for the pregnant moms in his care. Now he is winning.

The head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Dora Nginza Hospital in Nelson Mandela Bay, Mabenge is an obstetrician and gynaecologist who has specialised further into gynaecological oncology.

Although the feisty doctor's mood might fluctuate between elation and despair, his reason for doing his job has never changed: "If a woman dies, you hurt a whole community."

Since taking over as the head of obstetrics and gynaecology, Mabenge has trained 22 new obstetricians and gynaecologists and two gynaecological oncologists. His team delivers 700 babies a month.

The past two years have been traumatic for the team, ever since provincial maternity services collapsed in the first wave of Covid-19. As obstetric units at clinics throughout Eastern Cape closed, sick women flooded the city's maternity unit, overwhelming staff and doctors.

In 2022 the unit was hit by a violent and debilitating strike during which women had to be evacuated at night to another hospital.

Pregnant women came to Dora Nginza Hospital to give birth from all over the western part of Eastern Cape and the unit was often not the safe place Mabenge wanted it to be.

When he received his award for Best Frontline Doctor at a recent departmental award ceremony, Mabenge was ecstatic. It crowned months of intense turnaround work in his unit.

"It is good to have support," he said. "There has been tremendous improvement in our outcomes, both for deliveries and for moms after giving birth." He explained that he had managed to employ more nurses and doctors could now run two theatres for C-sections. Before, there had only been enough staff for one operating theatre.

"We need continued support and I am relieved to say we are getting it from the current head of the Eastern Cape department of health, Dr Rolene Wagner. "We can now cope with what we have to do. The morale is high. We are leading by example. If there is a problem, we know there is someone we can turn to."

*This is a wonderful report, Dr Mabenge - we are so proud of you and your staff! (Original report shortened)*



## The Link Project



Amanda Oakes-Cornellissen

The Lift Project was designed by Professor Darren Morton and his team from Avondale University in Australia. Initially designed to lift the mood and well-being of the general public, this 10 week online programme has been successfully completed by over 30 000 people across 50 countries worldwide. As Professor Morton was my study leader for my Master's Degree, I saw it fit to make use of this programme. As it has never been implemented on individuals who have a diagnosed mental health condition, we decided to investigate whether The Lift Project would make any difference to these individual's mood and well-being. It was also the first time The Lift Project was introduced to South Africa!

I was fortunate enough to have the help of three of our local GP's (Dr Cornellissen, Dr Combrinck and Dr Vermeulen) here in Kathu, who sourced most of the participants for this study! Being the facilitator and technical person was a challenge, but it taught me to always be organised, and have a plan B up my sleeve, especially when load-shedding reared its ugly head!! Trying to shuffle my day job (Physiotherapy), this intervention and keeping up to date with the data collection, was tough. Thankfully I had help from Professor Morton and his team with the statistical analysis and the formal transcript compilation.

The whole Research process, including submitting to Frontiers in Psychology Journal was an eye opener and a very good learning experience for me. Thank you to my husband for putting up with me and supporting me during this time! The Lift Project is a 10 week educational program that engages participants in well-being enhancing strategies from Lifestyle Medicine and positive psychology. Each week participants would partake in a group lesson on a specific topic such as the importance of sleep ,exercise or whole -food plant based nutrition on mental health. They would also be given a challenge for homework each week.

Amanda's research was unique in that the Lift Project has been shown to be effective in improving mood and preventing mental health issues but this was the first time it was used on patients who were diagnosed with an affective disorder and undergoing pharmacological care for it. Amanda had a treatment group of 23 participants . They showed a significant improvement in their mental health scores within 1 week and this improvement continued over the intervention. This pilot study highlights the impact of a lifestyle medicine approach to mental health concerns . It also provides hope for a population level solution to lower the mental health burden in South Africa.

*Amanda Oakes-Cornellissen (physiotherapist) and her husband, Golvin, (General Practitioner) are both Adventist Health Workers that practice in Kathu, Northern Cape. We are so proud of her Master's degree in Lifestyle Medicine, through Avondale University. Her published research article on the Link Project is available for you to read in the SALMA Newsletter of March 2023.*

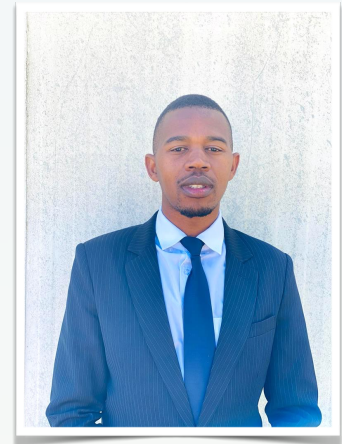
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## HEALTH MINISTRIES DIRECTOR SAU

### Dr Mosae Augustinus Phatsoa

is a Seventh-day Adventist medical doctor born and raised in the mountain kingdom of Lesotho known for its fame as the Kingdom in the Sky.

He completed a Diploma in General Nursing at Maluti Adventist School of Nursing and then furthered his studies with a degree in Medicine (MBBS) in Jinzhou Medical University (JZMU) in China. Upon completion Dr Phatsoa did the required government services in Lesotho and later on joined Maluti Adventist Hospital in Lesotho, serving as a Medical officer.



Later he became Chief Medical Officer in the same hospital. Currently he is completing his Masters degree in Public Health with the University of Suffolk in Ipswich, England. Dr Phatsoa is serving as the Health Ministries Director of the Southern African Union Conference (SAU) of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church.

On behalf of the Adventist Health Worker family in the South African Union Conference, we wish you, Dr. Phatsoa, God's richest blessings as you serve the Church in this capacity.

## Curried cauliflower and sweet potato fritters



### Ingredients (4 servings):

- ¼ small cauliflower, finely chopped
- 1 medium red capsicum (bell pepper), finely chopped
- 300g sweet potato, peeled, grated
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- ½ cup plain flour
- ½ cup milk
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 2 tablespoons olive or canola oil
- 2/3 cup plain low-fat Greek-style yogurt
- 2 tablespoons mango chutney
- Baby spinach, to serve

### Method:

1. Combine cauliflower, capsicum, sweet potato and onion in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Add curry powder and flour. Toss to combine.
3. Add milk and egg. Mix well.
4. Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Spoon 1/4 cup batter into pan. Spread out to form a flat round.
5. Repeat to make 3 more fritters. Cook for 3 to 4 minutes, each side, or until well browned.
6. Transfer to a plate lined with paper towel. Cover loosely to keep warm. Repeat with remaining mixture, adding extra oil if needed.
7. Meanwhile, combine yogurt and mango chutney in a bowl.
8. Serve fritters with mango yogurt and baby spinach.

# WHIEM HEALTH EXPO REPORT



Wholistic Involvement and Empowering Ministry

As reported in our last report about the Health expo we conducted here in Rooigrond in Mafikeng North West province of South Africa, the Lord continues to pour His blessings, as such the project follow-up to establish and build a church is positively underway.

As pictures show, from the small number of people we were gathering with, to a now grown number of God’s children that even qualifies to become a company. Plans have been made to baptise 10 people who are currently in Bible class ready to be baptized at end of this month of March 2023.

Considering the growing number attending worship, an application has been submitted to the local Municipality for a sizeable land where a church must be built, and sufficient enough for a community hall where health lessons and other family presentations will be conducted. Please join us in prayers for this blessing to be reality soon. There have been other interesting programs that were held to support the community both materially and Spiritually.

On 18<sup>th</sup> December 2022 we held a joint hospitality program, in which parcels were given to the needy,

On 18<sup>th</sup> March 2023 the main church organised the youth to come and conduct a youth program and also gave parcels to the needy.

Health expo programs continued and due to the success of reaching communities with the health lessons, other churches and organisations showed an interest in Health Expos. Here are the places we conducted the health expos which were equally successful.

On 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023, we were invited to go and support North Riding church in Johannesburg, with their arranged Health expo.

The following week we were invited by the Boipelong Psychiatric hospital in Mafikeng to support them with health expo lessons.

Another invitation came from the District department of Education in Mafikeng on the 10<sup>th</sup> February 2023. Many of the workers confessed that they really benefitted from the lifestyle lessons and check-ups.

*Ps Banda, since you moved to North West Province, you and your team have continued the wonderful ministry of Health Expos. We applaud your leadership and the team’s dedication in the communities. Thank you for this report.*





## PROFESSOR IN PUBLIC HEALTH ACKNOWLEDGED FOR RESEARCH EXCELLENCE



Kebogile Mokwena (MSc, EdD)

**K**ebogile Mokwena is a Professor of Public Health at Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences, and her current research niche area is substance abuse and population mental health. She is grateful to the South African Medical Research Council for research grants that enabled her to strengthen her contribution to research in these 2 inter-linked areas of social, physical and spiritual health. Her focus in substance abuse is nyaope, a cocktail drug that devastates Black communities in South Africa.

In 2018 she was awarded the prestigious 5 year grant NRF Research Chair in substance abuse and Population mental health, which was renewed for a further 5 years starting 2023. She was able to spread her research by forming collaborations with researchers within Sefako Makgatho University, as well as other institutions of higher learning, including University of Cape Town, Walter Sisulu University and University of Johannesburg.

Her research incorporates a significant amount of community health education and health promotion, and she has presented her work in various faith based organisations including Seventh Day Adventist, Methodist and Lutheran congregations in Tshwane and Johannesburg. She also presents her work in correctional services centres and schools.

At the end of 2022 academic year, her research excellence was acknowledged when Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University awarded her 3 accolades, i.e. the best researcher in the School of Health Care Sciences, the best female researcher in the university, as well as the best overall researcher in the university. She is also an NRF rated researcher, which is acknowledgement by the National Research Foundation of a recent research outputs and impact as perceived by international peer reviewers. The rating is based on the quantity and quality of research which is published in high impact journals/outlets.

Prof Mokwena serves in the board of Vista Psychiatric clinic, as well as in the Adventist Professional Health and Humanitarian Services

Together with her husband they have 3 adult children and 2 grandchildren, and are members of the SDA church in Centurion

*Prof Kebo, your research work has not just filled the pages of journals, but has introduced a pathway to mental wellness in many suffering communities - truly a ministry of healing!*

## WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES A SPIRIT FILLED EASTER WEEKEND

A white rectangular box containing the text "CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS" in bold orange capital letters. The text is flanked by two grey arrows pointing towards each other, one on the left and one on the right.

**CALL FOR  
SUBMISSIONS**

**SUBMISSIONS** are vital to make a newsletter both viable and meaningful. Your contribution, how small or seemingly unimportant, will truly be appreciated and instrumental in adding value to our newsletter.

PLEASE send your submission (news, pictures, articles, etc.)

to:

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