

# MTHOKOZISI'S LESSONS AND QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

## *Lessons*

---

1. However challenging your environment is, being truthful and open about sensitive things like being gay and living with HIV will be less stressful.
2. Talk to people who have been through similar experiences for support and get all the information you need to help you make choices about coming out and disclosure.
3. I was more at peace with myself when I accepted myself from within – I decided to ‘grow in’ to get in touch with my inner self, including all my flaws and all my unique qualities.
4. I found it a joy to share my gifts – when you feel depleted, this is when you should reach out to help others to regain wholeness within yourself.
5. Get all the medical advice you need and talk to other people on ARV treatment before taking a decision to start ARVs when you need them.
6. Find your own way of adjusting your lifestyle when starting to take ARVs to give yourself the best chance of living a better and longer life.
7. While respecting the fact that I am living with HIV, I decided to open myself up to a life beyond HIV so as to live out my passions and reach my dreams.

## *Questions*

---

1. What has been your journey of getting in touch with yourself and learning to accept who you are?
2. How have you handled being open about sensitive issues like being gay and living with HIV in challenging home or community environments?
3. How can you support your loved ones *after* you have told them shocking news like hearing that you have tested HIV positive?
4. What is your approach to looking after yourself and living positively with HIV?
5. How has my story inspired you to create and find a life beyond HIV?
6. How has my story challenged you?