



"To be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." -Madiba

Nelson Mandela-the Reconciler

His words speak to the essence of reconciliation-whether between white and black, Christian and Muslim, or women and men. His life bears witness to the possibility of achieving it.

Our love and prayers pour out to our South African family of friends as you grieve your beloved Tata Madiba. We grieve with you. We pray for the peace of Madiba's soul. We pray for South Africa. We pray for the world.

Nelson Mandela was born the son of a tribal chief in Transkei, a Xhosa homeland. As a sign of affection and respect, South Africans often call him by his clan name, Madiba, which means "reconciler."

"We thank God for him," said Archbishop Desmond Tutu. People cared about Mandela and loved him because of his courage, convictions and his caring ways for others, explained Tutu, but Mandela was not an anomaly. "Certainly, he was exceptional, but the spirit of greatness that he personified resides in all of us. Human beings are made for greatness," said Archbishop Tutu. "Let us love one another as we loved him."

Nozizwe Madlala Routledge, who was instrumental in bringing Gender Reconciliation work to South Africa, served in Parliament when Mandela was President. She celebrates his life and example, including his personal touch:

**He reminds me of Gandhi's wise words:
"Be the change you wish to see in the world."
I feel blessed to have served in Parliament with him as our leader. I always savored the warm, fuzzy feeling he left in my heart whenever he shook my hand and asked after my health and that of my relatives, whom he had not met. I know he is the best leader South Africa has had. For our country to prosper so that there is justice for all, we need to ensure that we act peacefully and responsibly at all times. This is the only way to honour Mandela.**

Mandela's pithy observation about ending apartheid is directly applicable to eliminating gender based violence, and all forms of oppression: "It always seems impossible until it is done."

May it be done indeed! "Reconciliation means working together to correct the legacy of past injustice." Thank you, Madiba. May you rest in peace, and your noble legacy live on . . .