

Mandisa Zungu (née Mesatywa).

Inanda student, 1978–1982.

Nonhlanhla Khumalo.

Inanda student, 1979–1982.

Ntombi Mngomezulu.

Inanda student, 2002–2006.

Rudo Mphasane.

Inanda student, 2006–2008.

Interviewed together in Cape Town, 4 May 2009.

MH: Since we're doing a larger group interview, we'll go around and I'll let you guys answer the questions in turn—we might end up having a conversation about some things that are not in my original plan, and that's fine too. So first, for each of you, your name, your maiden name, when and where you were born, and when you went to Inanda Seminary. So we'll start with you [to Ntombi].

NM: Okay, my name is Ntombi Mngomezulu and I am from Durban.

Can you spell your last name for me?

NM: M-n-g-o-m-e-z-u-l-u. *Ja*, and I went to Inanda Seminary in 2002 and matriculated in 2006.

Okay, and you?

RM: My name is Rudo Mphasane; I'm from Johannesburg, but my mom threw me in a boarding school in Durban, which was fantastic. I was there from 2006 to 2008, three years.

All right.

NK: I'm Nonhlanhla Khumalo, also from Johannesburg, Soweto. And I was thrown into boarding school because of the 1976 riots. I went to Inanda in 1977, just after the riots.

And when did you graduate?

NK: 1982.

Okay, that's good, I don't have many people in that age range.

MZ: And I'm Mandisa Zungu, from Queenstown, in the Eastern Cape. Maiden name, Mesatywa. And I went to Inanda 1978 to 1982.

For each of you—though Nonhlanhla, you've alluded to this already—why did your parents decide to send you to Inanda Seminary? As far as you know, how did they make that decision? We'll start with Ntombi, then keep the circle going.

NM: Why Inanda Seminary? [Giggles.] Because I think I was just thrown into boarding school because a girl in my family went to boarding school, so it was sort of a tradition type of thing.

Had she gone to Inanda Seminary, or to a different boarding school?

NM: No, my cousins had gone to Inanda Seminary, *ja*. So... the boarding school my grandmother went to sort of went bad after a few years, and Inanda was rising and all that, so she thought it would be a good one, and *ja*. And besides, I think I wanted to go to boarding school and Inanda was the only one I had heard of, *ja*.

And you had heard of it because your cousin went there?

NM: *Ja*.

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And Rudo?

RM: I guess for me, like I was at a boarding school prior to going to Inanda Seminary, but it wasn't doing me justice, you know, because my potential wasn't quite there. And it was more hectic because my mom is an actress, and the lifestyle that she lives is hectic, you know, and I think my mom had just heard from her friends that there was a school in Durban with good ethics, and I would do well there, and rise, and be someone, you know? So I think my mom just wanted to try it out.

And Nonhlanhla?

NK: You know, I don't know if there was a reason why Inanda. Because I am the youngest of four children and all of us were sent to different boarding schools—I don't know if my parents wanted a flavor of each of them! I have a sister who went to Amanzimtoti, one brother went to Dlangezwa, and the other went to—what was it, I can't remember—and I went to Inanda. So I really don't know if there was a logic to this one or not! [Laughs.] But everyone had to go.

So were your siblings all sent to boarding school around the time of the Soweto uprisings?

NK: Yeah, my parents are both teachers and they were of the opinion that the education in Soweto wasn't good, so when you finished your junior primary you had to be at a boarding school in Natal or Durban. That was the—and I actually made a mistake, I said I got there in 1977, but I got there in 1979, because I got there after you.

MZ: Yes. So I was wondering.

NK: I was first at my grandmother's.

MZ: Well for me, gosh, that was years back. You see, I come from a family of educators, and so therefore the preservation of education was important. I remember they were discussing, 'Where are you going to take Mandisa? Because, you know, we need to preserve education in the family. Take her to a very good school.' And I mean, in Queenstown, there were hardly any good schools at the time. And there were no boarding schools for a black child. So Inanda came up. My mother somehow heard about Inanda Seminary from friends and things like that, so they thought, 'Why not? Why not send her to Inanda Seminary?' It was quite a distance, I mean, if you look at Queenstown and Durban, gosh. It's unlike Joburg. I mean, Queenstown is the *bundus* of the *bundus*, you know? [Laughs.] But I think it was more about, you know, the preservation of good education, because Inanda was known for the best results in bringing up girls, *ja*.

NK: But Inanda had an unfair advantage, you know that? Do you know how they got these good results? They didn't accept anyone who didn't have a first-class pass. They didn't actually allow people to come into Inanda and become members unless you had C and above.

MZ: Yes.

NK: So it was selection bias.

MZ: Maybe, maybe. I don't know! [All laugh.]

So when you went to Inanda, what was the process of applying? Did you have to do an interview?

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NK: There was an interview in Joburg, there was something about having an interview in Joburg, I can't remember.

MZ: I can't remember, hey.

NK: There was something where you applied, and then they asked for your reply, but I can't help thinking there was some kind of meeting in Joburg. I can't remember.

MZ: *Ja.*

NM: I had an interview.

MZ: I think I had an interview in Durban. I had to go to Durban and go back... They couldn't even come to East London at least for us.

What do you remember most strongly about your time at Inanda Seminary? What was most important in shaping your subsequent lives and career choices?

NK: I think, for me, Inanda was the best experience that any girl could ever expect. Especially at the time. Because, I mean, we grew up at a time when—I mean, I had just been through 1976. Now you have to imagine the scene. You are ten years old. People are being shot at like flies. I mean, people are just dying all around you. And there's a funeral this Saturday, and you know, that as you are going to the funeral, there will be another funeral the following weekend. And your friends, your brother's friends, someone is dying. I mean, it was just mayhem in Soweto, you know? And yet, it started with a very simple day. I still remember June 15, when they were making the placards. My brothers used to go to Orlando High, and my mother was teaching at Orlando High at the time. And they were making the placards, and my mother was hovering around, looking at them, quite anxious about what the following day was going to bring, and everyone was excited and they were making, 'No, we don't want Afrikaans, no more Afrikaans,' you know, all that. And at the time it *seemed* like—it was exciting, but people were a bit apprehensive. But I don't think anyone I saw it coming, I mean, I don't think anyone anticipated the amount of bloodshed that would happen, you know. So you come out of that situation—I was pulled out of Soweto, first to go to Everton, where my grandmother is. So I went to school in Everton for a year.

Where is Everton?

NK: Everton is near Vereeniging, it's actually near Oprah's school. So I went to that school for a year, living with my grandmother, just to be out of Soweto. Because there really wasn't any effective education in Soweto, and in '78 in Soweto, and then in '79 I went to Inanda. Then I arrive at Inanda. And first we had to take the train ride. I don't know how you guys got there. We had to take the train ride. Now, there were no parents. Nobody was escorting you. We were bundled in with other girls and some older girls. It was an *overnight* train ride. And although Inanda always attempted to open on different days from Ohlange, the boys from Ohlange used to wait for Inanda girls, to be on the train with Inanda girls.

RM: They are infamous for that, those boys. [All laugh.]

NK: We used to sleep in this—I don't know if you guys have slept in a train before—in these things—bunkers—

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Sleeper cabins.

NK: And we slept four to six in each. And boys would be out in the corridor, you'd find it hard to go to the loo. The whole environment was very intimidating. But what happened, right from the moment you arrived, was that people started saying 'members.' 'Come here, member. Come here, member.' And it was the most phenomenal thing... you're feeling threatened, you've left home, but all of a sudden you're being welcomed into this comradery that you know nothing about. And for me that was the best feeling. Because at first I thought 'members' was a special group, so I was sitting there, watching them call each other 'member, member, member,' and then before long someone looks at me and says, 'Member, come.' So I thought, oh! I also fit, I also belonged. So that was really nice, hey. I enjoyed that. And then of course you go to Inanda and the school itself was phenomenal. I mean, the sort of education you got—Mandisa and I can keep you all night, telling you the stories of what the matrons used to do, what the principal used to do, and what she used to get up to, because she was the naughtiest. [MZ laughs.] But I think more than anything for me, it was a feeling of, one, acceptance and belonging. And two, a sense that I could accomplish anything. And I think for me, that's the most important gift that I think Inanda gave me. One of the things that I think illustrates it the best was when we used to go and play sport with co-ed schools. And the girls at the co-ed schools didn't do anything, I mean, they didn't. We had to do our own softball, our own debating club. We didn't have boys to do any of that for us, so we did it ourselves, you know. And the girls at the co-ed schools were just looking pretty and not getting involved in any of this. [MZ laughs.] And, you know, you left Inanda feeling you can stand up to any man, you can match up to anyone, you are just as good as anyone, and I think for me that was really phenomenal, you know.

RM: There's nothing like the sportsmanship at Inanda... The togetherness that we have...

NK: Except for that first week of arrival. [MZ laughs]

RM: That didn't happen in our time, though.

NK: Really? You were so lucky, so lucky!

MZ: That initiation period, when you first came, gosh! For me, the first thing was just the language. I'm Xhosa. And, you know, the girls would call me in Zulu to initiate me, and they would say things I didn't understand [laughs]. And when I didn't comply I would get in trouble, because I was actually trying to understand what they were saying. And that was the first hello for me at Inanda. I don't know, the list is long. The culture. The religious culture. Music. The traditional dancing, and, oh, the music. For that matter, the Inanda girls, the old Inanda girls, have released a CD of music. The sportsmanship, like the girls say... Nonhlanhla used to be my dancing partner. Ballroom dancing... She would wear the pants, and I'd have to wear this little dress.

NK: We used to make do.

MZ: And the academic side, gosh. Very strong academic achievements at Inanda. Foundations. I don't know if it was because we had the best teachers, or we were just hard workers, or the combination of both maybe, and maybe the fact that Nonhlanhla mentioned, the selection bias of bright students, hard workers, and very good teachers. We had a Miss Garn from Turkey, Istanbul, Turkey.

NK: And Karen Roy.

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MZ: She taught us biology. Miss Garn taught us mathematics. We had the guys who taught us physics. Dr. Hitchcock... And I mean for me, you know, the most—I don't even have a word for it, because it's deep—was the teaching about Christ. Oh, I am forever grateful for that... What actually keeps me afloat is the teaching about Christ. It's not even my credentials. My credentials nowadays come second, you know. The teaching about Christ that I got from Inanda formed a strong foundation. I came from a religious family—Methodists—but really the zooming into Christ as a person, who Christ was. I got that at Inanda. I actually got saved at Inanda Seminary.

What religious denomination do you belong to now? [To Mandisa]

NK: Charismatic born-again! [Both laugh.] Washed in the blood and all that.

MZ: Born-again, whatever. Some of the things I remember from Standard Ten, sometimes today I meditate on them. I say to my husband, 'You know what? Our teacher told us this.' And some of these things are coming through now. It was a very strong and solid education in that respect. So the Christian aspect, the education, the sporting, culture, were very strong, were very, very strong... [Discusses jokingly how younger generations at Inanda can't sing as well, recollects poor showing of Mah Edwards' song during At Home in 2006.] There's a school song—that stood out for me as well.

NK: When you sang the school song, the whole chapel used to do this.

MZ: The chapel would shake like that! ...We sang with passion.

For you guys [Rudo and Ntombi] how important were the history, the traditions at Inanda Seminary?

RM: It was very important, because you're there, that's home. I was there all the time, because I couldn't go to Joburg all the time, you know. So that was my home, even during some holidays... We had this thing that I think was still there in your times, my baby, my mama.

NK and MZ: Yes, yes.

RM: So there was always that family bond, you'd bring it in.

NK: Did you guys have the language rule?

MZ: How can we forget the language rule?

NM: We had the red card, yes.

NK: Monday morning 'til Friday lunchtime...

You don't have that rule now—you can speak Zulu during the week now, right?

NM: Not really.

I hear people speaking Zulu during the week.

RM: We break the rules.

MZ: Maybe things have changed.

NK: During our time, you wouldn't dare. Things used to be very strict. Friday, you know when the bell went off, 'Nqo, nqo!' It was such fun.

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MZ: You would work if you broke that language rule. I remember exclaiming in Xhosa... and I had to work for that. The principal gave me one hour to sweep the dining hall or something like that. By just having, I mean, breaking that rule—

RM: I think it was worse for me, because I was in the SRC for two years, and the students were telling me, ‘No, we want to speak Zulu during the week, please tell Mrs. Tate’...

So that is still the rule, that you’re not supposed to speak Zulu during the week.

RM: That is the rule.

So all of the classes are in English.

NM: In English.

Do you all think that’s a good thing?

RM: No, it’s highly beneficial.

NM: A lot. I think it’s—ja... I think for me, I think that as well, it was a sort of personal decision that you had to make, if you wanted to grow you had to follow it... I think it was really beneficial.

NK: But one of the funnest people in that school was MaKoza—during our time. I don’t know about others—our principal. Now, for me, if I had to pick one person who was most influential for me, I would choose MaKoza, and I’ll tell you why. I’d come out of Soweto, okay. Out of—you know—an environment that said white people were better than you were. Then you come to Inanda and you get a multiracial staff, with a black principal. And not just a black principal. What a lady. *What a lady.*

Tell me about her.

NK: Wow. Firstly, she was extremely articulate. She was very confident, you know. And she was just—I think, to this day, I am struggling to find a lady who dresses better than MaKoza. Eish. Smart, hey? And her heels, hey? This high. She came around not so long ago, and the only thing I wanted to see was how high was her shoe, because that was going to be my judge of how things were going.

MZ: In old age, hey.

NK: But she was amazing, you know. She was confident, she was articulate, she was successful. And, you know, she used to walk in a certain way. She used to get very upset with people who—who sat like Mandisa is sitting now.

MZ: How I am sitting, you know.

NK: Her thing was, your chest must stand upright. Your head must be held high. This is who you are. You are an Inanda girl. And this is how you walk. And when you talk, you lift your head up and look people in the eye. She was amazing, you know. And it was wonderful to see a black woman command that amount of respect. And she commanded it not forcefully, but because she deserved it. She was just a good leader. I mean, I had very good memories of her. I think she really was amazing... The one thing that used to make us laugh about her was that—I was supposed to be involved in the Student Christian Fellowship, the SCF. I was chairman of the SCF. And MaKoza would walk into Sunday morning chapel,

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she walks into chapel, and quite clearly she hasn't quite sorted out the sermon. And she would call me, 'UKhumalo! Where is that verse that talks about this, this, this, this?' And I would quickly find the verse for her. And I promise you, she delivers a sermon that sounds like—you know, I used to look at her—
MZ: No, she was amazing. You know, whenever I went back home my mother used to say, 'Mandisa, what did MaKoza do?' Because I always had stories to tell. 'She said this, Mama. And I learned this word. And this word.' The word 'nostalgia,' I learned it from her. I mean, the way she used to say these big English words: 'I guess some of you are suffering from *nostalgia*.' [MZ and NK laugh.] She said this when we were on strike, we were striking. [Both laugh]

What were you striking about?

NK: What were we striking about? Food, or some stupid thing?

MZ: It was a teacher. I think it was a teacher, I don't know, a teacher that was coming from Swaziland—I can't remember the story.

NK: It wasn't anything serious... I mean, now in retrospect, we shouldn't have struck.

MZ: We shouldn't have struck, we were just being children, very naughty. Oh, she had good English. She was an English student, I think during her days. An English student.

NK: And she used to have these stories—you remember Jason? The story of Jason?

MZ: Yes. Jason was in a story—

NK: In a storybook that we were reading. But she had a way of, you know, taking the story, turning it around. Jason was this guy who was lost in the story, and she just stood up one day and said, 'I am Jason.' And everybody was like—'I am hi-jacked.' But she would capture you—

MZ: She would capture us.

NK: All of you are just watching, and listening! [Laughs.] I think she was a bit of a performer as well.

MZ: She was a performer, yes.

NK: I mean, she really used to catch your attention so—

NM: How long did MaKoza stay?

NK: She arrived when I was in Form 2, didn't she? Because when you guys were in Form 1, she wasn't there, was she? I think she arrived the same year I did. But when we left in 1982 she was still there.

I think she left in '86 or '87.

NK: But for role models—and did we have *few* female role models. You guys are lucky, there are women all over the place, they are doctors, they are doing this, doing that—we had nothing. So to come across someone like MaKoza was like, wow. Look at how confident she is. It was really quite something.

How did you all feel about attending an all-female school?

NM: I hated the moody people. I hated the girl gossip.

NK: Was there a lot of girl gossip?

NM: Gossip. *Ugosi*.

NK: *Ugosi* [laughs].

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MZ: You guys were not studying. That's why. [All laugh.]

NM: I think for me, the most difficult thing was—when I got to boarding school, I was never really self-conscious. But people—there was one of those—you put on a kilo, people would be like, 'Oh my gosh. That thing is a bit tight now.'

MZ: *Hhayibo*. Really?

NM: Like, I think it was, *ja*. I actually went through a time when I didn't eat at all, like actually, because everybody's like 'You've actually got hips!' and I'm thinking, 'Okay, I can't get rid of them,' and it really made you—but it also made me understand my womanhood and I think it sort of—we shared good times. I think for me, more than anything, one of my friends would say, 'Don't forget that you came alone, and you will leave alone.'

RM: Yes.

NM: So for me—even now, when things get rough, I always think, 'You came alone, and you will leave alone.' So it was one of those—sort of training, that inasmuch as I want to be accepted, I don't really have to be accepted by a certain group of people. I sort of learned to be comfortable inside. It taught me about the beauty of self... I learned to be independent...

MZ: But now, you touch on an important point—that independence. Hey! The independence we learned there became a problem, and it is still a problem for some people [all laugh]. Because [all laugh again] when you get married, you know you bring that through, at times my husband will say, 'Oh, just like MaKoza's girls.' Because, I mean, in the presence of men you are so independent, it is actually scary sometimes for our culture. And you know, the men—they become threatened about it. They would say, 'these women,' you know, things like that. So therefore—I mean, at the time, being in a girls' school seemed fine. But I think the downside to it is, you know, when you get to varsity and it is full of all these men—I didn't know what to do. And I ended up doing some wrong things.

Where did you go to varsity?

MZ: Fort Hare, in the eastern Cape, *ja*. And you end up doing some wrong things. Simply because, truly, I just didn't know what to do, I wasn't prepared. We were very protected at Inanda and suddenly you are on your own.

NK: Getting excited—hasn't seen a man! [Laughs.]

MZ: Yes. That's the bottom line, I suppose. So yes, you know, we learned a lot of independence, but, hmm, it can be tricky.

NK: It's interesting that you talk about weight and things like that, because during our time it was *not* an issue at all.

MZ: Hey, we used to eat.

NK: All of *gained* weight. We used to laugh about food people ate. You remember *amasi*? This one used to eat *amasi* every Wednesday until the button doesn't close. [MZ and NK laugh.] And it would be the biggest joke! We knew Wednesday after *amasi*, we're all sleeping, we're so full... *Amasi*, sour milk, that was like the highlight of the week. And we used to bring all sorts of Kool-Aid, and color powder—so it would be yellow, green, sugar-coated, anything. So I find it interesting that's a problem, because for us—

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RM: That was a problem in our time.

NM: A huge problem, like I think there were about three girls who became seriously anorexic...

MZ: Was that because they introduced boys? There was a time when there were boys at the school.

NM: Is it. No, not in our time.

That would have been in 1997, I think...

RM: There was also a lot of jealousy...

NM: They made you feel bad for doing good.

MZ: You guys learned some bad habits since our time.

NK: I can't even remember anything like that, absolutely not.

MZ: I mean, people used to clap for you and cheer you on... That is a strange influence, I wonder, where did it come from? Maybe from the environment, air.

NK: Were you watching too much TV? Because we were not allowed.

MZ: We were not allowed to watch TV.

NK: MaKoza would not let us watch TV. The only time we had TV, do you remember, Mandi? When Princess Di got married, there was no school the whole day. [MZ and NK laugh.]

MZ: We also had Campus Care, do you still have Campus Care? We used to clean the school ourselves, like in the morning, people were allocated to sweeping there, scrubbing there.

NM: We still have that. One day this old girl came to campus and she asked, 'Do you still have Campus Care? I'm asking because it's a very dirty campus, and how we used to clean it!'

NK: Old people always think they are better. [MZ laughs.]

RM: No, I used to enjoy bossing people around during Campus Care.

[To NK] Where did you go to varsity?

NK: I went to the University of Natal Medical School.

[To RM and NM] You guys are at UCT. So how do you all feel that Inanda prepared you for college?

NM: I think in terms of study—we had compulsory study period every day, and even though we sort of hated it at Inanda—you sort of get here and nobody cares if you study or not. But it was something that was instilled in you...

RM: And when you're sick, you can't be like, 'Oh, I'm sick, I want to go home...'

You were at the medical school in the early 1980s?

NK: 1983. Because we go to medical school directly from high school, we don't do pre-med.

Do you feel that Inanda prepared you well?

NK: I felt so. I really felt comfortable in my skin. And when I got to medical school—I didn't have a lot of issues. I mean, I had really bad acne for one... I just felt I was quite well-rounded. I felt quite happy with myself... But one thing that Inanda did for me was—I fell in love with biology when I was at Inanda. I just

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fell head over heels in love with biology. I thought biology was the coolest thing ever... So when I finished high school, I knew—I mean, I had a great biology teacher. Karen Roy was one of my favorite people ever. I mean, to this day. Because, you know, she just made things come alive, and made it so fun... I was selected to go—they took us for a week and exposed us to all sorts of careers in science. They took us to see engineering programs—but when they took us to the medical school and we saw the electron microscope, it was just the most phenomenal thing. Because you know when you love a subject? I love biology... By the time I left high school, I knew that I either wanted to be a doctor or teach biology. So my plan was to either do, if I didn't get into medical school, do a B.Sc... I stuck with the medical school. MZ: Preparation for varsity—academically, I think the preparation was quite good. Even now, Inanda girls, they top everywhere. They are everywhere.

NK: Are you topping?

MZ: The unfortunate part of that is that South Africa seems not to be ready for such women. Black women who know what they are about, you know? Who can do things. They are actually not ready. It's like, these people can exist, but...

NK: We're getting somewhere now.

MZ: No, no, it's true, it's true. It's almost like—you know, there's this thing that apartheid did—so the assumption is that every black person, you know, was therefore not educated, whatever. So to find these women mushrooming all over the place, with all the background that they have, it's like, do they actually really exist? Can they really contribute? This also goes I think for women in general from other schools as well? So that's the problematic part of it. Relationally though, as I said earlier on, I didn't know what to do with those men at varsity or how best to respond.

NK: The boys were a problem, my friend.

MZ: I think initially I was very stiff, then I moved from being stiff to the other extreme...so my husband tells me to the shock of my family!

NK: But I suppose it's different with everyone. Because, you know, I met my husband on the first Friday of the first week at varsity. I promise you... Sat next to each other on the bus, started chatting, and we never stopped chatting. We were arguing about all sorts of things—at first it was all very intellectual. Philosophies, belief systems, and things like that. Then it just grew gently, it grew gently, and it will be our twentieth anniversary in December. So I think it just works differently for different people.

MZ: It also depends on the type of men you meet I suppose.

NK: I suppose so! [All laugh.]

MZ: Very key! While I also got married to a guy I met first year of varsity, mine wasn't like this. Very up and down. Because he was from KwaMashu, you know. And from KwaMashu they believe they are *pantsulas* and *tsotsis* and clever [laughs], so he tells me.

What is your career field, Mandisa?

MZ: What do I do now, good question. . I am a business development executive for Old Mutual Investment Group of South Africa. It's an asset management business. So basically I source funding for socially responsible investing. That's primarily what I do. Very overqualified for that [laughs].

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NK: Of course, my friend. [Both laugh.]

NM: But are you enjoying it?

MZ: Certain aspects of it, yes, certain aspects, definitely no.

NK: Working the tightrope.

MZ: Yeah, very tight.

And what kind of medicine do you practice, Nonhlanhla?

NK: I am a pediatric dermatologist.

MZ: She is a doctor of doctors.

NK: So I run the services at the Red Cross Children's Hospital. And then part of my portfolio is teaching, I teach fifth year medical students, six year medical students, people who are specializing in dermatology. So then again, it's gone back to teaching.

How do you all know each other [the older and younger women]?

MZ: Oh, Nonhlanhla is passionate about ISAWEC.

NK: I don't know how it started—some girls moved to Cape Town, and we sort of discovered each other... It was about five years ago... We thought, let's teach, let's try to pay fees for one child. So that's how it started.

MZ: *Ja*, that's how it started. So we started ISAWEC, which is Inanda Seminary Alumnae Western Cape, and basically she [Ntombi] was one of the beneficiaries, and some other girls... And it just grew...

Were you involved in efforts to revitalize the school in the 1990s?

NK: No, this was after.

MZ: The idea with ISAWEC, though it actually hasn't worked out, was to mentor the girls. But she is doing well without us... But really part of the aim is to mentor the young girls.

NK: But really also, we felt like Inanda had given us so much, that if the school could help us identify needy kids, and we could give them what we've been given—because really once you have that, no one can take that away from you. You are set for life. Really, you can take care of yourself.

MZ: Absolutely... Part of the aim as well was to target certain industries. You know, children who were good in mathematics and physical science would go for medicine... because we know there is a shortage of black women skilled in those areas and others. So there is that aspect.

When you [Nonhlanhla and Mandisa] were there, what was the student political climate like?

NK: Political environment?

To what extent were students involved in politics?

MZ: Very aware, hey. Particularly Nonhlanhla—from Soweto, sure.

NK: I mean, politics was very deep-seated. I mean, I had to go through what they call healing of memories, I was so traumatized from '76, I really was. And when I started at Inanda I hated white people,

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like a passion. Because the only white people that I really saw closely were the soldiers carrying guns in the township. There weren't any other white people that I knew closely. So I associated white people with evil, and death, and cruelty, and all those negative feelings.

NM: Did they come to school [Inanda]? The soldiers?

NK: No, no, no, when I was in Soweto. So I mean, I was really damaged. I was actually very, very damaged. That is why I always—I always laugh when I think of Karen Roy. Because Karen Roy was the first white person that really tested my faith in humanity. [She and MZ laugh.] Because at first, when I first met her, I used to look at her and think, 'You are all the same. I don't care how hard you smile, I don't care if you—you know, you are all the same, you are all evil, all this, all that. But in no time—you know what she was like—in no time, all that melted away. Because she was really quite fun, you know, very easy.

Was she South African?

NK: No, she's American.

MZ: No, we had the best times with Karen. The best times.

NK: Very good times with Karen. She also chose nice movies, too. You remember?

MZ: Yes, yes.

NK: We had movies, and before Karen, the movies were a bit dodgy, you know. [She and MZ laugh.] Then Karen came. And she was friends with Carroll Jacobs—phenomenal, absolutely phenomenal, she still is. We've been friends forever—she's still in Cape Town, so we keep in touch. And the two of them together were quite close friends. So they used to go and get the movies together. So, things really looked up.

NM: But, I still want to know, did the soldiers ever come into the schools in Durban.

MZ: The soldiers were in Soweto.

NK: But there were things in the townships around 78, 79.

NM: But you guys were protected.

NK: Yes, we were totally protected.

MZ: That was the other thing, we were totally protected at Inanda.

NK: We used to have someone called uBaba Gwala. Baba Gwala was at the gate, he was the security guard, the watchmen... The school was very secure. In fact, it was too secure, in a sense. Because it shielded you completely from everything.

MZ: Absolutely, absolutely.

Did you interact much with people in the surrounding communities?

NK: No.

MZ: No, not at all. I mean, you needed permission to go into town, parents must give you permission to go to town... And my husband is from KwaMashu. So he used to tell me that when they were growing up, when they see Inanda girls, they would say, 'Hey! There are those girls from Inanda Seminary!'

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Because we were also supposed to speak English when going to town. So, I mean, all these black girls speaking English in West Street, in the main streets of Durban, you know [laughs].

NK: But you know, MaKoza was, she really was quite –for the matric ball, instead of inviting Ohlange... you know who she would invite? Hilton College and Michaelhouse. [MZ and NK laugh.]

RM: What?

NK: We had all these white boys at our matric ball that we didn't know... [laughing]

Did you all interact well?

NK: Eventually, eventually we had fun. But MaKoza was not going to let us have anything but the best, in her book.

MZ: But now that you mention it, we hardly interacted with the community.

NK: But people could visit, I mean, if you had relatives, they could visit on Sundays after lunch.

[To Mandisa] What were your husband's ideas of Inanda girls before—

MZ [Erupting in laughter]: Colonized. I mean, colonized, you can't tell anything to an Inanda girl, stubborn. When my husband says I'm being stubborn, it's 'MaKoza.' He doesn't even know MaKoza [laughs]. 'A typical MaKoza girl.' Stubborn, you know, all those things. Very independent, hey. Clever.

NK: I think my husband was attracted by that very streak, you know, because he used to tell me that there weren't really a lot of girls that challenged him. People used to accept his—you know, he was known as being very smart, where he comes from. He was the highest in the Transkei during his year in matric, you know, so he was known for being very smart. So he wasn't used to saying something and then having someone say, 'No, I don't agree with it.' 'And why don't you agree?' 'Because of this, that, and the other.' And then he stops and says, 'Actually, you might be right.' So I think for him, he found that very attractive.

MZ: You mentioned a very good word—challenging. My bosses can't handle it, my husband can't handle it—not in a bad way... So I suppose it made us difficult to be managed because by and large you have to just accept. We were schooled to be independent, to challenge, equipped academically and to be African!

Did you guys [Rudo and Ntombi] feel that way when you were at Inanda? That the school was isolated from the surrounding community?

RM: It was. But, you know, we had, like, initiatives like orphanages that we used to go visit and everything, in the surrounding community and everything... But it was still like, you couldn't go out when you wanted to go out, you needed permission from your parents, so I guess, you know, you wanted to learn more. Learning from the same people doesn't broaden your mind much, you know... But it was also good for you, because there was also so much that you were learning inside...

NM: I think, when I was in Grade 8, we didn't have an electrical fence, so there were always girls who found ways to jump over. So when they came back, it was always, 'So what did you go to do?'

MZ: We had those during our time as well [laughs].

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NM: I remember this one girl... this was when we had an electrical fence. What she did was she dug underneath, like really went under.

Oh man, that's like breaking out of prison.

NM: And she comes back, it was like seven, it was really dark, the whole school was waiting for her, and the security guard with the torch.

NK: And was she expelled?

NM: She was, she was. I think socially, ja, the stubbornness, the independence. You don't just say and I swallow. I have to taste, and see.

MZ: I'm still struggling with that, hey.

I think that's about all--do you have anything else you want to share, to emphasize?

[Talk about poor quality of boarding school food, older girls remember using cold water for showers.]

What are you studying at varsity?

RM: Business science, economics. It's going well, it's challenging, but you know, I'm an A student...

NM: I started off with accountancy, but it really bored me. So I went with information systems, firstly because I felt as though, well, there were only like three girls who did it, and that ticked me off, and there were only like five black people who did it as well, so I sort of wanted to break the stereotype that only a certain group of people. And I sort of wondered why people aren't doing it, you know...

[To Nonhlanhla] And you have a daughter, you said?

NK: I've got three.

Do or did they go to Inanda?

NK: No, they don't. But they go to a girls' school in Cape Town. My girls are about their age, they're seventeen and fifteen.

ZM: I would have loved to take me kids to boarding school, when I see how spoiled they are at home.

NK: I'm a bit like MaKoza, in my parenting style, I think I am, and very much like my mother. So my kids, they're very disciplined. I don't compromise.

ZM: You know, our school brings very fond memories, it was the best time.

NK: But toward the end--I just wanted it to end. I think the last five months, you just get tired of the rules. Then you go to varsity, and the first month you wish you had the fence [laughs].

Are there a lot of other Inanda girls at UCT now?

NM: There are only five of us!

A lot of them go to UKZN.

NM: Ja... [talking about student housing shortage at UCT].

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NK: The battles are many, you know. South Africa is nowhere near where it should be... Our kids are nowhere near where they should be. The system is still not favoring black people. I mean, my husband was telling me some statistics, that something like a half, sixty percent of white kids who finish matric go to university. And you know what the percentage is with Africans? Ten percent, get into university. And of those, less than half graduate. So we are really nowhere near where we should be.

MZ: I actually felt it when we left Inanda—maybe it was easier for medicine and other things—but for people who went into B.Sc. like myself, it was *hell*. We had hell, we had hell. Because they didn't want us to do B.Sc. in mathematics, so we were taken all over the place, this way and that way.

NK: This lady next to you has the most amazing mathematical mind ever, I promise you.

MZ: I don't know where she gets that from.

NK: She truly has. So when she went to Fort Hare—she was telling me, there was this Afrikaner who just fails them. And I thought, how can an Afrikaner fail you, Mandisa, of all people? But it was hard.

MZ: South Africa let us down. It still continues, in many ways, unfortunately.

NK: But I suppose the main thing is to have the stealth, the steel—

MZ: You must have nerves of steel and just push.

NK: And this is what we are trying to instill in our girls—you guys are probably better, but the problem with the younger generation is, kids who haven't experienced apartheid are taking the freedoms that they have so for granted. I mean, there are kids who didn't vote, who are eligible to vote, who didn't vote. I couldn't believe it, I said, 'Do you know how many people *died* to get you that vote?' ... How dare they not vote! They take a lot for granted. They think they are all of a sudden equal with whites, and everything is perfect—*nothing* is perfect. Until the people in rural Transkei and rural Zululand have got access to facilities and opportunities, we are not yet equal... But I mean, those people are dependent on you guys! You guys are the people who are going to go back, and give those people opportunity. You mustn't be satisfied that you're wearing high heels and speaking English and sitting in bars with—

MZ: Smoking cigars.

NK: So that's the only thing that I worry about... When people complain about the political situation now--the reason we're in the position that we're in is that people who are supposed to be in the Youth League aren't involved with the Youth League... They are not influencing decisions...

[To Nonhlanhla] When you were at the University of Natal, it was not yet integrated, right?

NK: No, no, no. It was a black residence. And we stayed at a place called Alan Taylor.

Do you know Thembi Msane? She graduated Inanda in '85 and then went to University of Natal.

NK: No—so we stayed in Alan Taylor. The police knew that there was an ANC cell operating from Alan Taylor, but they didn't quite know who it was. So we used to have these middle-of-the-night raids, they'd just come in and kick your door down. So it was that kind of environment, police just walked in any time, and there was a lot of protest, and marching...