

Dzikamai Bere on In Conversation with Trevor

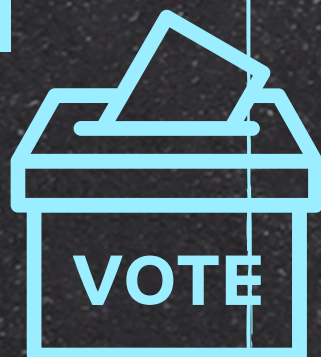


On Elections



01. Zimbabwe is in a perpetual season of elections

Zimbabwe has been plunged into a perpetual season of elections. This is because the elections remain contested. The recalls trigger more and more elections.



02. Elections in Zimbabwe deliver only bloodshed



When elections are announced in Zimbabwe, violence increases. Instead of bringing hopeful participation and excitement, our elections bring fear and trepidation to the communities.

03. The Electoral infrastructure in Zimbabwe is a broken calabash

The electoral infrastructure has no capacity to deliver the free will of the people as envisaged by the Constitution. Continuing with elections in such a situation is like pouring milk into a broken calabash. Our focus must be fixing the broken calabash.



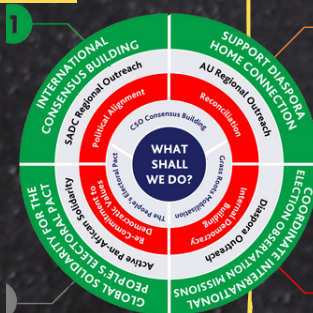
04. Elections in Zimbabwe have become a profitable industry

If we are agreed that the current state of the electoral infrastructure cannot possibly deliver the free will of the people, why do we insist on them? It is because this has become a profitable industry. As a result we are now obsessed with merely ticking boxes and collecting the cash.



05. How do we solve this?

First we must shift the power of elections from the elite, back to the people. Secondly, we must reconnect with the communities, align with political leaders and build consensus around the people's electoral pact. This will open pathways to reform. Never again must we hold elections for the sake of ticking the boxes.



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On Activism

01. On becoming an activist

"Activism, you don't find it. It finds you. Activism finds you in the face of injustice." Dzikamai Bere



02. Activism is inspired by care for one's community



"Activism is stepping forward using the tools that you have, to cause positive change, inspired by the care you have for the community." Dzikamai Bere

03. Activism is an engaged citizenship

"Activism is an engaged citizenship, a caring citizenship, a citizenship that exercises its constitutional right and responsibility to oversee the government of the day." Trevor Ncube



04. Anyone can be an activist, no matter what space you are in



You don't necessarily need to be in the civil society space to be an activist. Some of our groundbreaking judgments came from judges who chose to step forward. We saw Dr. Mashumba speaking out for the right to health for children. You can be an activist, no matter where you are.

05. Activism is sustained by stories of progress and hope

Activism in an authoritarian context is tough because of constant threats and attacks. It is the hope of the future that sustains activism. It is many stories of small successes, little by little, that fan the flame of activism to keep blazing. Activism is a lifetime commitment.



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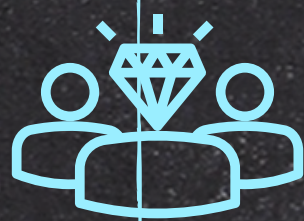
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On Civic Leadership



01. Civil society must resist elite capture

There are two main challenges for civic leaders today. They must resist over-professionalisation - where professionals takeover what are supposed to be people movements. They must pay attention to prioritisation. Neither the donors nor the politicians must set the priorities but the communities we serve.



02. Civil society must rebuild connection with its grassroots

Sometimes sincere advocacy initiatives can be disempowering to the communities. We as the professionals are tempted to believe we have all the answers. We must go back to the roots and give back power to the communities.



03. Sustainability for civil society

The PVO Bill is bad for a vibrant civil society. However, it is not the only threat. Elite capture is also a threat. Sustainability is more than just keeping the lights on. It is keeping the lights on while remaining faithful to the mission.



04. There is more to human rights work than elections

Mass movements like ZimRights must resist the temptation to be reduced to merely election mobilisation tools. There is more to human rights work. Our activism must be holistic, balanced and inclusive. This is why ZimRights has introduced the eight action zone framework. .



05. Civic leaders must engage political leaders without fear

The propaganda around regime change has criminalised political engagement. Civic leaders must know that political leaders are the primary duty-bearers. Dialogue with political leaders to resolve human rights issues is legitimate and not criminal. It must be embraced.



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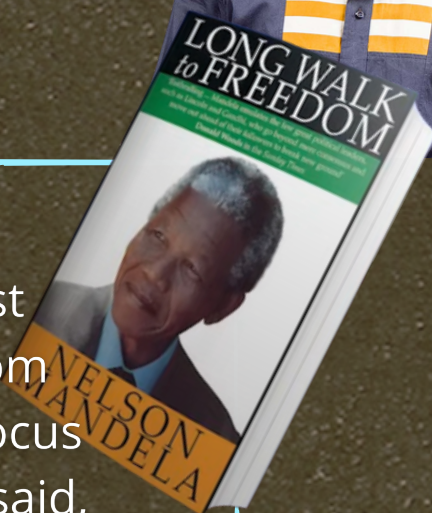


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Trevor's Book Club

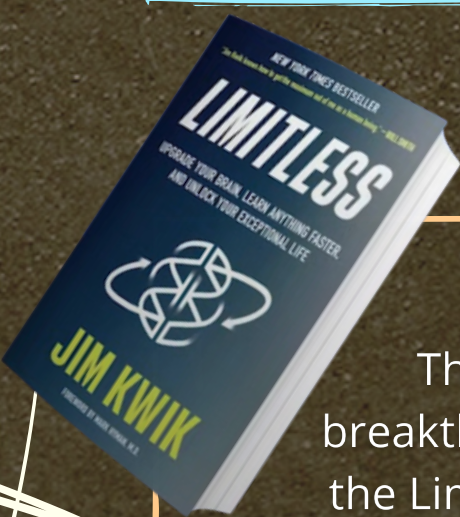
01. Long Walk to Freedom

This is a book recommended for every activist because it sets the foundation for our freedom belief system. The book teaches resilience, focus and leadership. It was Nelson Mandela who said, "Leadership is not positional. It is behavioral."



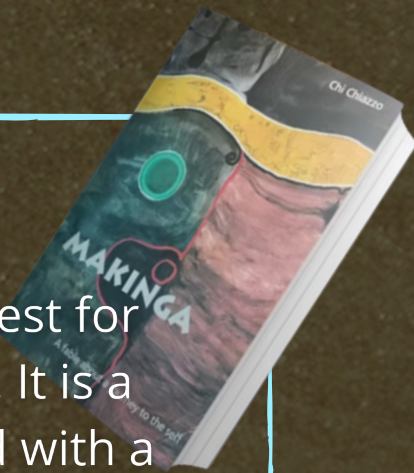
02. Limitless

The book 'Limitless' by Jim Kwik teaches us to breakthrough our limitations. Jim Kwik introduces the Limitless Model which has three sections that intersect with each other. In this, he says, when you find yourself limited, it is in either one or more of the following: your mindset, your motivation or your method. Then he offers tools to fix the limitation.



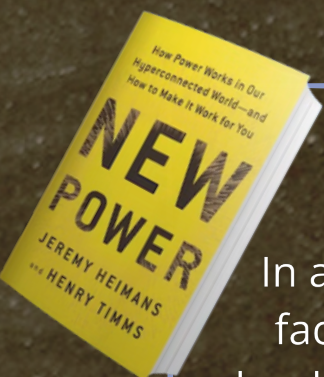
03. Makinga

The book 'Makinga' by Chi Chiazzo is the best for true pilgrims searching for meaning in life. It is a fable about the journey to self. It is packed with a lot of timeless wisdom inspiring one to see and seek meaning in the simplest things of life.



04. New Power.

In a world where people fighting for their rights seem to face an impossible task due to their powerlessness, the book explores new forms of power that communities can harness to shift the power and advance the causes they believe in. While old power is based on hoarding, new forms of power are based on sharing and channeling it. While old power is like a reservoir, new power is like a river. Powerful book.



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