

Do we know what our power is?

 By [Nicci Botha](#)

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Women often talk about power in all sorts of contexts, but do we actually know what our power is? This is the question posed by Alana James, chief executive officer of The Sunflower Fund at the Liberty Claim Your Power women's breakfast.



Alana James, CEO of The Sunflower Fund and Pippa Hudson of Cape Talk.

The Sunflower Fund is a donor recruitment centre and registry. It fights blood diseases like leukaemia through the recruitment of stem cell donors and maintaining a registry of potential donors committed to helping anyone in need of a life-saving stem cell transplant.

Those colourful buffs you can buy at Pick n Pay about this time every year help cover the cost of education and awareness about the need for and the process to become a blood stem cell donor as well as to cover the cost of the HLA tissue-typing test involved in the recruitment of donors. The Sunflower Fund also maintains a patient support fund to assist patients who are unable to afford costs associated with getting to transplant as well as being actively involved in creating a platform for support structures to assist patients, families and communities.

James is also a non-executive director on the board of the Cape Chamber of Commerce and chair of Northlink FET College Council.

Super hero stuff

When James talks power, she is talking the super hero stuff. She believes that everyone possesses within them the power to change the world.

At the same time, we need to recognise that we all have power gaps. “Areas where we are shaky,” she says. Some of these power gaps, we can work on, however there are some that “can’t be fixed at all”. Here we fill them with people who are competent and will complement your power.

Women also need to find their power circle, comprising of people who will affirm them. This doesn’t mean building a following of sychophants, who will “cower in your power”.

James also speaks about growing your power, but helping others increase their impact on society along the way. “It’s very lonely playing by yourself.”

She points out that your goals and aspirations change at different stages of your life. What was important in your 20s or 30s – like the car or big salary cheque - may not be so important in your 40s or 50s, when you may be looking for something more altruistic.

ABOUT NICCI BOTHA

Nicci Botha has been wordsmithing for more than 20 years, covering just about every subject under the sun and then some. She's strung together words on sustainable development, maritime matters, mining, marketing, medical, lifestyle... and that elixir of life - chocolate. Nicci has worked for local and international media houses including Primedia, Caxton, Lloyd's and Reuters. Her new passion is digital media.

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