IN HEALTH

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Adventure in South America

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Offal is back on the menu

Football frenzy
Odds on Africa's big five

JOURNEY OF COURAGE
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LIBERTY

Welcome to our fourth issue of In Health, our magazine for Liberty Blue Health Cover policyholders, Healthcare providers and Financial Advisers.

The theme of this issue is guts and glory. We take you on a journey that begins at the mouth and ends at the bottom of the GI tract, and we travel to a different plane where guts represent grit and daring.

Our cover story is a tribute to a truly great man, the father of a nation and inspiration to the world. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was a man of irrefutable moral standing, a man who had the courage to risk his own life for the sake of freedom for others. Read about his extraordinary life on page 12.

We uncover four intrepid Africans who found the resolution to overcome obstacles and achieve their goals (page 4).

Our spotlight (page 22) shifts to health and investigates some common gut-related disorders. We also provide some extra facts and figures on your digestive system (page 3).

Our food section on page 34 discusses the advantages of offal and serves up three traditional African dishes to tempt the taste buds and satisfy your nutritional needs.

In anticipation of the World Cup, we travel to South America on page 42 and discover some activities to test your mettle.

With Brazil and June 12 in mind, we also take a look at Africa’s big five football teams and ask if they have the balls to make World Cup history. See page 28.

Other stories include the World Food Programme’s attempt to tackle hunger (page 18), a psychologist’s guide to success (page 33), and a columnist who has learnt to listen to her gut (page 62).

Our Liberty team in Zimbabwe found two brave doctors who had the courage to engage in and battle the stigma surrounding men’s health. See page 10. We also offer some advice on the value of financial planning during these important life stages (page 40).

Once again we would like to stress that this is your magazine and we would love to hear from you. Send your stories, questions, concerns and suggestions to inhealth@lhh.co.za or inhealth@bespokemedia.co.za. We hope you enjoy the read and look forward to hearing from you.

Mdu Nene (Head of Operations for Liberty Health Africa) and Debra Roussouw (Head of Marketing for Liberty Health)

70% of your immune system is aimed at expelling foreign threats located in your gut.

Your gut is a complex network made up of your mouth, oesophagus, stomach, small intestine and colon. However, this system does much more than simply digest your food. Scientists have labelled our innards our “second brain”.

Your brain sends messages to your gut, but this clever communication system is a two-way street. The amount of nerves in your gut is superseded only by those in the brain. There are more than 100 million nerves embedded in the walls of our alimentary canal. This complex network is technically known as the enteric nervous system. Although your gut is not a place of conscious thought or decision making, it can determine your mental state, as well as signal the presence of some diseases.

All these nerves in the enteric nervous system enable us to “feel” our gut. Research suggests that these nerves play a major role in our emotions. For example, the “butterflies” you feel in your stomach before a public appearance are a physiological stress response. In addition, scientists are coming to the conclusion that our everyday emotional wellbeing may rely on messages between the two brains, and some mental health disorders may even be solved by targeting the digestive system.

There are approximately 100 trillion organisms living in the gut, and all these bacteria, fungi and viruses make up their own microbiome in your body. Research suggests that these naturally occurring bacteria and other microbes in the body can influence how well we burn, or store, fat, and can either spur obesity or keep us lean.

A blood test that checks the levels of a compound produced in your stomach appears to be a strong indicator of the future risk of heart attack or stroke. The test measures levels of trimethylamine-N-oxide (TMAO) – the higher the levels of TMAO, the greater the risk for cardiovascular problems. Researchers suggest that TMAO predicted heart risk better than other blood tests or the usual risk factors, such as high blood pressure, cholesterol and smoking.

95% of serotonin (your happiness transmitter) is found in your gut.
Even at the tender age of 13, Refilwe’s beauty was evident to everyone. Her striking ice-white skin, pale eyes and blonde hair—the result of the inherited genetic condition albinism—caught the eye of a fashion stylist. Suddenly the confident young schoolgirl found herself gracing the pages of a local magazine’s fashion pages.

In spite of her differences, Refilwe’s upbringing was simple and unaffected by her condition. “I was always aware I looked different to other kids and my three sisters, but I didn’t have a light bulb moment where it hit me. My mother never tried to hide the facts about my condition from me, but she also ensured I knew I was loved no matter what people said about me,” says Refilwe. “When a child is raised with love, there’s nothing anybody can say to break them down.”

Being “smart and confident” were instilled in her by her parents, she says. “My father always brought home books for us. Education groomed me intellectually and gave me the drive to push myself.”

Creativity was also encouraged in the Modiselle home, and Refilwe qualified as an advertising specialist and worked for a few years in advertising and media. Her modelling career was put on hold because no agencies would sign her on. “They couldn’t categorise me. I couldn’t be defined as a black model; I was unique. But this simply gave me the drive to change perceptions on what ‘beauty’ is, and redefine the European standards the world adheres to,” explains Refilwe.

Her tenacity paid off and Refilwe not only graces the ramps of numerous fashion week events, she was signed as a brand ambassador for Legit clothing, co-hosts the lifestyle talk show EK So Let’s Talk and featured on Oprah’s Power List for 2013.

Refilwe regularly receives letters from young girls and women she has inspired, and although she doesn’t define herself as an activist, she’s clearly proud of the difference her public profile is making. “I want to teach the world how to accept difference. I still go through challenges, but I’m pressing forward in my mission,” she says.

Her unusual beauty got her noticed, but Refilwe believes it’s her professionalism that has been the secret to her success. “I always give my best. I want to be that person people remember working with.”

With 15 years of modelling behind her, Refilwe’s attitude proves she will continue to break boundaries. She’s already added motivational speaker and singer to her list. And this year the 28-year-old will be breaking onto the big screen too, appearing in a feature film with Akin Omotoso called ‘Tell Me Sweet Nothing.’ Clearly life is beautiful for Refilwe Modiselle.
amazing africans

Esther Mbabazi, Kigali, Rwanda

Watching planes streak through the skies above enchanted Esther as a child. “I’d look up and imagine they were big birds. I told my parents when I was four that I wanted to be a pilot, and they laughed,” she says.

A trip to America with her family when she was seven was her first experience on a big commercial flight, and it only deepened her desire to earn her own wings. (She confesses she was quite taken by the free backpacks given to her and her four siblings by the airline too!)

At the tender age of 24, she now flies at the Soroti flight school in Uganda and sponsored by Rwandair. Equipped with her maths qualification, her father’s tragedy did not kill her dreams, but it did shape her approach to flying. “The safety aspect of flying is the most important thing for me,” she says.

Esther’s dreams remained intact. “An accident is an accident. You don’t stop flying because of a car crash,” explains Esther.

As a teenager she considered alternative career options, but says she just couldn’t see herself sitting behind a desk.

“Blockchain, no answers for the cause of his deafness, but as a toddler his mother noticed his balance was off, and by the time he was two, she realised that he couldn’t hear.

Raising the Nyariga region in Western Kenya, he had little hope of getting an education.

“My parents didn’t believe a deaf child could be educated, so I left at home to herd cattle while my peers went to school,” he recalls.

Thanks to his grandmother’s intervention, he was eventually placed in primary school, but the communication barriers and bullying he had to endure took its toll.

“I changed schools a lot. I fought a lot with the children because I was so frustrated. I was very isolated, but then I found friendship in books,” he says.

Securing a place at the Ka Tanzania flight school for the Deaf proved a turning point for the young man.

“It changed me completely. I quickly picked up sign language and realised there were many deaf people like me. I finally felt at home,” he says.

Nickson’s educational challenges ignited a passion in him to become a teacher, but once again his disability stood in his way.

“I wanted to be a role model for deaf children and teach them in a language they could understand, but my application to teaching college ended up in the bin. They wouldn’t accept me because they didn’t have the facilities to teach me,” explains Nickson.

He realised he had to reach beyond his home borders to get the further education he dreamed of and through sheer determination received a scholarship to study in America.

With a degree in International Politics and Development behind him, Nickson returned to pay it forward. Ten years on, Kenya now has over 50 trained deaf teachers thanks to Nickson’s advocacy work for the rights of the hearing impaired.

“I formed Global Deaf Connection and it sponsors deaf students with a sign language interpreter when they attend teacher’s training college,” says a proud Nickson.

Thanks to him, Kenyan sign language has also been recognised as an official business language in the country.

Having transformed the education system for deaf students, Nickson’s next goal is to influence politics to improve their lives and opportunities – this in a country where interpretation services, captions on television, and other social services are not readily made available.

He stood as the Secretary for Disability Affairs with a local party in the recent elections and is working on starting a foundation to support deaf children who cannot afford school fees.

Along with these achievements, he can add entrepreneur to his CV. Nickson founded Deaf Safaris Ltd, which facilitates travel for the hearing impaired to Kenya.

Nickson says that failure has never been an option for him and he will continue to remove barriers for the disabled.

“I feel motivated and happy when I do positive things and I measure my success by how my work impacts other people’s lives,” he explains.
Raised in the breathtaking foothills of Mount Kenya, a young Caleb would help his grandfather William Waicha farm his land. It was the usual mix of maize and other subsistence crops, and included a 40-acre coffee farm.

But instead of picking the beans, as is customary for children at harvest time, Caleb’s grandfather put the 13-year-old in charge of paying the labourers — “and at that moment the entrepreneur in me was born,” explains Caleb.

He studied computer technology — “I was good at it, but never passionate about it” — and then switched his career course to become a journalist. But the land kept calling him back and he recalls he was drawn to cover stories about farming and agriculture for K24 TV.

“I realised what I really wanted to do was farm,” says Caleb. “However, I’d grown up in a farming community and I knew my family’s approach to farming would never get me out of poverty. I needed to try something more modern.”

Instead of incurring debt by buying land, Caleb leased a plot. “No-one thought I could grow anything on that land,” he laughs.

After clearing the bush, Wendy Farms, as he called it, was stocked with three chickens, pigs and a couple of rabbits, and he drove 30kms from town to check on them daily. He was particularly excited about the prospect of farming indigenous Kienyeji chickens, and soon began to build his stock by buying from local farmers.

“I learnt some hard lessons in those first few months,” recalls Caleb. “The chickens weren’t vaccinated and I lost most of them.”

Undeterred, the journalist in him began to research options and he invested in 500 disease-resistant birds that had been bred by researchers at Kari University. But the learning curve didn’t end there. He lost 60 chickens on the first night when the temperature plummeted.

“I learnt about farming the hard way,” he admits. “I had a lot to learn about the business side of things too. You want to cut corners when you are young farmer, but something like buying cheaper grain can affect your profits in the long term because your birds take longer to mature.”

Nonetheless, Wendy Farms quickly received a following for its free-range eggs, and demand was huge. “People queue up for these chicks. They are cheaper to rear because they eat grass and kale as well as maize. They also taste much better,” Caleb notes.

Wendy Farms now consists of three properties leased in Kikuyu, Nyeri and Nanyuki. The 31-year-old concedes he is ambitious and gets bored easily, so he has branched out into other produce such as lettuce and strawberries, which he exports to South Africa.

“Goat’s milk is the closest thing to breast milk there is. I was raised on it, so I want to produce it for local women too,” says Caleb of his latest venture. He envisages moving into cheese production once he has established a herd. Beekeeping is also on the agenda. “My bees will feed from the nectar of the strawberry flowers. I see Wendy Farms as an ecosystem,” he says.

With an empire that grew from three chickens, Caleb also wants to use his hard-won knowledge to assist others.

“I’m working on a project where I give street prostitutes and beggars seeds and chickens, and teach them how to farm them. This is all they need to get them off the streets,” says Caleb. “My aim is to get one person off the street every week. My business is about money, but this is about impact.”

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Caleb Karuga, Nairobi, Kenya

amazing africans
Tackling the Taboo

The first men’s clinic in Zimbabwe has opened in Harare. Tendai Jambga, Country Manager Liberty Health Zimbabwe, chats to the two doctors who have the guts to tackle this stigmatised area of healthcare.

The pioneers
As a sickly child, Dr Hosea Mapondera was in and out of hospital on many occasions. Now in his early 30s, he says he’s passionate about all medicine, but especially men’s health as it has long been neglected. He currently works in the Department of Surgery at Harare Hospital and has a general practice.

Dr Advance Kavai, also in his early 30s, has been passionate about medicine since Grade 1 after a serious bout of malaria. He is married with one child and also practises as a GP. He is currently training to be a urologist.

Inspiration behind the clinic
Dr Mapondera says his uncle died from prostate cancer a year ago. “Seeing his struggle made me question why he had not sought treatment earlier,” he explains. Since then, the doctor has seen men with similar problems, and sexual problems, who prefer to suffer in silence rather than speak out.

“I wanted to create an outlet for men to solve their problems, and when I met a medical partner with the same mindset, the dream became a reality,” Dr Kavai’s concern grew as he started to see the social impact of men’s disorders, especially in marriages. “The standard prescription for sexual dysfunction from a GP is Viagra, but there needs to be treatment of the psychological aspect as well where counselling is involved,” he explains.

“In our society, there is a myth that if a man can’t perform sexually, he has been ‘sorted’ by his mistress. This leads to a myriad of problems, including domestic violence, promiscuity, exposure to STDS, the demise of marriages, illegitimate children, reliance on traditional medicines/prophets/no-name drugs and teas, and the general ripple effect on society at large. These problems contribute to 50% of divorces today and have to be destigmatised.”

Acceptance of the clinic
The doctors agree that the interest in the clinic has been good across all ages. They say that most men know that they need help but don’t know where to get it. They hear about the clinic through word of mouth and come and see for themselves. There are also referrals from other physicians and patients across all cultures from all over the country.

Type of cases
The majority of cases the doctors deal with revolve around erectile dysfunction (ED): impotence, premature ejaculation and low sex drive. HIV/AIDS also plays a role, as it contributes to psychological issues and the virus causes vasculitis, which affects ED.

The clinic also screens for prostate cancer, testicular cancer and sexually transmitted infections, as well as the management of non-communicable diseases, such as hypertension, diabetes and renal conditions.

In addition, it refers clients to marriage counsellors on request and acts as an educational centre.

A typical consultation
Upon arrival, patients are placed in a private waiting room where they complete a questionnaire. After a discussion with the doctor, the patient completes a detailed examination and screening. Patients are given appropriate medication immediately after diagnosis.

Regular check-ups
The doctors say that check-ups for prostate cancer vary due to genetic distribution. They should begin at 40 for blacks and 45 for caucasians.

Regular check-ups for testicular cancer are vital. It’s a young man’s disease, usually affecting men between the ages of 20 and 39. It is not a common cancer, but is typical for blacks and 45 for caucasians.

In addition, it refers clients to marriage counsellors on request and acts as an educational centre.

The doctors wish-list
“We would really like organisations all over Zimbabwe to address men’s health so that all men could have accessible, quality healthcare at affordable prices,” Dr Kavai says. “We would also like this concept to expand regionally, starting in Malawi and Mozambique. Botswana and Namibia already have similar clinics for men. We would like to see government policies emphasise men’s issues as this would assist in de-stigmatisation.”

In conclusion
The men’s clinic is part of Medicine Chain and was the brainchild of Mr Kingsley Mtetwa. Both service providers accept Liberty Blue Health Cover card holders. Our members can access treatment here that is in line with the benefits available on their policy.

Cover card holders. Our members can access treatment here that is in line with the benefits available on their policy.
Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, African nationalist, lawyer and statesman, died on December 5, 2013. His life was a struggle for justice, a journey of courage and an inspiration to the world, writes Jane Surtees.

An icon of peace and reconciliation, and arguably the most loved political figure of all time, Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was a leader with unparalleled moral authority. Armed with political savvy and an almost saintly capacity for forgiveness, he emerged from 27 years of isolation to become the driving force behind the peaceful transformation of South Africa from the racially divided, despotic rule of apartheid to a liberal democracy.

He was a hero, a celebrity, a mythical figure that captured the heart of the world. He was adamantly charming, smart but humble, amusing but definitely no saint. He described himself as “an ordinary man who had become a leader because of extraordinary circumstances.”

Many would disagree with the word ordinary, but few could dispute his assertion of extraordinary times.

Mandela was born on July 18, 1919 at Mvezo in umtata district. His father, Gadla Henry Mphakanyiswa, was a chief by blood and custom. His mother, Nosekeni Fanny, was the third of four wives. A descendant of the Ixhiba house, Mandela was groomed to counsel rulers rather than rule himself. He was deprived of his chieftainship and lost his fortune, with the result that Mandela moved to Qunu and became a herd-boy looking after sheep and calves at the age of five.

Education formed a vital component of Mandela’s life. He became the first of his family to attend school at the age of seven – where his teacher gave him the name Nelson. Two years later, his father died from lung disease, and Chief Jongintaba Dalindyebo became his guardian.

Thereafter, his education continued in church schools, exposing him to a taste of the western world.

During this time, he was also introduced to the workings of the regent in his court – something he described as “democracy in its purest form” – and something he integrated into his own leadership role by listening to others before venturing his own opinions.

Mandela’s formal education was interrupted after one year at University College of Fort Hare, another missionary college and, at the time, the only residential centre for higher education for blacks in South Africa. He was asked to leave unless he was prepared to compromise on a dispute with the Student Representative Council.

As it turned out, it was a compromise he was not forced to make. He discovered that the regent had arranged marriages for him and his elder brother, Justice. On hearing the news, they fled to the bright lights of Johannesburg and work at the Crown Mines, where Mandela was employed as a night watchman.

Doors began to open for Mandela when he met Walter Sisulu, an estate agent at the time. Sisulu introduced him to a lawyer, Lazar Sidelsky, who agreed to take Mandela on as a clerk while he finished his law studies by correspondence with the university of South Africa. His new colleagues were involved in politics, and through them a whole new world, including the ANC, emerged.

Mandela passed his BA degree at the end of 1942 and enrolled at university of the Witwatersrand for a bachelor of law degree. His friendships extended to white liberals – Joe Slovo, Ruth First, George Bizos and Bram Fischer – and Indian students – Ismail Meer, JN Singh, Ahmed Bhoola and Ramlal Bhoola.

“Wits opened a new world to me, a world of ideas and political beliefs and debates, a world where people were passionate about politics,” he wrote in his autobiography, Long Walk to Freedom.

He discovered people “who were prepared, despite their relative privilege, to sacrifice themselves for the cause of the oppressed.”

Sisulu’s house in Orlando was a mecca for activists. It was here they discussed the formation of a youth league, and it was here that Mandela met his first wife, Evelyn Mase, who was training to be a nurse. They married in 1944 and two years later moved into their own home in Orlando East with their first child, Madiba Thembekile. Their first daughter, Makaziwe, arrived a year later, but she died in infancy. Politics became all-consuming, and the doomed
couple had two more children before separating in 1956 and divorcing in 1958. “When your life is the struggle, as mine was, there is little room left for family,” Mandela explained. “That has always been my greatest regret, and the most painful aspect of the choice I made.”

When the National Party won the 1948 election, Mandela knew that South Africa “would henceforth be a place of tension and strife.” The government tightened the reins with the Suppression of Communism Act, the Group Areas Act, the pass laws, and other acts of suppression and control. The Youth League devised a campaign of mass mobilisation along the lines of Gandhi’s passive resistance – strikes, boycotts, stay-at-homes, protest demonstrations – all of which initiated a momentum, Mandela was arrested with other leaders in July 1952. They were found guilty of “statutory communism” and other acts of suppression and control. As the defiance campaign of non-violence gained momentum, Mandela was arrested with other leaders in July 1952. They were found guilty of “statutory communism” and sentenced to nine months imprisonment with hard labour. The sentence was suspended for two years as they had advised their members that action should be peaceful. Mandela opened a law office in the same year with Oliver Tambo, but their work was overshadowed by the struggle. In addition, forced removals of the black population from Soweto had illustrated the futility of conventional and legal means of resistance.

“The oppressed is often left no recourse but to use methods that mirror those of the oppressor. At a certain point, one can only fight fire with fire.”

In December 1956, 156 people were arrested and accused of high treason. It took 13 months to find “sufficient reason” to put 88 of those on trial. The trial dragged on until March 1961 when the accused were found not guilty and discharged. It was a humiliating defeat for the government: the state had failed to show the ANC had adopted a policy to overthrow the state by violence, and that the ANC was a communist organisation envisioning a communist state. There was one shining light for Mandela during the dark days of the trial – Nomzamo Winnie Madikizela. “I cannot say for certain if there is such a thing as love at first sight, but I do know that the moment I first glimpsed Winnie Nomzamo, I knew that I wanted to have her as my wife.” They were married in June 1958.

A number of anti-pass demonstrations took place while the leaders were on trial, including one in Sharpeville on March 21, 1960, where police opened fire and killed 69 demonstrators. The government declared a state of emergency and SA was placed under martial law. Mandela publicly changed his tack on the question of non-violence after the massacre – “the attacks of the wild beast cannot be averted with only bare hands” – and, although the ANC retained its policy of non-violence, he was authorised to set up a new organisation. Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) was born with a strategy of sabotage – a form of violence that inflicted the least harm on individuals. And Mandela began a new life as “The Black Pimpernel,” going underground, spending time at Liliesleaf Farm in Rivonia, and touring internationally.

The police eventually caught up with him in August 1962, and charged him with inciting African workers to strike and leaving the country without valid travel documents. He was sentenced to five years.

Mandela described Robben Island as “without question the harshest, most iron-fisted outpost in the South African penal system.” Prison life was cruel and many hard years lay ahead. Mandela’s last moments included not being allowed to bury his mother or attend the funeral of his eldest son, Madiba Thembezile, who was killed in a motorcycle accident at 25. It was a time requiring great strength and courage. “I am fundamentally an optimist… Part of being an optimist is keeping one’s head pointed towards the sun, one’s feet moving forward. There were many dark moments when my faith in humanity was sorely tested, but I would not and could not give myself up to despair. That way lay defeat and death.”

The 1980s was a decade of increased activity on both sides. The ANC was becoming more widely known and its popularity was spreading far beyond South Africa’s borders. One day in 1982, after 18 years on the island and with no prior warning, Mandela was informed he was leaving. His next lodging was Cape Town’s Pollsmoor prison, one that allowed him more contact with the outside world and his family. He describes the moment in May 1984 when he is able: 

“When your life is the struggle, as mine was, there is little room left for family that has always been my greatest regret, and the most painful aspect of the choice I made.”

In October 1963, he was transferred back to Pretoria for “The State versus the National High Command and others,” better known as the Rivonia Trial. Eleven ANC leaders were charged with conspiracy in over 200 acts of sabotage aimed at facilitating violent revolution and an armed invasion of the country. Although they were not charged with high treason, the supreme penalty was the same – death by hanging. These initial charges were actually dropped due to a shoddily indictment by the state, but the accused were immediately rearsied on another charge of sabotage.

Accused number one, Nelson Mandela, submitted his plea: “My Lord, it is not I, but a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunity. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die.” The accused were lucky to escape the hangman’s noose, and on June 12, 1964, they were sentenced to life imprisonment. Robben Island became their new home, and for prisoner 466/64 a different struggle began – one that involved food, the prison classification system, sunglasses, long trousers and study privileges. It may sound simplistic in comparison, but it took 15 years of hard campaigning for African, Coloured and Indian prisoners to receive the same food.
to touch his wife for the first time in 27 years. "It was a moment I had dreamed about a thousand times. It was as if I were still dreaming. I held her to me for what seemed like an eternity. We were still and silent except for the sound of our hearts."

The government also desired more contact with the increasingly famous Mandela. A few conditional offers of freedom had been thrown his way, none of which was acceptable, and now they wanted him apart from his fellow prisoners which was acceptable, and now they wanted him apart from his fellow prisoners.

However, it was his successor, FW de Klerk, who saw change as necessary and inevitable. "A man who saw change as necessary was the real Mandela," De Klerk wrote in his 1995 autobiography."He was not an ideologue but a pragmatist, " Mandela wrote of De Klerk. "In prison, my anger towards whites was so great and Mandela announced his separation from Winnie in April 1992, despite his undiminished love for her. "Just as I am convinced that my wife's life while I was in prison was more difficult than mine, my own return was also more difficult for her than it was for me. She married a man who soon left her; that was sorely tested. Winnie was found guilty of assault in a highly publicised case.

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For whatever reasons, De Klerk embarked on a process that opened the doors for real negotiation. Key prisoners were released, including Walter Sisulu and Ahmed Kathrada, bars were lifted on the ANC, PAC, the South African Communist Party and other illegal organisations, political prisoners with non-violent sentences were released, capital punishment was suspended, and some restrictions imposed under the State of Emergency were lifted.

On February 10, 1990, Nelson Mandela walked out of Victor Verster a free man at 67. The state president PW Botha in July 1989. The government also desired more contact with the increasingly famous Mandela. A few conditional offers of freedom had been thrown his way, none of which was acceptable, and now they wanted him apart from his fellow prisoners which was acceptable, and now they wanted him apart from his fellow prisoners.

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The World Food Programme (WFP) is the United Nations’ agency tasked with alleviating the number one risk to global health – hunger. With the ambitious tagline of “zero hunger in our lifetime”, it engages in a variety of initiatives from providing emergency food aid to promoting food security and increasing resilience to shocks among vulnerable communities. What should be a very curable health risk is not as simple as it appears but, as the following three programmes reveal, care and collaboration can produce stories of hope and success.

The emergency airdrop

The emergency operation works on a basic response level, handing out food parcels in areas in dire need due to political instability, environmental disaster or extreme famine. One ongoing emergency operation is the food airlift in Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR).

CAR plunged into anarchy when Séléka rebels ousted its president, François Bozizé, and declared its rebel leader, Michel Djotodia, president. Since then, a host of human rights abuses has plagued the region, and fighting has escalated between Muslim Séléka rebels and Christian anti-Balaka insurgents.

CAR faces mass food insecurity, with over half the population displaced and many more fleeing the nation as a result of the violence.

“The situation is terrible,” says Fabienne Pompey, regional public information officer for the West African branch of WFP. “Thousands of people are displaced in their own country. Some people are in a makeshift camp in the international airport of Bangui, and there are people in churches in terrible conditions.”

Although food parcels were delivered to various areas in the country, violence hampers the emergency operations. “For weeks we could not do a distribution because security was not guaranteed,” says Pompey. “In early January, we were delivering food but we had a problem: the border was so insecure and people were killing each other, so the drivers refused to cross the border. We decided to start an airlift, but the problem is that we need food for now, and the rainy season is coming up so we need to prepare for then, too.”

One of the biggest challenges facing this type of programme is a lack of funding. “We have to compete with a lot of crises,” explains Pompey. “WFP is a UN programme that has no mandatory funding from the states. For each project in each country, we have to look for funding directly from the donors. Donors do not have deep pockets, so they have to choose which cause they want to support.”

The school feeding programme

The WFP’s job includes improving food security and nutrition. One example is its work with Lesotho’s government to increase school enrolment through its School Meals Programme (SMP).

Lesotho faces negative climate change issues such as severe droughts. Only 10 per cent of Lesotho’s land is arable, and this is decreasing each year. The SMP focuses on overcoming food insecurity and malnutrition in school children.

“There’s a lot of pressure on some children to stay home and help with household and agricultural duties such as herding animals, and this can conflict with the child going to school,” explains Catherine Robar, WFP’s public information and communications officer in Lesotho. “School meals provide an incentive for the child to walk the long distance to and from school each day. What we’ve found is that there aren’t many different types of food at home, or maybe there’s no food, so this is an area where we can provide food and encourage high rates of school attendance.”

“The benefits of the project extend beyond the school children. South Africa’s Department of International Relations and

One in eight people do not receive enough food to sustain themselves. The World Food Programme operates on different levels to alleviate one of mankind’s biggest challenges, Michelle October discovers.
Cooperation assists with food donations. “This is a great opportunity for us because we can now source food from nearby South Africa,” says Robar. “WFP is purchasing food from South Africa, and a portion (40%) of that is from smallholder farmers in different provinces. So it’s developing the capacity of smallholder farmers in South Africa, as well as providing subsistence here in Lesotho. It’s a win-win.”

The WFP has taken Lesotho’s SMP one step further by encouraging schools to grow food on school property, which provides learning opportunities for students. “It’s really amazing to see because not only are children getting food, but they also have large fields where they plant their own maize meal, and gardens for planting vegetables such as spinach and beetroot. It gets the kids involved.”

The WFP aims to hand over the project to the Lesotho government by 2018.

The sustainable programme

The WFP has been working in the Sahel, an African swathe of land just below the Sahara Desert encompassing parts of Senegal, Mali, Niger, Chad, Sudan and Eritrea. The primary mandate in this drought-ridden area is to build resilience.

“Communities find it difficult to farm because the soil is too dry and there are recurrent plagues of food shortages,” says Pompey. “We work together in all kinds of activities that are community based, and that can improve irrigation, access to land, agricultural practice, resistance to drought and their capacity to feed themselves.”

One such activity is P4P (Purchase for Progress). Now in its sixth year, P4P has been successful in increasing farmers’ production capacity and has created a viable market in which farmers can thrive. “WFP used to buy food worldwide,” says Pompey. “Now we try to buy locally as much as possible. First, it reduces the cost of transportation, and second, it creates a viable economic system for the farmer. They have a market for the food and we help them improve the quality and quantity of the yield. We have the tools, and we teach them to build a community warehouse and maintain a good quality yield.”

One case in point is Mali, where war and drought have left people destitute and farmers with no access to credit, training or proper infrastructure. “People are exhausted,” says Pompey. “They have no capacity to get back on their feet. We have to build their resilience, because we know there will be more drought and we have to get ready for it.”

The main aim of the P4P in Mali has been to increase the income of farmers, especially women, and to enable them to send their kids to school, buy cattle and improve their housing. The project assists farmers to acquire credit through forward contracting, prioritises female farmers’ needs, and actively involves the government in its activities.

Recounting one of her visits, Pompey recalls, “There was a group of women who farmed Niebe [the black-eyed pea]. Traditionally, it’s only women who grow this kind of food. It’s very high in protein, and very good in the fight against malnutrition. After three years, they have so much improved their income that they are buying new cattle to sell in the market. They are improving their housing, sending their children to school, and their children are much better fed.”

P4P is just one of the WFP’s activities that proves that the fight against world hunger can be won.
Total transit time from eating to elimination is about 24 hours, but one American study put it nearer to 53 hours. The actual time varies for individuals, but it is usually longer for women. It is not uncommon for some people to move their bowel two or three times a day and others only once every two to three days. Each is normal for that person.

Foods vary in how quickly they pass through the gut. A study from the University of Hawaii found that it takes up to three days to digest a complex food such as a hamburger, whereas fruit can take less than an hour.

As we get older, digestion slows down and some medications, such as for blood pressure and depression, delay the process too. On the other hand, certain conditions, such as irritable bowel syndrome, an overactive thyroid and inflammatory bowel diseases like ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s disease, can speed it up.

Food fact: Nutrition experts advise us to eat slowly and chew food thoroughly – at least 20 chews per bite. This is because digestion begins in the mouth. The mouth uses the tongue and teeth to turn large pieces into smaller pieces (mastication) and uses enzymes from the salivary glands to begin chemically breaking down food molecules into a size our body can absorb.

The gut, which is more accurately known as the gastrointestinal tract, is a long tube that begins at the mouth and ends at the bottom. It includes the stomach, the small intestine (aka bowel) and the large intestine (aka colon). Food goes in the mouth, down the oesophagus, into the stomach and then through the small intestine, which is made up of the duodenum, jejunum and ileum. This is where food is digested and nutrients absorbed into the bloodstream. The gut then becomes the large intestine, which is made up of the colon, the rectum and the anus. The colon absorbs water and salt, and the remaining digested food then passes into the rectum, where it is stored as faeces (stools). At a convenient time, it is passed out of the anus into the toilet. Job done!

Lengthy business: If you stretched out the digestive tract it would measure nine metres. This may seem long, but after eating and drinking our fill a lot needs to happen for food and drink to be broken down, and water and nutrients absorbed.

Once you have eaten something it takes just seconds to travel to the stomach, where it is ground into tiny particles by stomach acid, before travelling through the small intestine, where it is further broken down and nutrients absorbed into the bloodstream. It then spends up to 20 hours in the colon before finally being eliminated. Total transit time from eating to elimination is about 24 hours, but one American study put it nearer to 53 hours. The actual time varies for individuals, but it is usually longer for women. It is not uncommon for some people to move their bowel two or three times a day and others only once every two to three days. Each is normal for that person.

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**COMMON CONDITIONS**

**Acid reflux (GORD)**
Most of us have had heartburn at some time. The painful and burning sensation just behind the breastbone – hence the name – is caused when acid from the stomach leaks up into the oesophagus, the long tube of muscle that runs from the mouth to the stomach. With gravity’s help, a muscular valve called the lower oesophageal sphincter keeps acid in the stomach. Normally it opens to allow food into the stomach or to permit belching, but if it opens too often or doesn’t close tight enough, stomach acid can reflux into the oesophagus causing the burning sensation.

Occasional heartburn isn’t dangerous, but chronic heartburn or gastro-oesophageal reflux disease (GORD) can be. People who are overweight, eat high-fat foods or are pregnant are at greater risk. In most cases, a quick dose of antacid (alkaline) liquid or tablets can control mild bouts of heartburn. For severe cases, an acid-suppressing medicine may be prescribed.

**Acute diarrhoea**
We have all had a “runny” tummy, but acute or chronic diarrhoea, defined as the “abnormal passage of loose or liquid stools more than three times a day”, can be deadly. Each year worldwide, diarrhoea kills millions. According to the World Health Organisation, around 760,000 of those victims are children under five.

Diarrhoea is primarily, though not always, a symptom of a gastrointestinal infection. Most of these are spread by contaminated food or water. Each day in Africa alone 2,000 children die from diarrhoea caused by drinking dirty water. Common water-borne infections that can cause diarrhoea are dysentery, typhoid and cholera. Rotavirus and Escherichia coli are the two most common causes of diarrhoea in developing countries.

Diarrhoea is considered to be acute if it lasts less than four weeks and chronic if it lasts for more than four. The most severe consequence of diarrhoea is dehydration, which can lead to death. Water and electrolytes (sodium, chloride, potassium and bicarbonate) are lost through liquid stools, vomit, sweat, urine and breathing. Dehydration occurs when they are not replaced through the use of oral rehydration salts or an intravenous drip.

**Prevent diarrhoea: safe habits**
• Proper hand washing and safe food handling are the most important ways to prevent the spread of germs that cause diarrhoea.
• The World Health Organisation reports that washing hands with soap can reduce diarrhoea by between 30% and 53%.
• Children and adults with diarrhoea must drink a lot of fluids to avoid dehydration.
• Babies should be breastfed exclusively for the first six months of life.
• Understand how infections spread.
• Give all children a rotavirus vaccination.

**Coeliac disease**
This is a condition that causes inflammation in the lining of the small intestine and is caused by a reaction to gluten, which is found in certain foods, commonly wheat, barley and rye. Symptoms include abdominal pain, extreme fatigue and weight loss. It is not an allergy or food intolerance, but is an autoimmune disease. The most common impact of the inflammation is that food and nutrients are not easily digested. Although there is no cure for Coeliac disease, the symptoms can be controlled by eating foods that are free from gluten. It can be diagnosed at any age and often runs in families.

**Colorectal cancer**
This refers to cancers that are found in the large intestine, specifically in the colon and the rectum. Nearly all bowel cancers develop in the large intestine and two-thirds of these are in the colon. The most common symptoms of these cancers are rectal bleeding and anaemia. Like most types of cancer, colorectal cancer is more common in older people; more than 80% of colorectal cancer is diagnosed in people over 60. Lifestyle is thought to be a direct cause. A diet containing a lot of red and processed meats can increase the risk. The greatest risk is in people who eat more than two portions of red or processed meat a day. It also appears to be more common in people who get very little exercise, are overweight, eat a low-fibre diet and who have smoked for many years.

People who have suffered from ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s disease (see page 31) for an extended amount of time are also at greater risk. Only about 5% of colorectal cancers are thought to have a genetic cause. Cancers that are confined within the walls of the intestine are often curable with surgery and screening is recommended from the age of 50.

**Constipation**
We all know what constipation means – stools are hard and difficult to pass – but what causes it and how can it be cured? The main cause is dietary – not eating enough fibre, the part of plant food that is not digested in the small intestine. Fibre adds bulk to faeces and helps the intestine to work well. The British Nutrition Foundation recommends eating 18 grams a day of high-fibre foods like fruit, vegetables, cereals and wholemeal bread. It’s also essential to drink enough fluid, preferably water.

Other causes of constipation are medications (particularly those with...
Gastroenteritis
Gastroenteritis is an infection in the gut that causes symptoms including diarrhoea, abdominal pain and vomiting. Viruses are the most common cause of gastroenteritis, but food poisoning is also a common cause. The infection may be relatively mild and clear over a few days, but in more severe cases the diarrhoea and vomiting can last for days. The main risk is dehydration and it is important to drink lots of fluid. Eat simple, healthy food.

Indigestion
This common condition, aka dyspepsia, includes a group of symptoms that come from a problem in the upper gut, which includes the oesophagus, stomach, and duodenum. Various conditions cause indigestion but the main symptom is pain or discomfort in the upper abdomen. Other symptoms include heartburn (see above), bloating, belching, feeling full after eating, nausea and vomiting. Symptoms are often related to eating, are common after eating spicy or fatty foods, and soon go away.

For people who suffer regularly, a doctor will investigate the cause, which may be a duodenal or stomach ulcer, acid reflux, oesophagitis, some common medications and H. pylori infection. Acid-suppressing medications and antibiotics are the most common treatments.

Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS)
IBS is a common functional disorder of the gut, which means that while there are symptoms, commonly abdominal pain (often spasms), bloating, and sometimes bouts of diarrhoea and/or constipation, there is no abnormality in the structure or known cause. IBS can affect anyone at any age, but it is common in young adults and teenagers, and is twice as common in women. Though there is no known cause, it is thought that there may be a tendency to overactivity of part or parts of the gut, food intolerance or an infection. Fifty per cent of people with IBS can relate the start of symptoms to a stressful event. Treatment varies and is usually lifestyle related: diet, exercise, stress management, probiotics.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease
This is the name of a group of inflammatory conditions of the small and large intestine. The two main conditions are ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s disease.

Ulcerative colitis involves chronic inflammation, with ulcers or open sores, of the large intestine, specifically the colon, with symptoms such as abdominal pain, diarrhoea, and rectal bleeding.

Crohn’s disease is a condition where there is inflammation in the gut, especially the colon and ileum. The condition flares up from time to time. Symptoms vary, depending on the part of the gut affected and the severity of the condition, but they commonly include diarrhoea, abdominal pain and feeling generally unwell.

Medication (steroids) can often ease symptoms by reducing inflammation and immunosuppressant medications may prevent symptoms from flaring up. Sometimes, surgery is necessary to remove sections of inflamed gut.

Ulcerative colitis and Crohn’s disease are both chronic conditions that need to be managed carefully by a doctor.

Kicked in the guts
Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer in the world, with nearly 1.4 million new cases diagnosed in 2012, according to the World Cancer Research Fund. It is predicted that worldwide the number of cases will rise to 1.36 million for men and 1.08 million for women by 2035.

Probably the most famous sports person to be afflicted by gut-related cancer was Bobby Moore. Pole described him as “the greatest defender I ever played against. The world has lost one of its greatest football players and an honourable gentleman,” he added.

The former England captain and the first Englishman to hold aloft the World Cup, died of bowel cancer in 1993 at the age of 51. The Bobby Moore Fund for Cancer Research UK was established after his death to raise money for research into bowel cancer and increase people’s awareness of the disease.

Another, more recent, sad loss was that of Bruno Metsu. The former coach of Senegal – “the White Sorcerer” – was diagnosed with colon cancer in July 2012 after replacing Diego Maradona as coach of Al-Wasil in Dubai. Metsu achieved worldwide fame by coaching Senegal to a 1-0 win over the defending world champions, France, in the opening game of the 2002 World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea. Senegal reached the last eight and also got to the Africa Cup of Nations final in the same year.

The Frenchman died in October last year.

Darren Fletcher provides a story of hope. The Manchester United star and Scotland midfielder lived with the symptoms of ulcerative colitis for three years – “running to the toilet 10, 20, 30 times a day and losing a lot of blood” – before surgery turned his health around and got him back in the game.
What are the chances Brazil will dance to Africa’s beat? Fairly slim, according to Colin Udo, who takes a look at the World Cup hopes of Africa’s big five.

An African country will win the World Cup before the year 2000,” Pele declared. It has been nearly 20 years since the man widely acknowledged as the world’s greatest ever footballer made his now infamous prediction. And there has been no African winner. Far from it.

Africa’s participation at the FIFA World Cup dates back as far as the second edition in 1934, when Egypt travelled to Uruguay and returned home after just one game, a 2-4 reverse to Hungary.

In the years since then, 12 other African countries have participated at the world’s biggest football fiesta. Sadly, the continent’s best showing has been limited to three quarterfinal places by Cameroon, Senegal and Ghana.

Despite Pele’s prediction, the century has turned, Africa has even enjoyed the privilege of hosting the World Cup, but still the continent awaits that first World title.

Pele is not the only football great to offer his backing to the African challenge. German World Cup winner Franz Beckenbauer weighed in with this just before the 2010 World Cup: “I’m confident that an African team can reach the semi-finals,” Beckenbauer said. “Ghana is strong, Ivory Coast is strong and the South Africans have home advantage.”

Ghana, eliminated in the quarterfinals by Uruguay, was the only one to get close. Both Ivory Coast and South Africa failed to survive the guaranteed three-game group phase.

It’s not for lack of talent, or even about managerial nous. Some of the best players from the continent regularly play and excel at the highest levels of club football worldwide.

And there has been no shortage of hired guns, mostly from Europe, offering their services in trying to mould those talents into different formidable units that, in the end, have proven anything but.

Africa’s World Cup in 2010 saw the continent carry the highest representation, with hosts South Africa bringing the number to six. Of the six, only one made it out of the group phase, a showing that proved mightily embarrassing for the continent.

As the 2014 edition rolls around, the same five countries that qualified for South Africa are carrying the hopes of the Motherland once again. Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon and Algeria will get a second bite at the cherry, hoping that the combination of Brazil’s tropical yet somewhat temperate climate will prove slightly more inclement to their ambitions.
ALGERIA
Nickname: The Fennecs
HOW IT QUALIFIED: It coasted through a qualifying group where it was expected to be given a run by Mali. In the end, the West African’s two wins from six came nowhere close to Algeria’s five.
Burkina Faso, another West African side, was its playoff round opponent, and when the first leg ended 2-3 to the Burkinabes, with a controversial penalty the decider, it was clear who was going through. The Algerians duly completed the task, albeit somewhat fortunately, in the second leg, winning 1-0.
WORLD CUP RECORD 1982, 1986, 2010. There is a reason why the last round of matches in all football competitions in the same group is played simultaneously. Few who are old enough can forget 1982, when the Fennecs beat Germany 2-1, lost 0/2 to Austria and were in line to advance when the Germans and Austrians, knowing what they needed to do, decided to play an accord game that saw both qualify and Algeria eliminated.
Algeria returned in 1986 but only managed one point. It had to wait another 24 years to return to the big stage, where the team managed another one-point haul before again making its customary first-round exit.
EXPECTATIONS Algeria could hardly have asked for a kinder draw. While Belgium boasts one of the most talented squads in football at the moment, and Russia is deceptive efficient, Algeria can fancy its chances of moving ahead in this group. But only if the team shows more zip than it did in scraping past Burkina Faso, and manage to keep its collective head. Apart from Algerians, few expect more than a good tournament, and a place in the knockout stages, starting with the draw. After two nightmares, Sabri Lamouchi and his troops must have been enormously relieved to be drawn in a relatively easy pool with middleweights Colombia, Greece and Japan.
PROJECTION The Eagles should make it out of the group, but with either Italy or England waiting in the round of 16, its chances of further advancement look slim. The team should better its previous performances, but not by much.
CAMEROON
Nickname: Indomitable Lions
HOW IT QUALIFIED: It made heavy weather of negotiating the group phase, and despite having been reprieved by Togo forfeiting a 2-0 win, was neck-and-neck with Libya until the final day of qualifying. Once past that stage, however, the Lions put its Tower of Babel within its house in order and not only held Tunisia 0-0 in the first leg of the playoff, but routed them 4-1 in the return to seal their place in Brazil.
WORLD CUP RECORD 1982, 1990, 1994, 1998, 2002, 2010. Africa’s most experienced World Cup campaigners by far, Cameroon has also provided some of its most abiding memories. A famous upset victory over Argentina in 1990 galvanised an entire continent, but was soured by a 0-4 hiding against the Soviet Union. But Cameroon still made history as the first African team to reach the knockout phase. Fired by the goals of Roger Milla, the Lions then trounced Colombia in the round of 16 to again push the boundaries and become Africa’s first side to play in a World Cup quarterfinal, where it lost in murky circumstances to England.
Those days look long gone, as Cameroon has failed to match that performance since, and first round exits have become the norm.
EXPECTATIONS Up until eight years ago, Cameroon would have been one of the first picks in any selection to decide which African team would go furthest. Not any more. Over the years, maladministration, in-fighting within the squad, and a lack of will to blood new talent has seen the Lions lose its fear factor.
Failure to qualify for the 2006 edition sign-posted an ominous low. Although that has been rectified twice, the underlying issues remain, with captain Samuel Eto'o refusing to share in team meals and having his own food brought in from home, claiming the federation were trying to poison him. How well those issues are contained will determine which Cameroon shows up. But it may be that the rot has eaten in too deep. Being drawn with the hosts and favourites Brazil cannot be good.
PROJECTION If the right Cameroon turns up and makes it out of the group, a quarter-final place looks a good bet.
NIGERIA: The Super Eagles

HOW IT QUALIFIED: Nigeria almost always seems to make even the easiest qualification campaign look laborious. Malawi, Kenya and Namibia should have been easy pickings, but the Super Eagles could only manage three wins and three draws, including one draw at home in its first game after emerging as African champions where it came close to losing against Kenya. In the end, the team won the group five points clear of Malawi before getting the easiest of the playoff draws against Ethiopia. Even then, it still continued to make it look tough despite winning both legs, 2-1 away and 2-0 at home.


Second only to Cameroon as Africa's most experienced side going to the World Cup, the Eagles have never gone beyond the knockout stage. It has provided some wonderful memories through, especially its first appearance in 1994. Then, the likes of Emmanuel Amuneke, Rashidi Yekini, Austin Okocha, Finidi George, Sunday Oliseh and others thrilled the world with such scintillating football they were named the most entertaining team of the tournament.

EXPECTATIONS: Stephen Keshi took over a Nigerian team short on confidence, disconnected from fans and struggling for an identity, and he built a title-winning business, but the unexpected death of my father last year left me reeling. I felt like I'd lost a beacon in my life. My daughter recognised my need for an emotional detox and roped me signing up with her 10-day hot yoga, and vegan challenge. I stopped eating meat and have stretch my courage and I can cope with pain and sacrifice. I can give myself a pat on the back for that, even if I can't post it to my LinkedIn status.

It's the crazy self-talk we all do that kills us. Your doubts become a self-fulfilling prophecy. If you can't take yourself seriously, you can't motivate yourself to do the things that will propel you to be a success.

As a coach, I don't have a formula or magic wand to influence people's success. When I coach you towards success I invite you to describe in full detail what success looks like, feels like, sounds like to you. How will your life be different when you have it? How will you know when you have achieved it? What will it take to achieve it, and what resources and support do you need?

Achieving your success is your responsibility and choice – own it and be accountable every step of the way. Wanting to succeed in something for the wrong reasons, such as pleasing your boss rather than yourself, or setting yourself unrealistic goals will set you up for failure quicker than you can say, "Donald Trump." And, although nailing a promotion might look like success, becoming self-aware of a negative behaviour, such as being indecisive or lacking empathy, can be just as rewarding to your career.

Next on my list to crack is sushi making. I've tried the confidence route (I can do this!) but my layers simply fall away. (I can do this!) but my layers simply fall away. It's time to sign up for a professional sushi-making course. Now that's something I can put on my CV.
Offal is back on menus and setting trends. Foodcorp’s Simone Falconer tracks the uses (and abuses) of a very African and very wonderful range of dishes.

Close to Tail eating, as the trendy chefs and restaurants now call it, is one of the restaurant industry’s top trends for the last few years. For as long as cows and sheep have been slaughtered, the guts, hooves, cheeks, livers, kidneys, tongue and brains have been considered delicacies and part of African cultural dishes and supplemented diets when meat is in scarce supply. These dishes often evoke childhood memories and form part of most celebrations.

Western “packaged goods” diets seem disgusted by the idea of eating the “nasty bits” and extreme words are used when the topic of tripe, blood sausage or sheep’s testicles comes up.

I often wonder how we came to accept that it was OK to eat a round loaf of solid pink sludge, packed with nitrates.

**Beef internal soup recipe from Liberia**

This is a traditional Liberian recipe for a classic stew of beef, tripe and dried fish in a tomato, onion and hot chilli sauce.

- 450g stewing beef cut into 1cm dice
- 250g tripe, cut into small pieces
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp red chilli flakes
- 1 hot chilli, pounded to a paste
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 250g fresh tomatoes cut into 1cm squares
- 1 litre water
- 250g onions, thinly sliced
- 250g dried fish cut into small pieces
- 2 litres water
- 1 large smoked fish, deboned

In a large pot, combine the beef, tripe, salt, chilli flakes, chilli, black pepper and tomatoes. Cover with 1 litre of water and simmer for 1 hour, until the meat is tender. While that is cooking, combine the onions and dried fish in another large pot. Add 2 litres of water and simmer until the fish is tender. Combine the meat and fish and simmer slowly for 20 minutes before adding the smoked fish. Cook for a further 10 minutes, adjust the seasoning and serve as a main meal on a bed of rice.

Photography by Zaid Joseph

Styling by Brita Du Plessis
cuisine

Somali-style liver recipe

This is a traditional Somali recipe for a classic breakfast dish of lambs liver cooked with onion, tomato, bell pepper and chilies.

**Lambs liver, cut into small pieces**
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 tomato, chopped
- 35g green bell pepper, diced
- 1 green chilli, chopped
- Juice of half a lemon (or 1 lime)
- 1 tsp ground coriander seeds
- 2 tbsp coriander leaves, chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

Heat oil in a pan over medium heat, add onion and fry for about 4 minutes or until tender. Stir in the tomato, cook for 2 more minutes, then season to taste with salt and black pepper. Stir in the bell pepper, chilli, lemon juice, coriander seeds and coriander leaves, then add the liver. Bring to a simmer and cook for about 20 minutes, or until tender. Serve with Lahooh, a Somalia pancake-like flat bread, or pita bread with a hot chilli sauce.

In my food immersion trips across Africa and other parts of the world, such as Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, Spain, and Italy, offal of all sorts fills the food markets and street food stalls, and most good restaurants offer a few choices. Around the world, offal is integral to most cultural diets. Recipes are handed down and the nutritional benefits understood and revered.

The latest craze in diets, or what they now refer to as lifestyle changes such as Paleo, Caveman and New Atkins diets, all sing the praises of offal.

Offal is nutritionally very rich and packed with all the good stuff our bodies crave. It is likely that our brains would not have developed into the sophisticated human driving machines that they are had our diets not been rich in protein and fat from the entire animal. The protein in offal is of high biological value and, when cooked well, is easily digestible. Generally, there is less fat than in muscle meat. Liver is a rich source of iron and vitamin A, and the heart is rich in thiamine. Common to offal eaters is tripe (cow or sheep stomach lining), which is a powerhouse of nutrition, rich in protein, calcium, zinc, selenium and vitamin B12. Adding tripe to a meal is a good way to add extra protein at a cheaper price, with less fat than muscle meat and highly recommended by many nutritionists.

Some of the more mainstream fifth quarter bits (but often not referred to as offal) are the trendy cuts such as oxtail, tongue and beef cheeks. These are easily found in most supermarkets and butchers, but are more expensive than tripe, liver and pancreas.

If you are venturing into offal as a beginner, tongue is a good place to start. It's a good source of iron, zinc, choline, vitamin B12, other B vitamins and trace minerals. Tongue is a fatty cut of meat, with about 70% of its calories coming from fat, making it one of the most tender cuts of beef you can find. One of tongue's biggest claims to fame is its taste. It's also one of the easiest organ meats to cook, and may prepare you mentally for other organ meats that can be a little harder to tackle.

The heart is also a good beginner's organ. Its texture and taste resembles brisket or tough steak. It is a good source of iron, zinc, selenium, and B vitamins, but where the heart really shines is its CoQ10 content. CoQ10 is vital for energy production and prevention of oxidative stress. People with chronic health conditions are often deficient in this compound.

Heart is not easy to cook, however, and so is more suited to mincing. In some markets, cheaper mincemeat is blended with minced heart even though it’s not...
Tripe, trotter and bean curry

Curried tripe, beef hooves and pigs’ trotters are a favourite in South Africa.

- 1kg cleaned tripe (ox or sheep) and sheep trotters
- 30ml cooking oil
- 15ml butter
- 3 onions (chopped)
- 2 large crushed garlic cloves
- 1 chopped fresh chilli
- 1tbsp chopped fresh ginger
- 30ml tomato paste
- 10ml curry powder
- 1tsp turmeric
- 3 tomatoes (chopped)
- 5ml salt
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 2 cans kidney or butter beans

Boil the tripe and trotters in salted water for about 3 hours or until soft. Allow to cool, then pour off the water and cut the tripe into bite-sized strips or squares. Sauté the onions, garlic and chilli in cooking oil and butter in a large pot. Add the curry powder and turmeric together with 250ml warm water and simmer for 2-3 minutes. Add the rest of the ingredients, stir well and simmer on medium heat for a further 15-20 minutes, adding additional water if necessary. Serve with mielie pap or rice.
In this article we look at three important life stages and the value of financial planning during each one. Where possible, we suggest you embark on this journey with the guidance and support of an experienced financial adviser.

Starting out
When you’re single and starting out, you have your whole life ahead of you and financial planning may seem quite unnecessary or something that can wait. That’s understandable.

However, this is the ideal time to start investing and planning for your financial future. The earlier you start, the more you can save, and the more your money can grow and benefit from things like compound interest.

Imagine being in an accident that leads to temporary or permanent disability and being without work. If this happened to you, think about the following:

• Would you be able to cover your rent and other monthly expenses?
• Could you maintain your current lifestyle and standard of living?
• Even if your company offers you benefits, will they be enough to cover you for all the above expenses and how long will these benefits last?

Getting married and planning for a family
The next big life phase is usually getting married and starting a family. You’ll probably spend months planning for your wedding or the birth of your new baby. Hopefully, you’ll put as much effort into thinking about your health and life cover, your child’s education, your retirement and your future dreams.

Here are some of the points you should consider:

• Health cover Will you join your spouse’s medical insurance or remain on your own? Is this cover complete or are there gaps to fill?
• Disability and lifestyle protection If one or both of you are permanently or temporarily disabled and unable to work, do you have a plan in place to protect and maintain the lifestyle you want?
• Life insurance If one of you were to die, would the survivor and your loved ones be financially secure? Now is a good time to look at your life insurance portfolio as, in most cases, the younger you are, the less it will cost you.

Retirement
It may seem unimportant right now, but saving towards your retirement is one of the best choices you can make. It could be the difference between retiring happy or having to work into your old age. Though you may both contribute to your employers’ pension or provident funds, consider adding to this with an additional investment or retirement annuity of your own.

Extras You never know what’s around the corner, so it is wise to save for unexpected events. And why not put some extra money aside to achieve one of your lifetime goals or dreams?

Whether you’re single and starting a career, married and starting a family, or ready to retire, it’s important to plan for your future. Reaching your ultimate dreams may require some sacrifice now, but ultimately it will be worth it, says Liberty Health Communications Specialist Trish Southwood.

Moving towards a happy retirement
Retirement can be a wonderful time, especially if you’ve planned well. Make the most of your efforts to save in the last two to three years up to your retirement date. Previously, your money was probably placed in aggressive investments for long-term growth. Now ask your financial planner for advice and move your hard-earned funds to less risky investments that preserve your capital but beat inflation in terms of growth.

Once you’ve retired, your income comes from investments, savings, your pension fund and/or retirement annuities. We suggest that you regularly review your investments with an experienced financial adviser to keep pace with inflation and to keep your expected monthly income as high as possible.

Again, it is vital to put emergency savings in place so you don’t dip into your capital should a problem arise.

As you grow older, you are likely to need more medical treatment. Consult your financial adviser and ensure that you move to the most comprehensive medical plan you can afford for the cover that you need.

Lastly, make sure your will is up-to-date and get professional advice about estate planning to ensure your beneficiaries receive the maximum benefits. And, if you haven’t already got one, consider putting a funeral plan in place.

Visit liberty.co.za for more information.
ARGENTINA The largest Spanish-speaking country in South America and the world’s eighth largest country is one of the most diverse places on the planet. The nation, which dominates the bottom half of South America and is flanked by the Andes in the west and the Atlantic Ocean in the east, is home to vibrant jungles, sprawling pampas, icy mountains, teeming wetlands, sandy beaches, moving glaciers and verdant volcanoes, not to mention the magnificent Iguazú Falls, which spans Argentina and Brazil.

Got the guts to...
Summit Mount Aconcagua, Mendoza: in December 2013, nine-year-old American Tyler Armstrong became the youngest person to reach the top of the highest peak (6,961 metres) in the southern hemisphere.

Hike the Lake District, Nahuel Huapi National Park: experience some awe-inspiring hiking in a landscape of wild mountain peaks and crystal clear lakes.

Learn to Tango, La Boca, Buenos Aires: you can’t go to Argentina without learning this sexy, sultry dance in the vibrant capital city.

BOLIVIA It’s officially the poorest country on the continent, but what Bolivia lacks in prosperity it makes up for in the warmth of its people and the extremes of its landscape. This landlocked nation, which is home in the West to the peaks of the Andes and in the East to lowlands within the Amazon Basin, is called the Tibet of the Americas. More than 60 per cent of the population identifies as indigenous. Although Spanish is most commonly spoken, Bolivia is home to more than 50 ethnic groups and has 37 official languages.

Got the guts to...
Ski at Chacaltaya, La Paz: you’ll have to spend time acclimatizing if you want to visit, let alone ski, at Chacaltaya, the highest ski area in the world (5,421 metres).

Leap 50 metres, Urban Rush, La Paz: this “leap” from the 17th floor of the Hotel Presidente is one of the most popular activities in the city.

Cycling North Yungas or “Death” Road, from La Paz to Coroico: this 64km road is considered the most dangerous in the world and has become very popular with mountain bikers. Make the journey with a local tour operator – since 1998, at least 18 cyclists have died.

GUYANA Perched on the northeast corner of the continent, this nation owes much of its flavour to the Caribbean, but its landscape is pure South America. Most of the interior is undeveloped and it is home to one of the largest virgin rainforests, which boasts Kaieteur Falls, one of the most powerful and tallest single-drop waterfalls in the world. The geologically extraordinary Mount Roraima, with its tabletop summit, was said to be the inspiration for Conan Doyle’s Lost World. Most people live along its Atlantic coastline and it’s the only country on the continent that has English as the official language.

Got the guts to...
Get close, Kaieteur Falls: tourism in Guyana is so undeveloped there are no rails to keep you back from the cliff’s edge.

Canopy Walkway, Iwokrama Forest: enjoy a bird’s-eye view of the forest from a series of suspension bridges and decks up to 30m high and 154m long.
CHILE If Brazil is its belly, Chile is the backbone of South America, running as it does down much of the left-hand side of the continent. This long, skinny nation is one of South America’s most stable and prosperous countries, leading the region in terms of “human development, competitiveness, income per capita, globalisation, state of peace, economic freedom and low perception of corruption”. It is a country of startling contrasts and extreme beauty, with attractions ranging from the towering volcanic peaks of the Andes – the world’s longest mountain range – to the ancient forests of the Lake District, from vibrant cities like its capital, Santiago, to quaint, traditional villages.

Got the guts to…

Climb a volcano, Volcán Parinacota: ropes and crampons aren’t always necessary, but climbing any one of the numerous volcanic peaks in the Andes, from Volcán Parinacota (6,330m) in the north to Volcán Villarrica (2,840m) in the south, requires some experience and planning.

Chart a sea kayak: kayak across glacier-fed alpine lakes through rarely seen canyons or explore the majestic coastal fjords and isolated island archipelagos of Chilean Patagonia.

Raft the Rio Bio Bio: grab your paddle and take to the wild white waters of one of Chile’s mightiest rivers.

COLOMBIA The most northwestern nation on the continent is also its most notorious. Talk Colombia and everyone thinks Pablo Escobar, armed conflict, cocaine and … coffee. Set aside preconceived ideas because it’s a country that is now considerably safer and popular with tourists. Many towns offer museums, parks, hotels and nightlife. Ecologically, Colombia is considered the most megadiverse country per square kilometre in the world.

Got the guts to…

Paraglide off a hill, Medellín: after about five minutes of instruction, strap on a helmet, harness yourself to a pilot, step off one of the hills around the city and wonder at the vision below.

Take a Pablo Escobar Tour, Medellín: expect to see a variety of Escobar-related excesses, from the roof where he was gunned down by police, to his grave.

BRAZIL It’s the heart, soul and belly of South America, the largest country on the continent and the fifth largest in the world. Brazil encompasses around half of the continent’s land area and, with a population of 198 million, is home to half of its people, every one of them a soccer fan. But whether you go to experience the World Cup, Carnival, Copacabana or capoeira, you’ll be dazzled and charmed by the energy of the cities and the passion of its people. Brazil lays claim to more than 60 per cent of the Amazon rainforest, which is home to one in 10 known species. This makes it the largest collector of living plants and animal species in the world. Hope to see rainbow-coloured macaws, jaguars, howler monkeys, snakes, pink freshwater dolphins, alligators, iguanas and, of course, tarantulas.

Got the guts to…

Fish for piranha: take a trip into the Amazon jungle (four nights is enough for a real adventure), sleep in a hammock, catch your supper and cook it on an open fire.

Rappel down Iguazu Falls: trek through the forest to the starting point, a basalt rock wall platform, where you ease your way down 55m while enjoying spectacular views of the Brazilian side of the falls.

Hike Corcovado Mountain, Rio de Janeiro: walk the 2.4km route, starting at Parque Lage through coastal rainforest to the base of the Christ the Redeemer statue, where you have some of the best views of Guanabara Bay.

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ECUADOR This relatively small country is considered to be the most biodiverse in the world, which is hardly surprising given that it is home to the Galápagos Islands. The archipelago of volcanic islands, distributed on either side of the Equator in the Pacific Ocean 926km west of Ecuador, has a unique ecosystem that was the inspiration for Charles Darwin’s Theory of Natural Selection. Giant tortoises, sea lions, penguins, marine iguanas and different bird species can all be seen, but visitor numbers are closely controlled. Quito, the capital, was declared a World Heritage Site by unesco in the 1970s for having the best preserved historic centre in the whole of Latin America.

PARAGUAY This small landlocked country is located at the heart of South America, though it is unlike many of its neighbours. Geographically, it is split in half by the Rio Paraguay, which runs from north to south. The terrain consists of grassy plains and wooded hills in the east, and mostly low, marshy plains to the west. The capital and largest city, Asunción, is home to nearly a third of Paraguay’s 6.5 million people, and, in contrast to most Latin American nations, Paraguay’s indigenous language and culture, Guaraní, remain highly influential, with more people speaking Guaraní than Spanish.

FRENCH GUiana This remains a French outpost so the currency is the Euro and, by the region’s standards, it is very expensive. It has the highest standard of living in the region (with good places to stay in the French-Caribbean capital, Cayenne), but the infrastructure in the interior is poor and transport options are limited into the dense rainforest. It is home to the European Space Agency’s primary launch site.

Got the guts to... Spend a night on Île Royale: for almost a century, until 1947, a notorious prison camp occupied a group of three small islands, home to famous convicts including Papillon (remember the film with Dustin Hoffman?). Tourists can visit two of the islands and stay overnight in either a guardhouse or a hammock in a prison quarter.

Got the guts to... Unleash your inner cowboy: saddle up for a working holiday with the gauchos of Chaco.

Got the guts to... Share a gourd of mate: this tea-like drink is enjoyed here – anywhere, anytime – more than the Brits love a cuppa.

Got the guts to... Snorkel Los Tuneles, Puerto Villamil: a rare opportunity to snorkel in caves and tunnels created by lava flows. Hope to see turtles, sharks and seahorses.

Ride the Nariz del Diablo, Alausí: tourists used to be allowed to sit on the roof of the “Devil’s Nose” the train running between Alausí and Sibambe, but these days, after a four-year upgrade, visitors have to sit in carriages during the journey on one of the steepest stretches of rail in the world.
PERU. Of course, it’s home to Machu Picchu, but Peru offers so much more for the intrepid tourist. The Andes, which run through much of the continent, course the air coastal strip from the lush Amazon rainforest. According to many, the Peruvian Amazon jungle is a better adventure holiday destination than its Brazilian counterpart; it has the same wildlife but is less spoilt and better value. The different terrains, as well as the immense cultural heritage, both ancient and modern, make Peru a one-stop country shop.

**Got the guts to...**

- **Hike the Inca Trail, Cuzco:** the best way to see Machu Picchu, the Lost City of the Incas, is to arrive by foot after walking the three-day Inca Trail, spending the nights in tents. Local porters, who are feet of foot, will carry your pack while you get used to the altitude and stop to admire the views.

- **Visit the Uros islands, Lake Titicaca,** highest commercially navigable lake in the world, are made from living reeds and were built by the Uros people hundreds of years ago when the Incas expanded onto their land. The Uros still live there in simple reed houses and make their living from fishing and taking tourists to the islands.

- **Fly over the Nazca Lines, Nazca:** from simple forms to stylised spiders, monkeys, fish, lizards and human figures, the lines were created between 200BC and 700AD, but it wasn’t until the 1920s, when Peruvian airlines began flying from Lima to Arequipa, that they were recognised as figures. Hire a Cessna to view the lines.

**SURINAME.** More than 80 per cent of this little known and seldom visited country is pristine rainforest. But, for those who go – usually tourists who like roads less travelled and prefer not to see another traveller – there are great jungle adventures and picturesque towns that owe much to its time as a Dutch colony.

**Got the guts to...**

- **Explore in a korjaal, Palumeu:** a traditional dugout canoe, but you’ll feel like Indiana Jones. Take a few days on foot and in a dugout canoe, but you’ll feel like Indiana Jones.

**URUGUAY.** It may be a baby brother to its neighbours, Brazil and Argentina, but laid-back Uruguay can laud one thing over them – it hosted the first ever Fifa World Cup in 1930, which Uruguay won, beating Argentina 4-2. Geographically, it is unlike much of the continent, made up as it is of mostly rolling plains and low hill ranges, and has a dense river network and fertile coastal lowland. The capital city, Montevideo, pulses to the rhythm of candombe, the thunderous Afro-Uruguayan, three-drum sound and hosts an annual Carnival.

**Got the guts to...**

- **Ride the Atlantic’s waves, Rocha Province:** pull on your bombachas (baggy riding trousers) and experience the ultimate coastal ride along wide, flat beaches.

**VENZUELA.** Despite ongoing political unrest, protests and high prices, Venezuela is a magical land. Its greatest attraction is the great plain that covers a third of the country and stretches from the Andes all the way to the Orinoco River. It also has the longest stretch of Caribbean coastline of any country. As with much of the continent, Venezuela is teeming with wildlife from the capybara (the world’s largest rodent) to caiman, pink dolphins to pumas – and the occasional anaconda. Of course, you can’t miss the world’s highest waterfall, Angel Falls, which plummets 979m from the top of a tepui (flat-topped mountain) in Parque Nacional Canaima, or a night dancing salsa in the capital city, Caracas.

**Got the guts to...**

- **Journey to Angel Falls, Parque Nacional Canaima:** you’ll need a guide and it will take a few days on foot and in a dugout canoe, but you’ll feel like Indiana Jones.

- **Go spelunking, Cueva del Guacharo:** don your hardhat and headlamp, and explore the depths, taking in stalactites and stalagmites in the country’s most spectacular collection of caves.
Listen to YOUR GUT

When your stomach tries to tell you something your brain may try to tune out. Do not discount its message, says Zanele Kumalo.

Did you know that you have a second brain in your stomach? The enteric nervous system, it’s called.

According to an article in The New York Times entitled The Other Brain Also Deals With Many Woes, “Butterflies in your stomach are caused by a surge of stress hormones released by the body in a ‘fight or flight’ situation. Stress can also overstimulate nerves in the esophagus, causing a feeling of choking.”

But let’s not get too technical here. We’ve all been there. We know the feeling. The night before an important exam and you’ve only just started cramming at midnight. The moment before speaking in front of an untested crowd. You’d rather not imagine naked. Meeting your ex’s new girlfriend who’s a dead-ringer for Lupita Nyong’o (you don’t stay long enough to find out if she’s her doppelganger or not). Flutter, churn, twist, gurgle, punch. Oh, the discomfort. You try not to worry, hoping it will go away.

Sometimes that feeling takes longer to make itself known, especially when you’re in a relationship that you really want to work out. It’s what a lot of people call “settling down.” Instead of “butterflies” – those giddy, irrational, hopeful sparks in your stomach – there’s an equally profound, upsetting and unsettling flurry that takes hold of your intestines.

I remember one such occasion. A few weeks in, instead of looking forward to seeing my date, a mild nausea had me cancelling plans and searching for affirming looks from friends and family. Mr Right? This just wasn’t right.

There’s another truism that says if someone shows you who they are, believe them. Said person behaved like the sweetest gentleman in the world, at first. I’m talking opening car doors, buying flowers, whispering sweet nothings, making dinners (and don’t we ladies just love a domestic god or actually just someone who is prepared to wash the dishes after we’ve cooked).

Now, I must confess, I’ve compiled a list of the attributes I’m looking for in a partner, which has become more realistic and practical over the years. It’s now been whittled down to the most important characteristics – he must be kind, gentle, generous, intelligent and someone who makes me laugh.

I wasn’t looking to tick anything else off besides this relationship big five. Maybe good skin and teeth, and gorgeous eyes wouldn’t do any harm. And an understated sense of style, of course. OK. OK. Let’s stick with the big five. But when his true colours started seeping through into what should have been the happy honeymoon phase – unprompted outbursts, belittling comments and just a general malaise at life – my gut told me, “Get out of here, now.” Not fight or flight; just flight.

Years later, as I nursed my sorrows over a glass of Sauvignon Blanc with some friends, I poured over the menu and the relationship – a series of breakups and makeups and finally, much to everyone’s relief, the terminal let’s-call-it-quits. Yes, the doomed relationship lasted three years too long. And now there was a different sensation in my gut sending a message to my brain. My stomach curled with hunger and I ordered a tuna ceviche. This time, I decided to listen to what it was trying to tell me. I just wish I had done the same with Mr I Do Not Know What I Was Thinking.

Zanele Kumalo is features editor of Marie Claire.
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