



# A space to flourish!

Mopane' Leaders' Experience Retreat is not just a retreat for leadership. It is also a space where one feels the love flourishing every day without discrimination. I learnt that sometimes it is so challenging to love ourselves. We have been raised in a society that didn't teach us about self-love. At the retreat, I learned that self-love is one of the best things I can do for myself.

Loving myself has provided me with self-confidence, self-worth, and in general, I feel more positive. I feel happier, and I have learned to take better care of myself. The rise and shine were the most exciting; they ignited my days at the retreat. Before the retreat, looking in the mirror, I saw a lot of different flaws and recalled too many past experiences and failings to love myself. The less I loved myself, listened to myself, and understood myself, the more tangled, troubled, and aggravated I was with my life. However, after I began to love myself and continue to love myself more and more each day, things are slowly becoming a little bit better in every way possible.

Sadly, self-love is not always easy. I have learnt how to accept the pain, how to be honest with who I really am. This has been a big step to loving myself. I have forgiven myself for past and future actions.

At the Mopane' Leaders' Experience Retreat, I learned how to accept the emotions that create love, joy, and happiness and the ones that cause fear, insecurity, and anger in our lives.

Daily I ask myself the question, "Do you fully love yourself?". The answer to this lies in accepting all my flaws and faults. Every day I live now, I have made a personal commitment to choose love, the same way we choose anger, hate, or sadness. I learned that I have the power to forgive someone who has hurt me in the past and that healing comes from forgiveness.

These days I take a break from time to time and accepting that no one is perfect, and things happen. Daily am working towards loving myself completely with no expectations as I build momentum for self-growth. I feel my grounding is firm. Kind words can be short and easy to speak, but their echoes are truly endless. Thank you, Mopane!

Retreat Participant