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CAPE TOWN MATRICULANT'S CREATIVE OUTLET INSPIRES GLOBAL AUDIENCE

A young matric learner from Cape Town had no idea that her love for design, and her first assignment in a design class would develop into a movement for mental and emotional health that would inspire many around the world.

Like many people, Taylia De Freitas, a 17-year-old matric learner at St Cyprian's, was unsettled during the national lockdown with the lack of social interaction and support of close friends.

Unbeknown to her, her circle of friendship was not just a social engagement network, but in their absence she realised their value as a coping mechanism for various life challenges she was facing as a young girl.

"I started seeing a psychologist to deal with my own mental health challenges," explains Taylia.

The challenges she refers to came from various life experiences such as being bullied about her weight from a young age, even by a teacher at a previous school. She also endured loss in the form of the divorce of her parents and the death of a very close relative to suicide.

"One day I was reading my journal and realised the power of speaking about your feelings," Taylia added.

She decided to go back to her first ever design, which read: *Speak it into existence*, and used it to start an Instagram page to share some of her thoughts and emotions.

Since launching the page on 23 February 2021, with various inspirational and thought provoking statements, @wordstohelpyoufly has become a source of inspiration, healing and a voice for many who interact with the page from around the world.

In a few short months the page has grown a following of just over 3000 people, with more being added daily. Taylia posts 5 times a week Monday to Friday and regularly hears from followers who felt stuck in a rut or overwhelmed emotionally who found liberation and inspiration from the page.

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She has since decided to produce a limited edition range of 20 hoodies with 20 unique inspirational statements. From announcing the hoodies on the page, orders streamed in and within 2 hours they were all sold out. The natural conversation is what next in terms of formally registering and potentially launching an online clothing business from the bespoke hoodie range. This is the next challenge that this self-motivated young lady is looking into with some additional ideas and products currently being explored.

Taylia is currently the editor of her school magazine, a position that she has held since the age of 14 and she also does design jobs part time.

She is a young lady with great ambition. "My personal goal is to be listed as part of the Forbes 30 under 30 and this page has demonstrated to me the power of stepping out and just starting," continued Taylia a budding entrepreneur and influencer who hopes to inspire more young people overcome their personal challenges.

Connect with her on the Instagram platform @wordstohelpyoufly.

ENDS...

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