



RAYMOND ACKERMAN
ACADEMY OF ENTREPRENEURIAL DEVELOPMENT

Nadia Mustapha

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Story told by
Nadia Mustapha
& Carol Williams

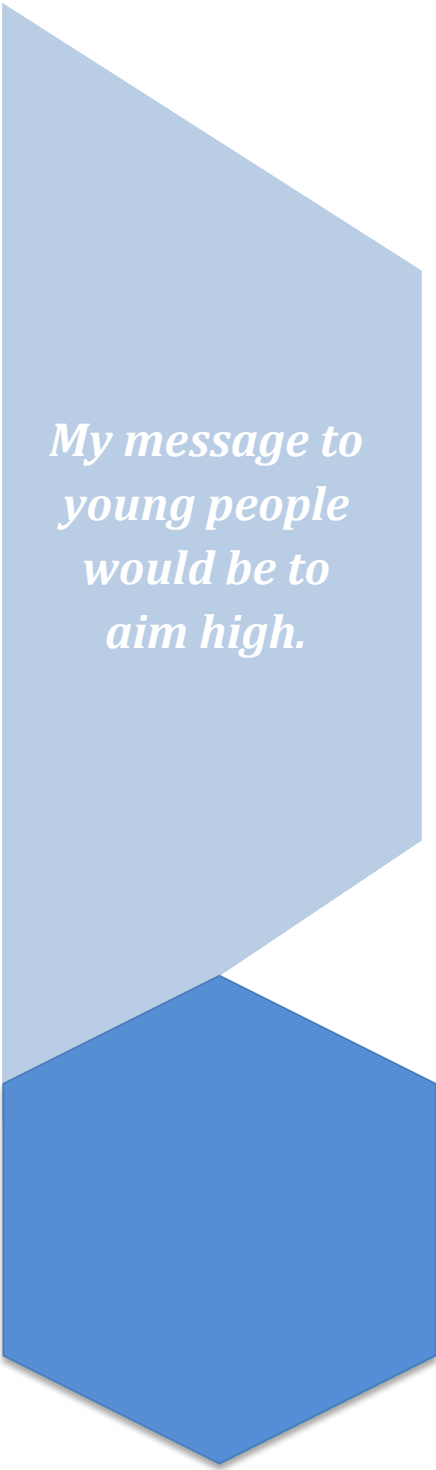


Living a life of perseverance and passion

Nadia and I meet at the Pick n Pay head offices in Rosmead Avenue. It's her lunch break and we meet up in the cafeteria. Whenever I am at Pick n Pay HQ I am always struck by the incredible business and legacy that Mr. Ackerman and his family have built over so many years. What a truly inspiring story, as is Nadia's. She is a fantastic example of an RAA intrepeneur; someone who is working within an established business with an entrepreneurial mind-set. Nadia is 29 years old, she's married to someone she's known since high school and they are now expecting their first child. She spent the first ten years of her life on a farm in Philippi. According to Nadia this was a really wonderful way to grow up, she was often alone or with her older sister. There is a beautiful quiet strength to Nadia and the poise and wisdom with which she speaks belies her age. The tranquility of her early years on the farm gave way to a more chaotic adolescence, with the family moving around from house to house. The instability in her teen years was very difficult to deal with as was the 'silence' surrounding these issues. As a result life became more and more challenging and Nadia makes the observation (with regards to the relationships in one's life) that in later life "it is hard support someone when you have never been supported". Learning to communicate effectively has been one of the most important lessons that she has had to learn over the years. We can all take so much from Nadia's story, enjoy it.

CHALLENGES I FACED GROWING UP WERE having low self-confidence, never wanting to upset anyone and living in an abusive environment, over which I had no control at all. When I started at RAA I would cry all the time, especially when I had to do public speaking of any kind. Even though I have struggled with self-confidence I have always believed that I could do anything. I am a real go-getter!

I realised late in life that I had studied the wrong thing. I started a B.Com law which I never completed. I have come to the place in my life where I have realised and accepted the fact that I am responsible for my own life. There was a lack of guidance when I was growing up and I really struggled to trust people. I now make lists and plans of the things that I want to do and make sure that I do the necessary things to make those things happen. For example I have wanted to be a 'planner' in the retail industry for many years and have made good use of my networks within Pick n Pay. I am now a Trainee Planner at Pick n Pay, having moved up the ranks from being a trainee store manager, to a store manager and now to head office to be trained as a planner.



*My message to
young people
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aim high.*

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I DREAMED OF BEING a Formula 1 driver!

WHEN I FIRST STARTED AT RAA I was so used to failure and disappointment. Life had not been easy and I was scared and didn't feel good enough. I soon realised that everything is a work in progress and that I don't have to have everything all figured out. I am learning as I go.

I DID MY RAA WORK EXPERIENCE AT PICK N PAY. I learned so much, I didn't get to see everything but I did see how things work. It was a fantastic place to do my work experience as I gained great insight into the world of business, made good networks and met interesting people. When I asked Pick n Pay if I could do my internship there they did not have anyone who could assist me. By being persistent I was allowed to do my work experience there and subsequently they have started offering more internship opportunities, so other people have been afforded the same opportunity.

AN IMPORTANT LESSON I LEARNT AT RAA WAS how to be a stronger person. RAA molded me into something I wanted to be. I grew up as a shadow, but now I am shining. I learned how to communicate effectively, reflect on my life and interactions with others and how to manage myself. These are all things that changed me completely and have made me who I am today.

SOMETHING I ADMIRE IN PEOPLE IS honesty and kindness. Helping people is something that I really want to do and it's important for me to mold myself into the person that I want to be: kind, compassionate, gentle and honest.

WORKING AT PICK N PAY NOW IS REALLY FUN! I am a sponge and try to learn as much as possible every day. I've always wanted to do this and my way of thinking is changing. This opportunity is preparing me for what lies ahead and I don't want to fail at this. I need to prove myself and I'm feeling scared, excited and motivated!

MY PHILOSOPHY IN LIFE IS "life's not about how hard of a hit you can give... it's about how many you can take, and still keep moving forward" (Rocky Balboa)

MY FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT! I hope to go places and I do eventually want to start my own business. I'm working myself in to a position that will allow me to put down roots and then establish something of my own. I want to leave a meaningful legacy and I believe that this is the way for me to do this.

MY MESSAGE TO YOUNG PEOPLE WOULD BE to aim high. You will succeed and you will also have some direction. Never be afraid to think bigger than yourself, don't limit what you think you're capable of. It's important to stop categorising yourself...be who you want to be.