

IN TUNE & OUT THERE

In a world where BlackBerries are like appendages, stepping out of your comfort zone can be a major challenge. These four men have removed themselves from the “normal” world for periods of time – and traded in technology for spiritual and life-changing experiences

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What helps you relieve the stress of modern life? On Saturday mornings I do Hatha yoga and I enjoy cycling along the Spruit, from the Johannesburg Botanical Gardens all the way to Republic Road and back. I also have an amazing woman, Vera, who’s a key part of my life.

What’s the MKP all about? It centres on redefining mature masculinity for the 21st century. The MKP (<http://southafrica.mkp.org>) is a network of 50 000 men who’ve done the flagship training – the New Warrior Training Adventure (NWTA). It began 25 years ago in the USA and it’s about developing emotional literacy and personal leadership in men. The NWTA is about journeying men back to a place of reclaiming the essence of who they are. The men have to disengage from their identities and relinquish all technology and communication with the outside world. It’s based on process technology and psychodrama,

which helps to create an emotionally, spiritually and physically safe environment for a man to access parts of himself which were previously blocked off due to, for example, traumatic events.

What happens during the flagship training? We get a group of 40-odd men together, normally in a rural setting, and three to five certified leaders. We then create an emotionally, spiritually and physically safe environment so that each one of them can embark on a “hero’s journey”. Essentially, they grapple with an ordeal using mythology and archetypes involving psychodrama and some of the principles of psychotherapy. Seeing 40-odd men unmasked is profound.

How has it changed you? As someone who grew up on the “wrong side” of the train lines during apartheid, I’m now able to have strong differences of opinion without wanting to physically fight someone. That’s hugely powerful. I used to carry a firearm everywhere – I was never in a place of comfort without my gun. When I realised that I was attracting bad energy,

I stopped. I haven’t carried a gun since. I have very strong warrior energy – I never want to walk away from a good

argument. I’m crystal-clear about not starting fights, but I’ll finish them – on my terms!

What does being part of a brotherhood add to your life? It’s not some starry-eyed situation – it involves men with deep wounds and shallow scars, and facing your demons isn’t easy; it’s very real and very raw. Some of my best friends today are from MKP and I wouldn’t have been able to be in my past

two relationships without it. The universality of our humanity is what brings me back again and again.

