

SA blind to accountability, with real consequences for future generations

By [Antoinette Pombo](#)

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"... universal adult suffrage, a national common voter's roll, regular elections and a multi-party system of democratic government, to ensure accountability, responsiveness and openness".



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Reading this phrase embedded in the South African Constitution will raise some eyebrows these days, no doubt.

South Africans accountable?

Not with schools being burnt down as we saw in Vuwani recently over a demarcation issue, nor with UJ's auditorium razed to the ground and the violence you see happening in the highest echelon, in parliament.

But this is only the tip of the iceberg...

These atrocities are the disarray you see in the media. They happen above murky waters. But there's a whole nation of 'unaccountability' brewing in the undercurrents of a country that just over two decades ago was the darling of the world... A nation that triumphed its past to build a better future for all... A society that would uplift its individual citizens to thrive and prosper...

It's disheartening to see this level of unaccountability, which has muddled our vision of what we want to achieve for ourselves and future generations. In our murky water, we taste selfishness and disrespect every day when:

- Taxi drivers charge down a one-way street in the wrong direction, block the emergency lanes and push their way through traffic with no respect for either their passengers or other motorists.
- Young girls get raped on their way to school or are coerced into performing sexual favours by 'trusting' adults.
- Educated people throw their litter on the ground in plain sight, without any deliberation.
- Privileges such as grants and sick leave are abused.
- Ordinary people take things that don't belong to them without the slightest morsel of guilt.

So what is turning our society into this nation, void of accountability and responsibility?

For starters, we have to lay blame on the country's leaders. If your president protects his self-serving interests above even the law, and is unaccountable to his electorate... And politicians carve their own warped grandeur reality while sugar-coating empty promises... Funds are misused and corruption is rife... What kind of example are you setting for the nation?

If lack of respect, responsibility and accountability continues in government and society, we cannot expect future generations to turn a new page and suddenly start valuing the very virtues that are eroding away in our 'land of hope'.

So where do we begin turning the page for our future generations?

'Right now and right here', says Jane Lyne-Kritzinger, MD of Youth Dynamix, a youth and family specialist research and marketing agency. 'Family is key to this transformation. Mutual respect for others and the environment, and taking responsibility for what you do comes from your upbringing,' says Jane.

'Parents, not teachers or anyone else for that matter, can instill in their children, a sense of responsibility, respect and awareness for others. For example, a mother or father would say, "Darling, please pick up the paper you just dropped on the floor". This guidance coupled with the fact that the family doesn't litter is how young children learn that littering is not acceptable and so they will naturally not do it because it doesn't resonate with their personal identity.'

Active parenting is the single most important requirement to bring back accountability. So, parents, don't ascribe your children's upbringing to others, take responsibility for your child's future today. And of course, because we are all role models for our children, we need to be accountable too so that we can be good examples to them.

Please don't let accountability and responsibility die, the future generation depends on it for its survival.

ABOUT ANTOINETTE POMBO

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