

Lixesha Series - Jos Dirkx

[TEDxCapeTownWomen](#) will take place on 29 October 2016, under the theme "Lixesha | It is Time". Inspired by Huffington Post's [Sophia project](#), TEDxCTWomen asked some previous speakers to share their thoughts on time, lessons learnt from inter-generational sharing, and what important skills have taken them years to acquire.



Jos Dirkx is an award-winning media and communications expert, a two-time TEDx speaker, and a Women Deliver Young Leader. She has travelled and spoken at events around the world. She's spent time in South Sudan and Eritrea with the United Nations and founded an award-winning NGO, Girls & Football South Africa, receiving a letter from First Lady Michelle Obama in recognition of work done for youth. Most recently, she was brand manager at IBM Middle East and Africa, bringing IBM's largest regional advertising partnership – with storytelling platform TED – to life.

She launched a mobile health app, mGirls, which delivers free, daily health care information to over 65,000 girls in South Africa via text. She's lived in 12 countries and has been to over 90, with interesting stories to tell about (almost) all of them.

1. What does the concept of time mean to you?

Dirkx: Tennessee Williams, celebrated author and playwright of some of the world's most valuable works, states in *'The Glass Menagerie'*: "Time is the longest distance between two places". Having grown up all over the world, I strongly relate to this. I often felt that if I just had a time capsule - some sort of tel-a-porting device - I would get to friends and family (scattered all over the world) faster. I wouldn't "waste time" being away from them.

But, alas (and this quote I borrow from The Rolling Stones), you can't always get what you want.

So, your best bet is to make the most of the time you have. Every day. At the end, our time is what we make of it and we tend to presume we have more of it than we do.

2. What is the greatest thing you have learnt from a younger or older generation than yourself?

Dirkx: There are many great things I have learned from people from all walks of life - I don't know if age and/or the respect of a generation is important. One of the greatest lessons I have ever learned lies in the importance of channeling kindness and power. There are only a few great leaders who can do both.

3. Tell us about something in your area of expertise that took you years to learn.

Dirkx: Haha! Can I be a total cliché and say, "You never stop learning"? Statistics show women live longer than men, so when it comes to something that has taken me years to learn: let's just say, I hope I have plenty more years to go with plenty more learning to do!

4. Our TEDxCapeTownWomen theme this year is "Lixesha | It is time". what do you believe is the most pressing issue we as a community/city/country/world need to address at this moment in time?

Dirkx: There are many issues we need to tackle; from a global perspective, it is impossible to narrow this list down. However personally, I find issues surrounding inequality - whether it be access to information, to food, to medical care, safety or human rights - the most important. Having grown up around the world and with travel experience to 95 countries, I have been made very aware of the extreme inequalities that can be debilitating.

We are unable to tackle this challenge unless more people are provided the tools and resources they need to deal with inequality. I want to continue my career working on human rights. I strongly believe courage to commit to standing up for injustice is one of the greatest contributions anybody can make to society.

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Watch Jos's TEDxCapeTownWomen talk: