

Lixesha Series - Valerie Amani

[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.

Born in Tanzania, Valerie Amani is the founder/creative director of Kahvarah, a clothing brand that is passionate about responsible fashion and woman empowerment. She completed her Bachelor of Economics at Rhodes University, where she was one of the founding members of the East African Society and active in the President's award programme empowering the local youth.

She then studied her Bachelor of Arts in Fashion Design at FEDISA (Cape Town) and acquired a Certificate in Luxury Brand Management (Domus Academy, Milan). She has worked with the Cape Town Carnival, and is a freelance stylist for the Woolworths visual Merchandising team.

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

Amani: I regard time as a measure and a reminder. Because time is in a constant forward motion, it acts as a personal measure of whether I am moving forward in terms of personal growth or not. I believe that time should not be wasted and the more time you have to spend, the more you should be learning and exploring and expanding.

It also acts as a reminder that nothing will last forever. I cherish great moments and enjoy them as much as I can because time comes with change. It also reminds me that nothing lasts forever and bad day today does not mean a bad day for the rest of my life.

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

Amani: My nieces have taught me to always be curious. While they were growing up they not only used to ask me a million questions, but could ask the same question a million times until they got an answer they were satisfied with. As a teenager I found that to be incredibly annoying because I didn't understand why they wanted to know so much. Looking back I realize the importance of being curious, being alert and not only asking questions, but asking questions until you get a real answer.

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

Amani: As a fashion designer, I have to make patterns (the blueprint) before I create samples of my clothes. It used to take me forever to create the pattern and to figure out how a garment is constructed. Only after four years can I now not only

create patterns faster, but can cut out fabric freehand without using a pattern at all.

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?

Amani: Discrimination as a whole, whether it is based on gender, race, sexual orientation, social class or nationality, is one of the most pressing issues. We live in an extremely diverse world and the more time people spend fighting against each other the less we can develop our communities in a sustainable manner. Hate and discrimination is a sign of digression and promotes war, unequal distribution of wealth and a general disconnect in our world. The way we treat each other is also a reflection of the way we treat our world, exploiting it and harming it. As people of a community which is part of greater world, I believe it is time for everyone to take responsibility and actively aim to positively impact our earth along with understanding and positively impacting the people around us.

Website: www.kahvarah.com; Twitter: [@kahvarah](https://twitter.com/kahvarah).

Watch Valerie's TEDxTableMountain talk:

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