



Meet Batya Cele

Masinyusane
Gqeberha

Batya Cele comes from Motherwell, Gqeberha. Teenage pregnancy, alcohol abuse and crime are common in her community but Batya made a conscious decision to be the change that she wanted to see in her community. She is part of the first-ever class of the YeBo Academy, where she aspires to inspire the youth in her community.

When she is not inspiring youth, she is outdoors soaking in nature's pure energy, something she simply loves. She is also a foodie and gets excited to try out new recipes.

What is your greatest quality?

My ability to be empathetic because not everyone can be empathetic. I place myself in other people's shoes. No matter how a person is, guy or girl, if you tell me something personal or you're vulnerable with me. I will make it mine and I may even start crying more than you. So, my greatest quality is to be authentically empathetic.

What are the lessons or experiences you want to tell your younger self?

Don't doubt yourself. You don't know how much power you possess. The places you find yourself in, you belong in them. Always know that you can reach for whatever you want. I was very short and tiny growing up, so people used to make fun of me. They always underestimated me and looked down on me. This made me doubt myself a lot and it stopped me from doing a lot of things. So, to my younger self I'd say, "stop doubting yourself. You do belong in the spaces you want to be in. Own it!"

What is the legacy that you would like to leave behind?

I want people to remember me as a person who lived my life to the fullest. When they hear my name, I want them to think of love and integrity. Someone who stood up for what she believed in.

This interview was conducted and compiled by fellow YeBo Academy student, Damian Marais.

YeBo Academy Class of 2023