

Kenyan Light Shine-On **My Journey from Corporate Worrier to Confidence Coach**



Annika Inken Kähler

I mean Business!

It was already dark outside. As usual, I was working overtime. Maybe that's why my boss knew he would find me there, working away at my desk.

He walked into the office and headed straight toward me.

"Annika it's good that no one else is around. I want to ask you something. It's better if we talk alone."

Oh my God! What does he want? I hope I haven't made a mistake. No, I thought, I'm getting great feedback on my work. I'm great at what I do!

"Yes ... what is it you want to talk about?" I smiled back.

"Annika, would you be interested in taking on more responsibility with the company? There is a special project coming up, it's a big project. We'd like you to take responsibility for part of it."

Oh my God! Oh my God! This is exactly what I wanted!



A colleague of mine, Corinna, had already been asked to lead the project. She was a friend. I was happy for her, but this project had created a feeling of competition in me. I admired her. I wanted what she had in some way. She was the head of the project and now I had also been given extra responsibility. I was being vindicated. *Finally, I was being recognized for all the work I'd put in!*

I was nervous. My stomach started to cramp. I thought, *Ooohhhh, what if I stuff up? Everything I've achieved will be gone. They won't give me another project again. I'll be finished!*

My heart started to palpitate, and I began to sweat. My underarms felt like a hot, sticky mess and I only hoped my boss wouldn't notice. It was important he saw me as the cool, confident and capable Annika. I took a deep breath and looked him straight in the eye.

"Yeah of course I can do that, it would be nice! I'm happy you asked me."

I had made it! I was a busy, busy business woman. *I was important!* I was that woman who dressed up to look more important than she was. I had my well-paid job with lots of spending, a nice apartment, good friends and a loving family. I had achieved what was important. I had everything society wanted. *That's what I wanted ... didn't I?*

At least at the time, that's what I *thought* I wanted. But, SHIT! Little did I know how much the next events in my life would alter my existence. If only I knew then, what I know now.

Six Months To Burn Out

It only took six months before I started to feel broken and burnt out. I'd been told this special project would take up about 30% of my working time. In reality, the

project ended up stealing 100% of my time. I was trying to juggle my regular day job responsibilities with fulfilling the demands of the new project. I was struggling. I began working more overtime. I started working weekends without pay! *Don't slaves work without pay?*

I felt a heavy responsibility to complete this project and to complete it well! Desperately tired and exhausted, tears and dread slowly replaced my eager enthusiasm. Stress eked away at my energy until there was no satisfaction in work or life left.

I hadn't had a holiday in years, but I needed one. I wanted a two-week all-inclusive vacation at a nice hotel! I wanted to relax at the beach, sunbathe and have a cool drink at the bar. And because none of my friends had time or money for a vacation, I decided to FLY ALONE to Diani Beach, Kenya.

No Turning Back

I rock gently to the sway of the train. I was heading to the airport in a carriage packed with people. There wasn't even room in the aisle between the seats. Where there wasn't a person standing or sitting, there was a suitcase. I looked behind me, to make sure my luggage was safe. I wanted to make sure no one was trying to steal or tamper with my bags. *All clear.*

Two kids were playing and laughing opposite me. They were louder than the crowd and the other passengers were staring at them. I popped my earphones in and stared out of the window... *I would walk 500 miles. And I would walk 500 more ...* The song went on and I went wandering into my own world.

"Do you really want to travel alone to Kenya? I mean it's Africa Annika?"
"Annika, you don't know the kind of criminals you'll meet, it's not that easy you know".

I started to think about the advice I'd been given about traveling to Kenya...

"Take care when you're at the ATM because you could get robbed!"

"Don't take taxis alone with drivers that you don't know. They'll drive to secret backstreets where no one can see you and they'll rob you. They will have knives and guns and they'll take everything from you. They'll dump you there in your underwear!"

Worries and doubts started to whizz around my mind. *Am I crazy to go to Kenya alone?*

I felt the stress like a big rock, heaving on my breast. I almost couldn't breathe. *I don't know what I'm doing? What if my luggage gets stolen or lost? What will I do when I'm alone and what if there is no one to help me?*

I can't do this! Oh my God I can't do this! These feelings of doubt flashed up and threatened my trip with overwhelming fear. I wanted to turn around and go home.

But, I really need this vacation. I was exhausted. I had to go through with it. The thought of arriving home and telling my friends and colleagues that I had turned back was too much of a loss for me to consider. I had no choice. *You booked it Annika, you paid for it, other girls can do solo trips, why can't you do it? You HAVE to do it!*

Nineteen hours later, the plane touched down in Mombasa. Exhausted and hungry, I stepped off the flight on to Kenyan soil.

Kenyan Taxi Ride - Alone!

First came the overwhelming heat smashing into my face as I exited the arrival gate. Next came the calling. "Here! Here! Come over here! Taxi drivers yelled to fresh passengers coming off the plane. I was stuck by their beautiful black faces and teeth that shone like pearls. *Wow! This IS Africa! I made it, I'm in Africa!*

Several tour guides from different agencies stood across the walkway. They appeared to have a list of names that they were checking off. Tourists gathered around. I recognised them. They had travelled with me all the way from Germany. I head over toward them and looked for my name on the list. "Here I am", I said.

A man with a deep voice stepped forward. "Annika. I've arranged a taxi for you." He looked about forty years old. At least 1.8 meters tall. He was wearing a Khaki polo shirt and trousers – he was rocking a cool Safari look. And he was wearing sand coloured suede shoes.

Those shoes, wow! They look so good.

My tour guide directs me to a taxi where a driver stands there smiling at me. *It's not a bus? Where is everyone else?* I look around to see who else would be joining my group. I was the ONLY person to go with him – ALONE. *What! It's only me. That's a bit unusual isn't it? Why aren't I being put with the others? Isn't this exactly what my friends and family in Germany had warned me about? Can I trust this man? What's he going to do to me?*

I take a closer look at him. His dark shiny eyes glistened wet, sparkly. His lips spread over his bright white teeth as he smiles at me. His soft cheeks frame a round friendly face.

OK, Annika, the tour operator arranged this driver. He must be trustworthy. The operators wouldn't let anything bad happen to you. Would they?

I move forward toward the driver's car. It was dirty with no special sign to say it was a taxi. *Was this guy a real taxi driver?*

One of the German guys waiting with the other tourists says loud enough for me to hear, "Oh look, she's getting into his car." The woman next to him says, "Oh my, I'd never do that!".

My heart beats faster and faster. *Oh my god! What am I doing! Should I sit in the front or back? I should sit in the back. It's better because he can't easily take a knife or do something else to me!*

I slid into the back seat and we began our drive to the resort - just the two of us.

First Impressions

I sat up, back straight, nose pressed to the car window. I wanted to take in every impression Kenya would throw at me.

"Is this your first time in Kenya?" The driver asked. "Yes, it is". I answered. "Well then, I'll take you via a special route, through Mombasa"

I was excited to see all the hotspots of Mombasa. I'd done all the research. I'd watched all the documentaries. I thought I knew Kenya well. But no! Nothing could have prepared me for the culture shock ...

First came the intense heat. I was suffocating under a thick blanket of steaming air. The sun crushing down on the black car. No air-conditioning. Windows rolled down, but no wind. *Oh My God! Will my circulatory system close-down on me!*

Then there was the ferry crossing. The people rush. Everywhere curious Kenyan faces stare at me, the 'rich' white woman with all the money that they needed. If they weren't staring at me, they were knocking on the window asking me to buy something. I felt so overwhelmed. I didn't dare get out of the car.

We drove through slums. Children in their ragged clothing called out, waving, smiling at me. Then there was the smell, *that* unique smell of Kenya. The smell of burning rubbish. Pile after pile, fire after fire along the roadways. That burning plastic

creeping up your nostrils. Mixed up with the smell of red dusty earth swirling through the air.

Slowly, slowly the city landscape turned into country living. More beautiful, smiling Kenyan faces. More piles of rubbish. More fires burning. We drove on further and further. My driver continued with the small talk. We spoke about his family. We spoke about Kenyan culture and speaking Swahili.

The further we drove, the hotter I felt. I thought my blood would start to bubble under the surface. I was slowly sinking into the back seat. Down, down, down I went until I could barely lift myself to peer out the window.

Thank goodness my driver hadn't tried to knife me or take me into the backstreets. I hadn't eaten since breakfast and I was too weak and tired to fight him off!

One hour into the drive, I am delivered safely to the resort.

For seven days I swam at the Diani beach, played games with the resort entertainment team and drank at the bar. The stress and exhaustion I had accumulated over the past months, slowly oozed out of my weary mind and body. *I'm ready for my African adventure. An African Safari! Yes! Sign Me Up!*

Safari Adventure

My heart pounds fast. Boom.boom. Boom. A huge grey mass came walking toward us. A herd of elephants, closer and closer they came to our safari van. There would have been about twenty, thirty or even forty elephant families. Big bulls, old grandmas, little baby elephants gathering around. They came so close, I felt I should reach out and touch one!

I was in awe. Hundreds of knowing eyes looked at me as if we were connected by an invisible power, in one special moment of time. I fixed my eyes on a big beauty standing out front. Our eyes locked. I'm mesmerised.

Did she know that elephants are my special animal? Did she know that I'd come on Safari especially to see her? Had they come so close just to greet me?

My trance is broken by the sight of a smaller elephant-bull flapping his ears and raising his front leg. He was swinging his leg to and fro, preparing to charge. He was angry. He was looking directly at me, right into my eyes! He started running toward me. *Oh my god! Oh my god! Just sit down!*

The driver started the engine and drove away fast. *Oh! You stupid girl, why didn't you take a photo. That was a special moment in time!*

We returned to the Ngutuni lodge late afternoon. I sat back in my chair on the terrace, overlooking the waterhole directly in front. The silence of the bush was magical. As evening came over I watched and listened to the animals. Elephant families gathered together. I could hear them communicating with each other. I felt connected to them. Goosebumps! *Was this real or was it a dream?*

As we prepared to leave camp, I reflected on my African safari adventure. It had been everything I wanted and more. I'd seen giraffes, zebras, water buffalos and other animals living peacefully in the wild. What was most special to me, was that I'd connected with the elephants.

My first ever African Safari had been an overwhelmingly, serene and beautiful experience. But, the Mombasa ferry crossing was a different story.



The Crossing

I'd already crossed the Mombasa, Likoni river twice already. I knew how it went. Cars drove on to the ferry. They are packed-in so tightly that you can't open your door to get out. At the same time, hundreds of people run on deck. Pushing and shoving. They stand in any empty space they can find.

All eight of us sat in the van waiting. The driver out front, myself and my six safari companions in the back. The heat was suffocating. The windows couldn't be rolled down. They were rectangular windows that could only slide across. *We're dying of heat exhaustion here! Just go already!* I stared out longingly, begging for the wind to send some relief.

Oh my God! Why are all the people running off the ferry?

One of the guys in our safari group points ahead in a panic and yelled, "Oh f**! The ferry is burning! The ferry is burning!" Up ahead, black smoke clouds billowed out into the sky.

Our driver looked back toward us. His brow puckered, "I'll go and find out what's going on. Wait here please." He leaned into his door. Bang! The door handle hit the car beside. There's no way he could squeeze out of the two-centimetre gap.

He stretched his leg out across to the front passenger side, grabbed the head-rest and heaved himself up over toward the passenger door. He tries to open the door. Bang! The door hits against the next car, but this time there's more like a ten-centimetre gap.

Oh my god! Is he going to get out?

Like a contortionist our skinny driver wriggled out of the van and somehow ended up on the deck. We watched his back disappear into the colourful car maze.

"Oh my god, help!" One of the tourists in the van (I'll call him panic man) hits his hand against the window. He pulls at his hair and started jumping around the van. "We have to get out of here! The ferry is burning! We can't get out!! We will all die here!"

Panic man's wife joined her husband in a state of uncontrollable fear, "Oh! Oh my god! Oh my god! What can we do?"

We tried to find a way to open the door. It was closed shut with the safety lock turned on. Maybe our driver had been keeping us safe on safari, but it wasn't feeling very safe now!

I watched nervousness spread through the van like a deadly contagion. The couples looked at each other. Their eyes darted around the van, one side to the other, up then down. One lady had a very red face, her hands twisted in her lap, I thought she might cry.

Slowly, slowly we noticed other drivers leaving their vehicles. One by one they were leaving. I sat still and remained calm.

Now think this through Annika. There are big grey billowing clouds. We are in Africa. Maybe there's been a breakdown? If we see fire, we have one door we can squeeze out of. We can climb over the seat, and one person after the other we can leave.

I decided to speak with the others, "Let's wait a moment. There's no need to panic. The driver will come back I'm sure. I don't believe the ferry is going to burn."

Annika, you are doing really well under the pressure here. How is it you've stayed so calm? Well done!

A few minutes later the driver came back. There had been an oil leak in the machine room. We now sat watching all the people run back on to the ferry. We waited. Finally, the ferry started moving forward.

One and a half hours later, I'm safely back at the resort. I sank back into my pillow and dreamed of the following day where I'd be relaxing by the pool.

An Invitation

I was a single woman traveling alone. The reception staff, the bartenders, the entertainment team - they all made a real effort to make conversation with me. They wanted to know me as a woman, especially because I am a white-skinned European woman.

Kito was an animator who organised guest entertainment at the resort. It was low season, and I was the guest who signed up to participate in all the activities. We were playing water polo and volleyball. I was spending a lot of time with him and he was easy to talk to. Our friendship soon developed.

We were sitting around the bar area and Kito says, "I will have my birthday on Wednesday. I'm having a big party for the whole day. Would you like to come?"

Oh God! I don't know. I don't think I'm ready to do that. Can I trust him?

"Mmmm, maybe. I'm not sure. Let me think about it", I picked up my beer and took another swig.

Kito invited me two or three times after that. I always answered, "I... don't... know".

Am I ready to go on a Kenyan birthday party with people I really don't know?

Kito realised I was feeling unsure and didn't know how to react. He reassured me, "You know Annika, I'm working for this resort. If something was to happen to you, or

you were to feel uncomfortable in anyway. You could go to management and I could lose my job.”

“Ok, I’ll come!”

Oh my god! I’ve agreed to go to a Kenyan birthday party! What am I going to buy a Kenyan man on his birthday?

I sat in the back seat of the taxi and spoke to the driver. “Can you help me please. I want to buy a present for a man. Take me to where I can buy a present. He is from here, he’s Kenyan”

“Hakuna Matata Rafiki (no worries!) I will show you where to go.” He drove me into the tourist district with the shiny shops displaying hats, cups, keyrings and the popular T-shirts with ‘KENYA’ or ‘TUSKER’ spread across the front. *No nothing here!*

I returned to the resort and spoke to another guy I’d met on the animation team. “Yes, Annika. I know him. I will help you!”

"Oh my God. Thank you!" I was so appreciative. Kito wanted to show his Kenyan hospitality. I was touched that he had invited me, not just as a guest at the resort, but as a friend. I wanted to give him a good present.

There is so much poverty in Kenya. Kito had a job at the resort but I know he didn’t earn much. The least I could do was give him a good birthday present.

Kito’s friend drove me to Ukunda. where the local people shopped. One of the guests staying at the hotel had warned me, “Stay on the main street. Don’t go alone into the second, third, or fourth backstreets. It’s too dangerous for you. They’ll take everything from you”.

Oh my god! I felt adventurous. I was the only white woman around. The people stood there staring at me, like they were looking at an alien creature. I read their curious eyes, "Why was this woman here? This is so strange."

Kito's friend took me to a store where they sold shoes. "He needs new shoes. We will buy him some nice shoes".

Shoes. Perfect Choice! I am a professional shoe buyer!

I leave the store with a pair of red Adidas sneakers tucked under my arm. *I'm sure he's going to love these!*

An Honoured Guest

It was about 5pm when we arrived at the party. As I stepped out of the car, I could hear music and I could smell the aroma of grilling meat. Kito's Adidas sneakers were wrapped beautifully in paper and I held them tight against my stomach. *I wonder how many people will be here? Hope he'll like his sneakers?*

We passed the house and headed into the backyard. *Aren't we going into the house? Is it outside? Oh my God! They are all going to be staring at me!*

We walked through the entrance and into an open area of the backyard. I saw groups of people everywhere. They all turned to stare. A group of people sitting together on white plastic chairs under the trees laughing and drinking beer. They stare. Women dressed in colourful Kenyan dresses, men smoking up the air with bones they were grilling on the barbeque. They all stare. Groups of children playing on the red brown sand and patches of grass. They stare. There were groups of people everywhere. No matter where I look the people were staring at me!

It was obvious to me that everyone knew I was coming. Kito informed me later, that I was the 'main event'. He had announced a special guest!

All the guests at the party, at least sixty people, had been waiting the whole day for the special guest to arrive, and the special guest wasn't Kito, the birthday boy. It was me!

OH.... MY... GOD! My heart is going to STOP beating! Am I having a heart-attack?

I didn't know everyone was waiting for me. When I arrived they must have thought, "Oh yeah the white girl, she must be the special guest."

Kito's friends and family couldn't help themselves. There was this white lady with blonde hair standing in their garden! A bunch of kids were playing. As I walked past, they turned around and stood looking at me with their mouths gaping wide open!

Someone grabbed me a chair. "Sit down, sit down please. More than one hundred eyes peered at me. No matter what I did, no matter where I stood or sat, there were eyes on me.

My heart palpitated. *Am I going to be sick?*

Kito had arranged acrobats to perform at the party. Someone grabbed my chair and placed it right out front where the performance was happening. I was there sitting first row like a queen. Everyone else was standing around. They performed right in front of me. Like I was the only one at the party.

They are trying to be so nice! But I shouldn't be the centre of attention now. I'm not liking this attention. This is not my party. Kito is the special person here. It's his birthday!

Finally, it was time to bring out the birthday cake. Kito cut the cake and he took the first piece of cake in his hand. In traditional Kenyan style he fed the cake to his best friend. Later they took the cake on their fingers and wiped it in the faces of each other. Everyone was running around, laughing and chasing and wiping cake in each other's faces.

Why aren't they putting cake in my face? I'm sure they want to? Maybe they are unsure? Just someone please, put cake in my face!

One girl, who worked on the entertainment team at the resort came over and she smeared a piece of cake into my face. *Thank you, friend,! Now I'm not the only person without cake in her face.*



When Shoes Mean More Than Shoes

No one else had brought a birthday present to the party!

When will I give Kito his birthday present?

The other guests were giving Kito money. I was the only one that had brought a present all wrapped up in pretty blue shiny paper with little balloons on it.

When everyone was standing around. Kito's friend steps forward and whispers to me, "Give him the present now. Now is good." I walk over to Kito and hand him the present. Everyone was there, looking, and watching. I felt the need to say a few words.

"I don't know how it's going on in Kenya. But we in Germany, we give presents on birthdays. So Kito, Happy Birthday! This is a present for you."

I handed him the package. I watched Kito slowly untie the ribbon, he lifted the sticky tape carefully and opened the paper. He pulled out his brand new red Adidas sneakers. Kito's eyes lit up and he held his sneakers high up above his head - like he'd won a special prize in an Olympic marathon.

Everyone started screaming and yelling. "Oh my god shoes! Whaaaa! Oh My God Shoes!!!"

The gratitude for a pair of shoes was so overwhelming to me. It was a bit too much... a feeling I'll never forget. I saw the power in giving a pair of shoes. At home in Germany, I had a cupboard full of shoes. My father had taught me, "Look at a person's shoes, and you'll know the type of person they are."

I wanted to give Kito a nice gift - a pair of shoes. To him, I'd given him something truly precious, something more than gold! This was the beginning of the many life lessons Kenya would teach me.

Seeing The Light

As we drove through the Msambweni project village, Sara pointed out the main volunteer initiatives. There were grocery stores, furniture workshops where, as the children grew older they could learn a trade. There was the farm, classrooms for the children and even an award-winning hospital. *Impressive!*

Sara was a German girl dating one of the Kenyan guys I'd met at the hotel. Her family had travelled to Kenya on holiday and after seeing the plight of hundreds of thousands of orphaned children in Kenya, they decided to do more to help. What started as a dream turned into a massive humanitarian project that now spans an entire village. When Sara offered to take me on a tour of the village I didn't realise the tour would impact my life so profoundly.

As we drove, Sara talked about life in Kenya and the plight of the people.

"It's not easy to live here in Kenya. The people struggle. You know you can go to the beach if you want a boyfriend. You can just pick-up a boyfriend right there on the beach. Some tourists, they will come and take a lover for a night. Whatever they want, they can get it. It's because the people are desperate for the money. They'll take a girlfriend hoping for a better life".

I'd never, with my own eyes, seen such desperate need for money before. I'd thought about it, but never really understood how people living in developing countries struggled with the primary cares of daily life. As we drove through the village, I felt like something new was being revealed to me. I felt a dark curtain was being lifted from my eyes. I wasn't watching one of the TV documentaries I liked to watch. This was real life.

I'd met Kito. I'd been to his birthday party and chatted with his friends. I'd eaten their birthday cake and had cake smeared on my face, laughing all the way. Sure, Kito had a job. But he started work in the morning at 9am, he had some free time at

lunch and then he was back in the evening for the night show. He had to be all bright and cheerful to entertain us. Kito and the other staff were working from morning until midnight. For what? Was it even €150 Euro a month? Not enough to live on. How hard would it be for Kito to support a family? How could he take his girlfriend out or think seriously about their future?

It was heartbreaking to me. I looked at the poverty-stricken people and what they had to do to survive daily life. I understood so much more now. No more judgement. *How many people in Germany have a good life and still would love to win a million?*

I could see how the Kenyan people work so hard. Not just for themselves or for new clothes or new shoes. They needed money to survive. They needed money to support their families. They needed money for medicines. People generally don't have health insurance in Kenya. If they have a bad accident. Then they are finished!

I've been so judgemental, so naive about the struggles of others.

Sara took me to the cafeteria to visit some of the school children. I sat down to take a little respite in the shaded outdoor area. The front doors of the classroom burst open. About thirty children, between two and four years old noisily rushed into the playground. They laughed and ran around, playing tag and tossing the ball to each other. My eyes slowly moved from one child to the next. I saw their eyes glisten in the light. Their bright white teeth, laughing. I'm taken into their world, the beauty of their joyful moment.

Look at these children playing and having fun. It's just like the children in Germany. Like two hearts beating like one. In Germany, the children go to school, they play, they laugh. Here in Kenya, the children go to school, they play they laugh ... so different, yet so the same.

Tears welled up in my eyes. I took a deep breath hoping the air would hold down my tears. I didn't want to cry in front of the children. I didn't want them to see the

pity I felt for them. These children were playing so happily. They had been saved, when many others had been lost.

Like the little girl that had arrived at the orphanage earlier that week. She was barely two months old. Her mother was addicted to drugs. The mother had planned to kill her on the beach. But Sara's family had managed to intervene and save the baby girl. Her name was Zola.

Oh my God! These children, they must overcome real problems. I am always talking about my problems. I am so stupid. All the little things I take so seriously. Have you ever given up something in your life Annika? When have you given back?

I felt a heavy weight upon my chest – guilt and shame! I was carrying, not just my own guilt, but the guilt of my entire western civilization. *We are so rich with our decadent lifestyles. We have so many rich people, we have so much. We could do more to help the Kenyan people, people in third world countries. I could do more.*

I noticed one young girl sitting alone in the shaded area of the cafeteria. The sun was shining through, casting light onto her beautiful face. I sat captivated, touched by the innocence in her eyes.

"Can I take your picture?" I ask.

"Yes" Her eyes lit up and she smiled.

This girl, her bright smile, her beaming face. She was sitting in the shade with the light shining in upon her.

What about me? Had I been living in darkness?

I had all the comforts Germany had to offer. My fancy shoes, my beautiful clothes and apartment. I hadn't known what was truly important. I hadn't known what life was. The true light of life. *What had I done to contribute to society? I always put a*

bit of money in the cup of that homeless man sitting on the street. But really, what difference did I make? What are you doing with your life Annika?

I Am Changed

I sat in my seat crying on the flight back to Germany. I wasn't ready to leave Kenya. I had so much more to take in. So much more to learn.

I'd seen the bitter poverty of the Kenyan people, the conditions under which they live and under which the children grow up. I saw the environmental pollution. I'd seen the piles of garbage burning on the roadways. I'd smelt the burn of plastic and I wanted to be sick.

I'd also experienced the warm, open culture of the Kenyan people as well as the beauty of the country, her land and animals. My view of the important things in life had been corrected.



All the problems I had felt at home so immense in Germany, were now so unimportant to me.

I trusted people more. I started thinking about the possibilities of life for the poor people in the world. It was not the first time I thought about the poverty. But this time it was different.

I had a different relation to the poverty in the world. Suddenly the issue was no longer at the other end of the world, but very close to me. The issue concerned friends of mine and their families.

Back in Germany, many of my friends and family couldn't understand why I had changed so much after just two weeks in Kenya. I'd left a focused, busy, business woman. I had been defining myself by the things I had, the things I wanted, what I had achieved; my business, my goals, my career. But those things weren't important to me anymore. I didn't want my old life anymore.

I don't want this dead life, where I am just living and not creating my life. You are just existing not living. You have to change something Annika. You have to give back to the world.

Kenya had changed me forever.
I am so thankful to Kenya. I will love you forever.



Epilogue

I immediately signed up as a donor to the humanitarian project I visited. Within six months I'd sold all my stuff and moved out of my apartment and I'm on the next phase of my journey... To live my dreams, loving myself and others.

I invite you to follow my life-changing journey.

Follow Me ... Annika Inken Kähler

Hi, I'm Annika, an unconditionally self-loving plus size girl, Digital Nomad and travel junkie. I'm living my purpose in life. I know you can do that too!



Find out more about Confidence Coaching with Annika:

Connect with Annika on her Facebook Page:

<https://web.facebook.com/Confidence-Coaching-with-Annika-Kähler-1930325320521478/>

Join her Facebook group for women who want to love themselves unconditionally:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/903742576448585/>

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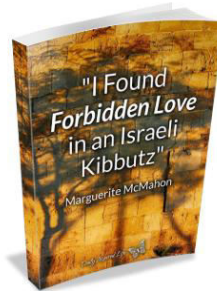
ISSUE # 2

An Unromantic Story of Love
Amelia Stowers-Wah

Amelia believes she's fallen in love with her perfect man Alex...

until her whole idea of life and relationship is rocked by the 2017 Mexico earthquake.

Should Amelia trust in her gut or was this just Tinder all along?

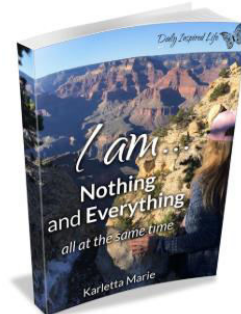


ISSUE # 3

Forbidden Love in an
Israeli Kibbutz
Marguerite McMahon

It's the 1970's. Australian born, Marguerite, volunteers in an Israeli Kibbutz where she falls deeply in love with the young, handsome, Ela.

They plan to spend the rest of their life as husband and wife... but it seems the great divide between religion and race may keep them apart forever



ISSUE # 5

Nothing and
Everything
Karletta Marie

Karletta grew up in a low-income family, the daughter of a garbage collector. She dreams of a life traveling the world, walking through Asia, driving Safari and overlooking the Grand Canyon. But she has no idea how she'll ever get there...

Until one day a miracle happens.

Short Stories - 30min to 1hr reads
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