

# EDITORIAL / REDAKSIONEEL

In reflecting on the last twelve months, it seems to me that South Africans are scurrying for answers at an ever increasing rate. The fact that "change is the only constant" has become a motherhood statement. What we often do not understand though, is firstly that the rate of change is constantly increasing, and secondly that the complexity of the transformation we have to deal with is significantly higher than that of mere change. In this issue of *Communicare*, it is my belief that some pointers to this transformation are given to us. They may on the surface appear to be disparate issues, but within the context of South Africa today (and the foreseeable future) they are in fact inseparable.

In *The Last Word*, outcomes based education is analysed and some interesting issues raised. Perhaps one of the more substantive issues that we need to come to grips with, is that education is but one element of the entire social transformation that all South Africans are going through, some of us willingly, others kicking and screaming. The transformation of education is not only about global competitiveness, productivity, or even wealth creation for all the people of our country. It is at a much deeper level, and hopefully in the first instance, about each one of us as individual human beings. It is within this context that some of the points raised in the article on the Self and Communication struck me as being of crucial importance. In very simplistic terms, it leads one to the conclusion that all of our national education strategies, and all of our insightful academic research, and all of our intellectual debating serves no purpose if it does not impact on the level of individual transformation.

The issue is therefore not one of outcomes based education versus academically based teaching per se, but at a more fundamental level one of how universities, as part of a learning and teaching community, ensure that we obtain true reflexive competence as well as the ability to lead other learners in achieving this themselves. There was a time when tertiary educational institutions, especially universities, saw themselves as somehow above and removed from society at large. This was a position taken based on the mistaken assumption that the world of academia was the brain of society. If this were indeed the case, why do we (in the aggregate sense) rank so lowly in terms of human resources development when compared to other developing countries? And indeed, if the teachings of the world of academia was so rich, why are so many people who have attended our institutions poor, not only materially, but also socially and psychologically?

As educators (not academics) focusing on communication, that most basic of human activities, we should perhaps be in the forefront of the transformation to develop human beings who are well rounded and capable of being "good citizens".

*Sonja Verwey*