

## **" I de-stress at church UFIC popularly known as Kwa Makandiwa" , says Dr Bright Matonga**

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**"See what the influential people in Zimbabwe have to say about working out, eating well and loving their bodies and get inspired to stay health"**

***"I liken my role in raising health awareness to a cheerleader , I do not have to play the game for you or teach you how to play it , rather I cheer you on saying, you can do it go ahead and lose those kilograms" , says Dr Brighton Chireka***

By Doc Beecee

In my endeavour to raise health awareness I have been interviewing some of the well known figures in our society . We are what we eat and do after that and it's good to know what our public figures are doing to improve their health. I am humbled in that I have managed to interviewed over a dozen of people in our community and I will be featuring them one by one.

Today I have the pleasure of presenting my interview with Mr Bright Matonga who is a Former Head of Tv at ZBC, CEO Zupco, Head of Electronic and Print Media New Ziana, Former MP Mhondoro NGEZI and Deputy Information Minister. He is currently CEO of an Engineering and Construction company. His is a holder of Doctorate in Strategic Management PHD, MSc Strategic

Management and BSc Hon in Media Production and Technology.

Today the 28th October is his birthday and is turning 48 years old . I wish him a happy birthday and many more health years to come. Before I go into the details about what he told me about his lifestyle, I would like to write a bit about Noncommunicable diseases which are mainly related to our lifestyle.

Noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, are not passed from person to person. They are of long duration and generally slow progression. The 4 main types of noncommunicable diseases are cardiovascular diseases (like heart attacks and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructed pulmonary disease and asthma) and diabetes. These diseases are often thought to be public health problems of significance only in high income countries. In reality, only 25% ( 10 million people each year ) of chronic disease deaths occur in high income countries - while 75% ( 28 million) occur in low and middle income countries, where most of the world's population lives.

### **Who is at risk of such diseases?**

All age groups and all regions are affected by NCDs. NCDs are often associated with older age groups, but evidence shows that 16 million of all deaths attributed to noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) occur before the age of 70. Of these "premature" deaths, 82% occurred in low- and middle-income countries. Children, adults and the elderly are all vulnerable to the risk factors that contribute to noncommunicable diseases, whether from unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, exposure to tobacco smoke or the effects of the harmful use of alcohol.

Under the leadership of the WHO more than 190 countries agreed in 2011 on global mechanisms to reduce the avoidable NCD burden including a Global action plan for the prevention and control of NCDs 2013-2020. This plan aims to reduce the number of premature deaths from NCDs by 25% by 2025 through nine voluntary global targets. The nine targets focus in part by addressing factors such as tobacco use, harmful use of alcohol, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity that increase people's risk of developing these diseases.

In my interviews I am mainly focussing on the diet, exercise and the mindset as these are the most important areas that if addressed can reduce the risk of developing NCDs.

### ***Dr Matonga had to say the following about his lifestyle;***

***" Apparently majority of people in my circle have gone traditional when it comes to our eating habits! We tend to eat traditional food like zviyo for breakfast porridge and main meal, mhunga, brown rice or rice with peanut butter or mapfunde! I enjoy road runner chicken. Remember am a farmer most food is home grown! Vegetables are a must especially carrots, peas, beans and cabbages! Mukaka wakakora also a favorite sweet and wash down!"***

***"Am a devout Christian at UFIC United family International Church or kwa Makandiwa as it is popularly known! Tuesday services attract +50000 and Sunday +100000 congregants ! We singing and dancing and teachings focus on such issues of managing finances, a major cause of stress, managing relationships, families and friends ! As a politician, one grows or develops a thick skin, with time! I also keep company and pays attention to people that add value to my life! I don't drink, anymore! or smoke! Managing and balancing work and family is also very key! Family always come first no matter what happens "***

***" I used to go to the gym but these days I prefer to take a few walks ", says Dr Brighton Matonga .***

Wow that is impressing how some manage their stress. What can you do if you are concerned after reading this article? I advise you to see your doctor and discuss your concerns further, but I will give you general advice here which you can start using from now going forwards. You need to eat a healthy diet taking appropriate calories and right portions as well as reducing foods high in saturated fats. You need to have at least 2 days that you do not eat meat and also if you can manage it have a day that you fast for 12 hours. You need to increase your physical activity and keep well hydrated by drinking enough fluids depending on your body size. Getting started is easier than you think. Changing a few daily habits can soon add up to a more active you. Be active every day. Every 10 minutes counts. If you don't think you can squeeze anything else into your day, see if you can reduce the time you spend sitting still and free up time to be active. Stop smoking if you do and also reduce your alcohol intake for those who drink. Have a support group or a church you go to , you are always welcome in the house of the Lord and you will have peace of mind.

Not taking any action about your health is a decision in itself and you will have no one to blame. This health blog is here to stay and it will continue to raise awareness to make sure that you do not lack knowledge. The ball is now in your court to take action and I hope you have and will be activated by this article.

This article was compiled by **Dr. Brighton Chireka** who is a GP and a Patient Engagement Advocate (PEA) in Folkestone Kent, UK. You can contact him on **[info@docbeecee.co.uk](mailto:info@docbeecee.co.uk)**