



### **Patrick Oancia's visit to SA.**

This was my second visit to South Africa. On my first trip, I found the energy quite challenging. Although everyone I met was very nice, there was a lot of talk about the fear and concerns of living in the post-apartheid dynamic. The house I stayed in Joburg had bars on the master bedroom door. I first thought that someone had previously been under house arrest there. But to my surprise, I was told that the bars were to keep burglars from killing you! Nevertheless, my guest bedroom had no bars. I slept with one eye open and any sound in the night terrified me!

I felt so frustrated and claustrophobic from the subtle residue of fear that lingered everywhere, that I asked a friend take me for a drive into some neighborhood that was not gated or security controlled so as to get some perspective. We went through Hillbrow, and for the first time I felt relieved to see people living freely on the street. Despite the dangerous

reputation that this neighborhood had, it was a great experience. I spent a lot of time hanging out in the Bronx and Harlem in NYC during the 80's. These were very dangerous neighborhoods then. Hillbrow had this same energy, and despite the edge in the air, there were also very normal people there going about their lives in a very peaceful way. I felt the humanity there, and believe that the paralysis that can emerge from fear can really distort our reality. As human beings we choose the way we perceive any situation. Yoga teaches us exactly this. I feel South Africa is an ideal country to challenge the deeper attributes of the Yoga philosophy off the mat.

2010's visit was very nice. My workshops at Karma Shala Yoga in Cape Town and again at Lotus Studio in Kynsna were amazing! Jim, Tamsin, and Nicki are doing such a positive thing for Yoga in South Africa. All the students were very open minded and super focused. I also had time to experience more outside teaching, and was better able to absorb the overall cultural and social dynamic.



When I was in transit back to Europe in the Joburg airport, I met a young Zulu girl who worked in the gift shop. She was living in one of the Joburg townships. She was incredibly interesting and very articulate in describing her life experiences. She had deep intuition and insight of inquiry in her heart. It inspired me to understand South Africa, its hardships, diversity and progressive potential even more.

Best,  
Patrick.