



Tomorrow Trust: Kim Feinberg

Words Michelle Loewenstein
Photo Gareth Jacobs

Kim Feinberg describes herself, quite simply, as a former 'Jewish tea mother' with a background in the performing arts. And, while many of us walked out of *Schindler's List* and promptly forgot about the true-life horrors portrayed in the film, the Sandhurst resident left the cinema filled with a sense of purpose. "I just thought, 'I have to do something'. I spoke to my rabbi and then started my own oral history project," says Feinberg.

It was through this that she became involved with the Survivors of the Shoah Foundation, a venture aimed at capturing the stories of survivors of and witnesses to the holocaust. "I was privileged to be able to participate. It was a really humbling experience. No one can fully understand what went on in Nazi Germany except the survivors," she says.

This was just the start of

Feinberg's amazing philanthropic career, which has seen her meeting the likes of Nelson Mandela, Walter Sisulu and American actress Fran Drescher, who she describes as a close personal friend. "I've literally followed the open doors. In life you either walk through the doors or close them," she says. "Everyone has a gift. Mine is to make a difference, especially for children."

Her volunteer work led her to the Topsy Foundation, an organisation founded to help prevent HIV/Aids and alleviate its consequences. It was here that Feinberg came into contact with children that had been orphaned by the disease. "I went to Mpumalanga and I cried all day. Again I thought, 'I must do something'. I'd been part of the biggest oral history project in the world, and yet no one had heard the voices of these kids. It was then that I decided to create The *Tomorrow* Publication. I called it *Tomorrow* because it's the one word that we take for granted and these kids don't," Feinberg says. Interviews were done with the orphans, and the information was then collated into a book – written and drawn by the children themselves. 70 per cent of the funds raised from the book were then put into the Tomorrow Trust, into an account for education. "UN stats show that the danger point for kids in orphanages is post-matric when they have to leave. There's no structure to support them, so there is a chance that they will become involved in negative behaviour. We come on board as the education arm and provide an exit strategy," she explains.

Feinberg's name has become synonymous with the Tomorrow Trust, and despite only being around since 2005, the organisation is well known and well respected. "The worst thing about my work is having to turn kids away because of lack of funding. We have a file of kids that we've had to turn down. We need money and support. Every R10 helps!"

Feinberg copes with the stresses of her job by doing yoga every morning and by keeping her time at home sacred. "I come from a broken home where we were financially and emotionally challenged," she says, "and I decided that when I had kids I would be at home as much as possible. I work really hard. It's a huge responsibility – not only running and growing the Tomorrow Trust but to the children themselves. Beyond that, I also have a responsibility to my own two children," she says. Feinberg has a son in matric and a daughter studying at UCT. "My son said an amazing thing to me on my birthday recently. He said, 'You know mom, if you had to die tomorrow, even at 46 you have made such an impact on so many people'," she says proudly. "We all like to own beautiful things but to know that I have made a positive impact on someone's life is so much better." ☺