

I will start by a quote by Dr Mabena who is an indigenous leader from South Africa, who said: 'Community life must not be just a mirror where you look upon yourself. The more we know each other, it becomes a glass to see through. Now I know you better, you know me better and we can explore endless possibilities.' I have almost 20 years of experience in education for sustainable development, in both secondary and higher education and I find that this quote summarises my ideas for the values that must underpin any type of education, not just education for sustainable development. And this quote comes from an indigenous knowledge holder who has real life experience of what it means to act for the community and prioritise the common good. Local communities, families, even schools cannot survive and thrive without collaboration and collective action. Why cannot this be the norm for academia? It is true that higher education has long focused on competition, excellence and individualism, but pedagogy talks about the endless possibilities that exist when we interact with peers and stretch our own boundaries. Sustainability, which is my area of research, necessitates inter- and transdisciplinary action that comes from bringing diverse minds and value sets together. I have witnessed many students and colleagues flourish through education for sustainable development, developing confidence through collectivity, pursuing common goals, and transforming the learning environments and broader societies. So I think it is time that higher education switches to a different education paradigm that values collaboration and collective action. Otherwise it will be perpetuating social injustices and crises.