

## Appendix Seven: Care

Here is the email exchange between Dr. Eden Charles and myself.

Eden's Email

**FW: Care**

22/02/2004

Ian Phillips

To llewelyn

From: Eden Charles [mailto:edencharles@btconnect.com] Sent: 22 February 2004 09:41  
To: Ian Phillips  
Subject: Care

Dear Ian

I am writing to you because I think that you might find that easier. I have tried to contact you by phone and have not been successful. I do not want to put pressure on you and so I am trying this route to communicate with you.

Ian, I do not know why you have not been in contact. I can imagine though that it has to do with the tremendous pressures that you have been under trying to hold so many balls in the air at the same time.

All I want you to know is that I love you and want what is best for you. You have given so much to me and to others in the Learning Centre that you owe nobody anything. You deserve to give yourself all that you need to be happy and well.

You have been an inspirational personality in my life since I met you. You have been there for me many times when I needed you. When I left Race Today you helped me move into the Youth Service and find value in myself and my ability to survive and succeed. You have been straight with me when I was stuck in unproductive behaviours and you have praised me when I have achieved.

I really, really value you and what you have given to me over time. I had hoped to be able to give back some of what you have given to me and I feel that I would have had it not been for the route my life has taken over the last three years or so. It has been a terrible last few years for me, particularly in relation to life. It has drained me in ways that I never thought possible. I am used to being strong and doing many things and being successful at most of them.

Over the last few years I have felt as if I am trying to do the right things and failing people close to me at the same time. I have not been able to put the quality of attention into the things and people most important to me as I have struggled to

survive. I certainly feel that I have failed to keep up our relationship. I have tried, but given up too easily when obstacles appeared, especially given how important you are to me.

I think that you are proud and very well defended and don't let others see your feelings too easily. Sometimes I find it hard to know where you are. But that is no excuse because I have never doubted that you are close to being a saint in your commitment to young people and Sankofa. What you have done you have done selflessly. You have given and given and not got enough back. I wish I had found a way to communicate to you before just how much I appreciate the sacrifices that you have made. I knew that it had to be at a terrible cost to yourself but I failed to take action that could take some of the pressure off you. I do not like this form of communication. It feels stiff and impersonal and I do not feel able to capture the warmth and love I feel towards you and wish for you. I hope that we will be able to talk over these things sometime soon – but obviously not until you are ready. I just hope that we will be able to talk sometime! I believe in you and I know you will get through whatever it is you are going through at this time.

Truly Ian, if I can be of any help please feel free to exercise the right of a friend to allow me to.

I am working on some things and I hope to be in contact with you again soon with some good news. Do not feel any pressure to respond to this message.

One love Eden

I replied to Eden's email as follows:

On 13/4/04 3:19 pm, "Ian Phillips" <llewelyn69@hotmail.com> wrote:

Eden

It has been a long time. I am not in the best of health, but I am not sickly. As they say it is a mental thing, but I have really needed a rest. I have felt like I have been cracking up, but I know I can't really go there. I did not choose to make the break. I had to make the break. Thanks for your kind words. It is appreciated. As I emerge I will communicate more.

Ian

Take Care ... attached is my PhD Transfer Paper ... comments will be appreciated

Eden would reply:

From: Eden Charles <edencharles@btclick.com>

Dear Ian

You do not know how happy your communication has made me. I am so glad to hear from you. I know that you "had to make the break", I know you as a man of humanity, honour and not sufficient generosity to himself and I am pleased that you are doing what you need to do for yourself.

I am working hard with the Learning Centre and feel really optimistic about the future of it as a project that can live the objectives we set out to achieve in a manner that is sustainable and growthful for those who work in it/for it as well as for the young people.

I have read your paper once. I will read it again and give you comments. I am stunned by the quality of the voice that you use. It is a much more open and explicitly inclusional than I hear.

It is also one who is using the self-inquiry approach with integrity to explore and enhance your own life's possibility. It feels of much more personal value to you than the earlier paper that I read and as such of much greater value to me, as reader, as Black man, as friend and as co-inquirer.

We are in communication through forces deeper than I understand and I send you my love and wish you all you need to continue your journey.

I will write soon.

Eden