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THE ORYX

The weekly newsletter of Windhoek International School

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Community,

Though we are a diverse community who come from all manner of backgrounds and experiences, there are certain commonalities which unite us and to which we all ascribe as members of our WIS learning community.

Sometimes these values and principles can become tacit, assumed, or unstated. On Wednesday, the Board of Directors voted to approve a set of six principles which put in writing a summary of our values and convictions as a community of learners. Whenever new problems arise or decisions must be made, we will ask ourselves, "Is what we will do and how we do it consistent with WIS Principles?"

These principles arose from an initial workshop led in August 2022 for teachers, facilitated by former WIS Director Mr Kevin Bartlett. That initial document then went through four or five drafts, after receiving valuable feedback from students and parents. I think that you will see that these principles are familiar because they have been part of WIS's mission and DNA since our school's founding in 1990: Value all people with equal dignity; act with a clarity of purpose; pursue excellence; take responsible ownership for our actions; prioritise wonder and creativity; use resources sustainably. These are the principles which sum up our approach to education at WIS.

In March, we will begin a series of listening groups and community meetings where we articulate our vision for how we can put these **principles into practice.** We will develop a code of conduct for what these principles mean:

- 1.In the classroom
- 2.At home
- 3. For the community

Please consider diarising these upcoming parent meetings:

3-Way Conferences (more details signup times will be shared next week)

Tuesday 14th March 14:30 - 17:30 Wednesday 15th March 07:30 - 14:00 Thursday 16th March 14:00 - 17:00

Secondary 3-Way Conferences
Primary & Secondary 3-Way Conferences
Primary 3-Way Conferences

More details about these three-way conferences will be emailed next week. Note that we will not have regularly scheduled school on Wednesday March 15th.

We will hold our first of several **WIS Principles-to-Practice Parent Meeting** in the Secondary Library on Wednesday 15th March from 7:15 to 8:15am.

Dr Simon Pickstone-Taylor of the Neurodiversity Centre

Thursday March 30 6-7pm: All Parent Workshop (virtual)

NEW STAFF 2023 - 2024



Derrek Berkompas

Derrek has been an educator for over 20 years. His career includes teaching nearly every age group, including teaching other teachers. Derrek has taught in the US and Taiwan. His ability to form authentic positive connections with each student has been a hallmark of his career. Derrek believes connecting the classroom to the real world creates meaningful learning. He practices this philosophy by seeking out unique experiences to share with his students. After Derrek mastered the art of beekeeping, his students not only loved trying on bee suits and tasting honey, but also gained a deeper understanding of biodiversity and ecosystems. Derrek's love of the outdoors inspired him to partner with local Native American tribes to restore salmon habitat. Derrek's students hatched salmon in the classroom and tended them until they were mature enough to be released into local streams. He is excited to discover all that Namibia has to offer and continue bringing learning to life. Derrek and his wife have six children and one grandchild. Their youngest child will be joining WIS 8th Grade. Derrek loves hiking, backpacking and skiing. When not active outdoors Derrek is often enjoying a good book or playing board games with family and friends. Derrek and his family are looking forward to being part of the WIS community.



The WIS Principles document is at the end of this week's Oryx. Please have a read through them, and might I suggest that these principles and their attending questions may make for a good dinner table conversation! I certainly look forward to connecting with many of you as we begin the process of unpacking what these principles will be increasingly lived out here at WIS.

Please remember that the afternoon of Saturday March 11th is **INTERNATIONAL DAY!**

Sincerely, Ethan

WIS Principles

WIS Principles

Drawn from our school's foundational documents and informed by community conversations and educational research, this document summarises our values and serves as a means of measuring the integrity of our policies, practices, and daily decisions.

These six principles describe what we do, how we do it, and why. In every action and decision we make, we ask ourselves:

- 1. Does this action value all **people** with equal dignity?
- 2. Does this activity have clarity of **purpose**?
- 3. Am I putting in my best effort towards **excellence**?
- 4. Am I taking responsible **ownership** of my actions?
- 5. Does this action facilitate wonder and **creativity**?
- 6. Is this action a **sustainable** use of our local and global community's resources?

1. The PEOPLE Principle:

We view WIS as a community, rather than an institution, because we believe that relationships are the most powerful influencer on learner success. At WIS, we learn from those around us and we know that our differences make us stronger. We are proud of our diversity of culture, language, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, belief, tradition, ancestry, and socio-economic status. We want our learners to cultivate a strong sense of self. We recognise that each person holds multiple identities and has a unique personal story to tell.

In Practice:

This principle means that every person at WIS is safe to be themselves. We recognise that it is our individual and collective responsibility to ensure that all members of the school community are welcomed, included, and treated fairly. When concerns or conflicts arise, we have respectful face-to-face conversations directly with the people who are involved. Any decision must balance the needs of the one with the needs of the many, so there are times where it is necessary to regulate our own behaviour and self-expression for the good of others. We value people's right to express views and opinions in a respectful manner; however, discrimination on any basis is unacceptable. We utilise a curriculum that is anti-racist and anti-discriminatory. We listen attentively to different perspectives. With humility, we understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Questions:

Does this action value all people in our community with equal dignity?

Do I seek to understand before being understood?

Am I open to changing my mind?

Am I being a good teammate?

Do others feel cared for in my presence and through my actions?

Is WIS a better place because I am here?

2. The PURPOSE Principle:

Learning is a process of making meaning, and must be driven by a clear and intentional purpose. We learn when we connect new information and skills with prior knowledge and experience. Learners are more engaged when they are convinced by 'the why', so we apply our learning to address real-world problems and an end that is bigger than ourselves. A sense of purpose serves as a driving force to push us through adversity and the challenges of daily life.

In Practice:

Our units of study are driven by inquiry and take place within a real-life context. We continuously refine our conceptual understandings of the world and our place in it. We deconstruct and analyse the components of what it is we seek to create. We set clear goals, and we make a plan for how to accomplish those goals. We begin with the end in mind.

Questions:

Does this activity have clarity of purpose?

Can I explain why this is a meaningful activity for me to be engaged in?

Have we analysed what a good product looks like before setting out on our own?

Who will be responsible for achieving this?

How will we know if we are successful?

Does our community believe that the school has a deep sense of purpose and is making progress towards achieving excellence?

3. The EXCELLENCE Principle:

We believe that learners develop the dispositions of excellence when they are surrounded by a community which models, sets, and keeps high expectations. We believe that all people already possess within themselves all the ability and compassion that is necessary to make a positive difference in our world. Excellence is a way of being that is won by training, revision, and habituation. It is our collective and individual responsibility to model these characteristics for others.

In Practice:

We expect one another to produce timely and accomplished work. We expect that this will take multiple drafts. In a partnership between the school and the home, we help learners try again whenever an effort falls short of the mark. We place student work within authentic and meaningful contexts, and we organise learning celebrations for the good work that students produce. We set high expectations for ourselves. We inspire others to be the best they can be.

Questions:

Am I putting in my best effort towards excellence?

Am I setting clear and measurable goals for myself?

Do I approach everything I do with a growth mindset?

Do I continuously revise and refine my work to be the very best I can be?

Do I lead by example?

Is my feedback timely, specific, actionable, and respectful?

4. The OWNERSHIP Principle

When we take ownership of our process, it becomes possible to try new things with a positive attitude and high expectations. Learning is a deeply personal, social, and emotional process. We are all different, and we all have the right to own our learning story. The time and pace of each person's journey is unique. We take a step by step approach to achieving our goals, and we are not afraid to revise our methods as we come to learn more. We believe that learners rise to expectations and that motivation must come from within.

In Practice:

We use strengths to address weaknesses. We meet each learner where they are and help them build the capacity for growth and self regulation. Our unit plans give voice and choice to the learner. We provide modifications and accommodations to learning plans as required. We take time to revise our work. We reflect on our own learning journey.

Questions:

Am I taking responsible ownership of my daily actions?

Do I pursue physical, mental, and emotional wellness?

Do I spend time in reflection and introspection?

Am I making it safe for others to discuss their feelings, worries, and frustrations?

Can I explain why this activity matters to me, and evaluate my commitment to it?

Am I taking the opportunity to take on real and meaningful responsibility?

5. The CREATIVITY Principle:

We are naturally curious and playful. We can never predict which experience will bring about a life-long passion, so we encourage learners to explore and to try new things. We learn through a lifelong cycle of inquiry. We know that the world's problems will not be solved at the same level they were created, so we must make space for imagination, divergent thinking, and exploration.

In Practice:

When we teach, we are attuned to student curiosity. We offer elements of voice and choice within our curriculum and methods of assessment. We take advantage of chance encounters and the unexpected, and we value having more questions than answers. We explore the limits and assumptions of academic disciplines and theories.

Questions:

Does this action facilitate wonder and creativity?

Do I take time to consider not just what is, but also what could be?

Do I take time to express myself creatively through sport, play, service to others, and the arts?

Do I pause to appreciate the unexpected?

Am I open to exploration and adventure?

6. The SUSTAINABILITY Principle:

Our world has a scarcity of resources, and as a community we are committed to meet today's needs without compromising biodiversity and the wellbeing of future generations. We are attuned to the difference between what we want and what we need.

In Practice:

This principle compels us to be wise stewards of the environment and responsible users of the school's limited financial resources. Our fiscal decisions prefer the simple but sustainable to the extravagant and short-sighted. Our learning objectives are contextualised to sustainability concerns, and our unit plans are relevant to the social, environment, and economic challenges which our students will face both now and as future leaders. We don't consume or change without first considering whether we can reuse or refurbish what we already have.

Questions:

Is this action a sustainable use of our local and global community's resources? Are the changes I am proposing able to be implemented and sustained? Do my decisions reflect a commitment to the natural environment? Do my decisions promote social and economic equity? Do I avoid using wasteful packaging and do I clean up after myself? Can I explain the impact of change on the systems I am learning about? Are my actions making my campus and my community a better place?

PRIMARY PRINCIPAL

Dear WIS Community,

I am delighted to report that the Grade 5 camp was a huge success and that our students returned to school brimming with enthusiasm and energy. Thanks to all our Grade 5 teachers and assistants, Ms. Seodhna, Mr. Gerson, Mr. Daniel and Ms. Avril for making it a memorable experience for our students! I know the lack of sleep was totally worth it!



It reminded me of the tremendous benefits of outdoor education for our students and how lucky we are to have these opportunities right on our doorstep in beautiful Namibia. Outdoor education offers a unique and enriching experience that promotes learning and development in several ways.

- 1. Improved Physical Health: Outdoor education allows students to engage in physical activities that promote good health, such as hiking, climbing, running and swimming.
- Increased Confidence and Resilience: Outdoor education challenges students to step out of their comfort zones and take on new challenges. Our students faced various challenges, such as navigating through unfamiliar terrain or working together to build a shelter, and they emerged from these experiences feeling more confident and resilient.

"I learned that I can do more than I can. I also learned that I like helping a lot of people when they try to do something. I learned about other people; that they have a lot of hidden talents.. My favourite part was building a shelter." - Eula

3. Positive Social Interaction: Outdoor education encourages positive social interaction and teamwork. Our students worked together to achieve common goals, and they learned to appreciate and respect each other's strengths and weaknesses. They also had fun and created lasting memories that they will cherish for years to come.

"I learned that you shouldn't judge a book by its cover because if I'm honest I didn't think the food would be that good but it was! I learned that some people, although they seem tough- they actually aren't." - Dunya

Our Grade 5 students had the opportunity to experience the benefits of outdoor education firsthand. I know that this will have a positive impact on their academic and personal development, their relationships with teachers and students and their Exhibition journey.

"Thank you! I have no words to express how thankful I am that my young lady was able to experience camp with such warm, kind hearted teachers! The ride home was non stop chatter-boxing and laughing about her experience! For me (helicopter mom) letting go wasn't easy but knowing I can trust each and everyone of you with one of my biggest blessings is truly wonderful! Thank you thank you! I hope you have a restful afternoon with your own families and children!" - Grade 5 Parent

Thank you for your continued support of our school's mission to provide a well-rounded education for our students.

Warm regards, Marcelle van Leenen

Procedural writing in Grade 2

Procedural writing is a type of informational writing that explains how to do something, typically in a step-by step format. It is a specific type of writing that is used to explain how to complete a task or a process.

Students in Grade 2 integrated procedural writing in their Unit of inquiry, 'How the World Works' based on their experiments and inquiry investigations.

Students came with many different ideas of how to do things (writing instruction).

Today, we would like to publish two written instructions. Stay tuned for more information coming in the Oryx or on school social media and websites. We hope that the instructions will be helpful and easy to follow.

'How to walk your dog': by Ava

- Step 1: Make sure your dog or puppy has his collar on.
- Step 2: Clip your dog 's leash on.
- Step 3. Make sure your dog is in a good mood.
- Step 4: It is cold outside therefore put some dog clothes on your dog.
- Step 5: Go outside.
- Step 6: Put the music on your phone and then your dog is happy and you are happy too.
- Step 7: Just dance, dance and enjoy walking your dog!

'How to make fizzy slime' by Maggie

- Step 1: Get the bowl and pour 10 ml of glue.
- Step 2: Add 3 ml of warm water.
- Step 3: Mix it until it is not sticky (add activator if it is sticky).
- Step 4: When you have a nice consistency add shaving cream.
- Step 5. Mix all of the ingredients with the shaving cream and when it is fully mixed you will have fluffy slime.

The Grade 2 team

SECONDARY PRINCIPAL

Upcoming events to guide our students in their planning and research for further education:

The coming months are filled with opportunities for our high school students to get exposure to all the things that are available to them. The process of finding the right course, the right fit, the right opportunity is a daunting task and exposing ourselves to the opportunities out there by engaging in them and reflecting on the options every single student/person has available to them.

In the past weeks, we have worked quite extensively with <u>Unifrog: The Complete Destinations Platform</u>. Students in Grades 10 - 12 have been engaged in completing the following tasks on Unifrog:

- a personality quiz
- an interest quiz
- a work environment quiz
- a skills quiz and just in the past week or so
- a skills test

All these tasks guide students to explore their strengths and get some guidance through the platform on subjects that might be suitable for them as well as career paths that they might follow. These guidelines come with lots of resources and suggested institutions. Even if a student is not planning to go to the US or the UK, the information they get can open their minds and give them opportunities to explore what is out there.

Career paths and subject areas are varied and each individual subject group has multiple connected career options. We have journeyed far away from traditional careers - doctor, engineer, architect, teacher - each of these has multiple branches that diversify the field of study.

For that reason, I encourage students and their parents to expose themselves to as many opportunities as possible. Join presentations and events where you get information on study opportunities and destinations as well as the critically important aspect of financing a tertiary education.

I therefore invite all our high school students and parents to diarise the following events:

13 MARCH - STUDYING IN THE US

Charles Dorn will speak with students and their parents/guardians about US Higher Education, liberal arts colleges and Bowdoin University. His wife is a development Officer for Princeton University and can answer Princeton specific questions

16 March - Youth For Understanding (YFU)

07:15 Coffee Morning - Discover the World as an YFU Exchange Student

16 March - What is the Dual Vocational Training Model in Germany?

17:30 - Information evening about skilled trade qualifications in Germany

21 March - CIS Exploration Day Africa

<u>Participating universities</u> - <u>REGISTER HERE</u>

12:00 - 15:00 Live Event

(14 March - Virtual Booths are available for early preview) - 30 June - Booths close

WRENTOURS UNIVERSITY FAIR @ WIS

Participating universities:

John Cabot University, University of Winnipeg, University of Tampa, Indiana University Memorial University of Newfoundland, University of Calgary, Abu Dhabi NYU, University of Johannesburg, Lynn University, University of Toronto, Babson College, Wren International

What is the Dual Vocational Training Model in Germany?



Information evening about skilled trade
qualifications in Germany
For grades 10 – 12
(parents should join their children)

16. March 2023 – 17:30
Windhoek International School





- Meet representatives from various professions
 - Hear about opportunities regarding apprenticeships in Germany
 - Inform yourself about language courses at the Goethe-Institut
 - Talk to the German embassy regarding visa requirements

More Information:



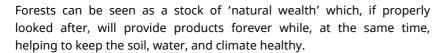
Regards, Maggie Reiff

Story to Poem - Grade 8 Poetry

The Grade 8 students had to read the following story in order for them to create their own poem using the ideas of the story.

The value of forests

When I was little, I used to play in the forest behind my grandmother's house. Now it is no longer there. It has all been cut down. I miss playing there, but, more importantly, my grandmother has taught me about the value of forests and the seriousness of cutting them down. I want to share this knowledge with you.





We need to look after forests. We especially need to look after natural forests. We need to be careful with planted forests and manage them well. Whenever possible, we should plant indigenous trees. It will be too late to look after our trees when they have all gone!

Forests are very useful. They provide shade. In hot countries, trees are really needed for shade. Trees also absorb carbon dioxide and give off oxygen. They are therefore very important to help fight pollution and allow us to breathe fresher air.

Forests keep moisture in the soil. They help prevent soil erosion. They provide habitats for many animals and birds and plants and thus benefit biodiversity. They also provide us with wood for fires, timber for building houses, furniture and boats, pulp for paper and cardboard, and many medicines that come from trees and forests.

Forests are either natural or human-made. Very few natural forests are left. People are cutting them down to plant crops instead of using them as forests. Soon there will be no natural forests left. People are cutting down forests so quickly that it is as if forests the size of three football fields are being destroyed every minute!

Human-made forests are not as good. Usually, they consist of only one type of tree and no other plants grow beneath them. Fertiliser is needed because all the food from the vegetation that would normally grow under forest trees is not there. The world must learn the value of forests before it is too late.

This is what some of our WIS students produced during their summative - Criterion C - Producing Text. Pay attention to how they have used personification, simile, and hyperbole in their writing:

What are forests supposed to be - Hamish Philip Gr. 8AJ

I used to play in the forest behind grandma's house when I was younger The fact that humans wanted space gave them hunger, To cut down our trees for space and wood One person could not stop them if they could

Power-hungry people cause this unearthly torture
You and I must stand up for our future
Together we must stand and keep fighting

We must scare these people and make them run like greased lightning.

A community <mark>as brave as lions</mark> we must stand To put an end to the corrupted or bad

For as we sleep the wind whispers through closed windows to us

But ignore them we do, not to make a fuss

So will you do the right thing and rebel To give these corrupted a walk through hell To keep the world's biggest source of wealth And to protect the world's health

No Remorse - Christa Pienaar Gr. 8JPB

My small feet pattering through the leaves My silk hair flowing through the breeze The tall trees smiling upon me My grandma calling for the house key Slowly the trees fade away My smile vanishes in a similar way

Only one with a heart as cold as ice Would cut off a tree for a good price Natural Wealth disappeared like the shadow thrown by a passing cloud No more products on the shelves Nothing left for ourselves

Now they've got tons of money Although we're left with barely any honey The sky has become dull I can't even comprehend this in my skull

How can one have no remorse? To simply destroy something so beautiful The natural forests are dropping like flies Tears are falling from my eyes

Stop Playing God - Euzel Grobbelaar Gr. 8JPB

I wonder where they went The trees And the soft subtle breeze All the time spent But I'm grown up now Yet somehow I stare at the abyss I'm no longer bliss

The importance of forests
Disappearing due to ignorance
Open up to the world around you
It's not one tree but two
Maybe more

Bring back the trees
For they, please
They shade our worries
Why do we hurry
To plant
Or to grant

The shades of green
And brown-coated tree bark
You're being mean
We need to embark
And bring back the trees of dark

The leaves dance
It's not a trance
Stop cutting down
Thinking you are the one
Playing God

Oh that priceless forest - Finn Botha Gr. 8JPB

Little I was when I began to learn
The importance of you
But now you are gone
Never to return
I look back and remember
What you do every day

You give life to billions

You provide shade for the needy So magical you were You beautiful forest

You can talk, you can move You can think, you can feel

If only the people were to understand

How important you truly are

You help all life that finds itself within you Like a mother helping her child

Yet the people have no mercy
They refuse to understand
No emotions
No second thoughts
Not a single ounce of remorse
They cut you down
They rip you apart
Until you are no more

Annual Bank Windhoek Namibia

National Swimming Championship 2023



Dear Community,

With an open heart, I would like to congratulate the sixteen swimmers from WIS, who took part in the National Swimming Championship last weekend. Students once again have shown confidence, perseverance and sportsmanship.

The swimmers competed in individual and team events from Thursday afternoon until Sunday. Many of them stood on the podium and received medals, many of them shared tears or beat their personal best.

I have been watching them for the past few years, and I'm their biggest fan! I can proudly say that all of them achieved so much and what is more important have grown as individuals. They represented four different swimming clubs, they raced against each other but as you see on the photo they were all united as friends. You will be able to read more about their journey in this year's Yearbook.



A special congratulations to Elaina de Almeida (Grade 4) and Suraya Ashikoto (Grade 5) for receiving a medal. They were the youngest WIS swimmers participating in this year's Namibia National Swimming Championship.

Let's congratulate our swimmers for taking part in competitions held in South Africa this and next month. Naeem Robiati and Zafari Zeidler will be participating in the Level 2 competition which is held in Pretoria, Hillcrest swimming Pool from 3 - 5 March 2023.

Esmeralda Nel and Jeremy Zhou, will be representing Namibia in the Level 3 swimming competition which will take place in South Africa at the University of the Western Cape from 31 March – 3 April 2023.

Salome Rey will represent Namibia in the South African National Junior swimming Championship from 21 - 25 March in Durban.

We wish them fast waters. Beata Stephanus

WINDHOEK INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

INTERNATIONAL DAY

SAVE THE DATE! 11 MARCH 2023

14:00 - 18:30





WATCH THIS SPACE FOR MORE INFO SOON!









Discover the World as a YFU Exchange Student!

Become a YFU High School Exchange Student

An exchange year, semester or term with Youth for Understanding (YFU) gives you the opportunity to discover a different culture, learn a new language, and find a 'home away from home' on the other side of the world. It will open your eyes to different possibilities for further study, employment and personal growth. Thousands of learners, host families, schools and volunteers have joined YFU in the 70 years of its existence. Why don't you!?

YFU offers the following high school exchange programmes:

- Destinations: Over 20 countries in Europe and Latin America
- Duration: From 8 weeks to 10 months
- **Departure**: In August or January (and June or November for selected programmes)
- Homestay: All YFU exchange students live with a local host family
- Educational: All students attend a local high school in their host country
- Add-Ons: Language courses and specializations (sports, art, music...) available upon request
- Fees & Funding: Visit our website, download our fee overview, or contact our office
- Application: Application forms to be submitted at least 6 months prior to the departure date
- Requirements: 15-18 years old, in grade 9-11, average of at least 65% across all subjects

Youth for Understanding: Changing lives since 1951

YFU is one of the world's oldest and largest non-profit exchange organizations and has provided study abroad opportunities for over 270,000 high school learners since 1951. We opened our doors in South Africa in 1995 and started offering our programmes in Namibia and Botswana in 2022. YFU is a volunteer-driven organization with offices in 50+ countries and we continue to create international friendships and promote intercultural understanding and global citizenship.







University Exploration Day **Africa**



Tuesday 21 March 2023

12:00 - 15:00 CAT

11:00 - 14:00 WAT

13:00 - 16:00 EAT

in collaboration with:



Meet college and university representatives from all over the world at this FREE virtual event!

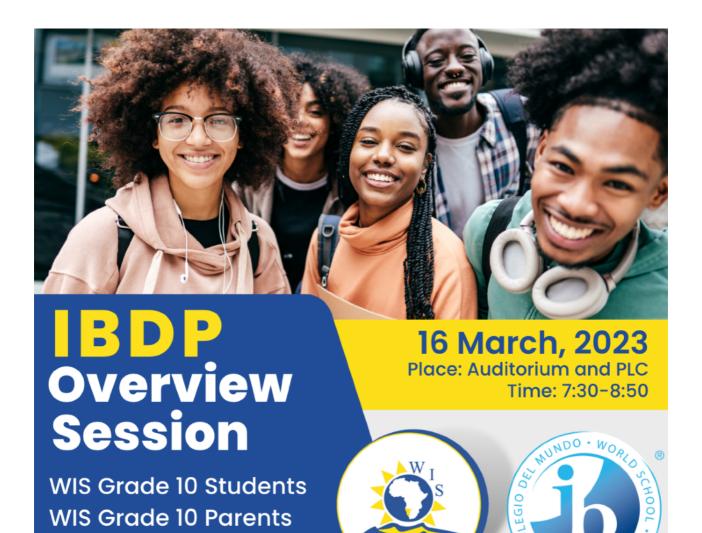
Plus... join sessions on:

- Financial considerations for university
- Beyond academics
- Student panel hear from your peers!

Register and see the full list of universities attending:

https://cis.swoogo.com/africa2023





SESSION A: 07:30 - 08:25
Overview & Subject Group Brief Presentations

SESSION B: 08:25 - 08:50
Informal DP Subjects Sharing

ON MONDO







High Commission of India Windhoek



MEDITATION CLASSES



learn intense Pranayam and Meditation

Monday to Friday from 1st March - 31st March 07:30hrs-8:30hrs

Venue - High Commission of India 97 Nelson Mandela Avenue, Klein, Windhoek For joining please send an email at: culture.windhoek@mea.gov.in











