No grit, no pearl

Refiloe Mogale, President: SAAHIP

“The highest reward for people’s toil is not what they get for it, but what they become by it.” Chennai

At our recent SAAHIP conference, we bestowed honorary life membership awards to two deserving pharmacists whose passion and contribution to the pharmacy profession and SAAHIP has not gone unnoticed. When we look at their feats, it is easy to become overwhelmed or intimidated by what they have achieved or contributed to the pharmacy profession. It makes us think how much we need to start or chart a path like this of our own. Many pharmacists choose the profession because it is a scarce skill that the world needs and it pays well. Pharmacy is a great profession of service but if pharmacists only follow what they are good at and the passion is somewhat lacking, it may lead to complacency.

The work becomes a cyclical version of doing something over and over that leads to demotivation. But if they do something that is bigger and meaningful, this may lead to greatness as observed with the two award recipients. In order to reach that level of greatness, pharmacists have to prove that they are resilient and they are required to try new things. The question is: what is our motivation as pharmacists? Is it just money, upward mobility and gaining skills?

Our motivation should not only be payment, but there should be meaning, creation, challenges, ownership, identity and pride. One needs to use one’s strength and gifts to make the profession better through service, creativity and leadership. We should be able to create lasting value such as becoming self-experts, doing the impossible and surrounding ourselves with passionate people who affirm the work we do and the contribution we make. We need to discover what we love, what we are good at, what we can be paid for and most importantly what the profession needs of us.