



IWFFA

**International Women's
Flag Football Association**

And Now a Word From Our Philosopher.....

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How Big is Your World?

Francoise Malby Anthony writes, “Ubuntu is a powerful Zulu word that means we don’t exist on our own and that we are never alone because we are part of a bigger connected world of humanity. Before coming to South Africa, I lived in a society where being an individual was more valued than being part of a community. It’s not like that here. In traditional Africa, ‘us’ is more meaningful than ‘me’. Ubuntu means that I am who I am only because of who we all are together.”

— **Francoise Malby Anthony**, [An Elephant in My Kitchen: What the Herd Taught Me About Love, Courage and Survival](#)

When I was about 15, it occurred to me that all of the agonizing I was doing about whether I was wearing the right thing, saying the right thing, or the dumb thing I couldn’t stop being embarrassed about was a total waste of my energy and I was suffering for nothing. I don’t remember what brought the revelation, but I realized that every single other person around me – the jockiest jock, the brainiest brain, and the coolest of the cool – were all worrying about the same things. The realization that everyone spends almost zero time thinking anything about me and way more time thinking about what everyone thinks of them was profoundly freeing. And it helped me to be gentler and kinder to the people around me.

When you’re in the middle of a game, it’s really easy to put your head down – only paying attention to the ball and the play you’re trying to make or stop. It’s easy to forget to see the whole field, all of the moving parts, and that every single person on the field (players, coaches, referees, and spectators) is bringing their life experiences – good and sometimes really bad – to the field with them. And it’s easy to not see every single person on the field as a human – a beautiful person with value, humor, hopes, fears, dreams, and insecurities.

How different would the game be if we all saw each other; if we recognized that I am only who I am because of who we all are together, if during and after the game, we encouraged each other, lifted each other up, and appreciated each other. Yes, even the opposing team. The game is so much more fun when you are not playing against *the enemy*. And when you realize that you all want the best for each other – you can even poke fun and laugh when something doesn’t go quiet the way you hoped it would.

What happens when you put away the last pass or flag that was missed and focus your energy on the whole game and all the people around you? How much richer and larger would the game and the world be? We’re living in a time when people in power are trying to divide us. The propaganda that is coming fast and furious, is designed specifically to turn people you don’t even know into “other” and the enemy. You have the power to make your world large; to invite people in; and to care for each other.