

ROLLING INSPIRATION

ISSUE 4 2020

The leading magazine for people with mobility impairments

ADRENALINE JUNKIES TAKE FLIGHT

Wheelchair users try extreme sports

DILEMMA OF DONATIONS

When and how to give to those in need

SEARCHING FOR A CURE

Progress made in spinal cord injury research

BEHIND THE MASK

Dealing with the acne



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CONTENTS



ADRENALINE JUNKIES TAKE TO THE SKY

From flips in a powered paraglider to jumping from a plane, these wheelchair users bravely take to the sky.

PAGE 4

DILEMMA OF DONATIONS

NPOs often have the challenge of deciding when and how to give. George Louw brings QASA under the spotlight.

PAGE 8

SEARCHING FOR A CURE

Many organisations are dedicated to finding a cure for spinal cord injuries. We take a look at the progress made.

PAGE 16

REGULARS

Upfront	2
QASA news	7
Ida's corner	8
Travel	12
Amputee corner	14
Employment	18
Beauty	22
Sexuality	24
Sport	26
Hotspot news	27



MEET THE TEAM

MANAGING EDITOR

Raven Benny
coo@qasa.co.za

EDITOR

Mariska Morris
rollinginspiration@qasa.co.za

CONTRIBUTORS

George Louw
Mandy Latimore
Heinrich Grimsehl
Joy Duffield
Rustim Ariefdien
Danie Breedt
Leon Fleiser



BEHIND THE MASK

Joy Duffield shares some tips on protecting your skin from the acne caused by wearing face masks.

PAGE 22

A NEW NORMAL

What will be the new normal for the sporting world as South Africa emerges from lockdown? Leon Fleiser reflects.

PAGE 26



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TIME TO FIGHT THE PANDEMIC FATIGUE

AS WE ENTER OUR EIGHTH MONTH IN LOCKDOWN, STILL BATTLING THE CORONAVIRUS, MANY STRUGGLE WITH PANDEMIC FATIGUE AS THEY TIRE OF SAFETY MEASURES. HOWEVER, RAVEN BENNY CALLS ON HIS FELLOW SOUTH AFRICANS TO KEEP HEART AND STAY SAFE

As the world awaited the outcome of the United States presidential elections, one could only blame the president's management of the pandemic for his demise. If he listened to advice and did not place the economy so high on his priority list, less lives would have been lost. He could even have fared better at the polls.

This while his British counterpart took a very responsible decision to lock down the country for at least a month. Other European countries are also about to take drastic measures against the flare up or second wave of the COVID-19 virus. There is an increase of up to 43 percent in the number of deaths according to a CNN report on 5 November 2020.

A similar matter bears heavily on the minds of many South Africans as a second hard lockdown looms in an attempt to curb the spread of Coronavirus cases.

By now many people have reached a state of pandemic fatigue. We've had enough of wearing masks, social distancing and being locked in our communities unable to move around freely. Another round of this is unimaginable.

We saw in the past eight months the political ball game behind the fall out of food parcels, and the alcohol and cigarettes sale bans. The delivery of personal protective equipment became a major money spinner for many. This again could be our looming fate if we do not adhere to protocols with continued responsibility.

All this just when we became used to the new normal; when we all seem to agree that we can do most of our daily tasks in a safe and responsible manner. Yes, we had occasions of plain stupidity like huge gatherings in nightclubs that were termed super spreader events, and funeral attendance in huge numbers that too spread the virus rapidly.

We learned about contact tracing and Bluetooth technology that is being used as early warning systems. Municipalities learned to use samples from our wastewater treatment plants to identify “hotspots” where there are cases of mass community infections. There were some advances made in our response to the pandemic although we do not feature as a country developing a vaccine.

South Africa might just be a country that very cautiously uses all available information to its advantage and responds according to its capabilities. Our president could be a responsible leader in Africa, not removed from his people; showing good leadership skills and managing the response to the pandemic in a responsible manner.

He might be able to put the needs of everyone in the country first. Our President Cyril Matamela Ramaphosa needs to make the tough decisions now and not delay the response to this renewed crisis. It will also be a good measure of his leadership and a chance to prevent massive loss of lives and possibly save some jobs in the process.

Even at QASA and *Rolling Inspiration*, we have endured many necessary changes that were not easy to manage, but we learned along the way.


People with disabilities have been equally affected by COVID-19 and all the other ills of society like crime and corruption just as everyone else. We too suffered losses while also being very fortunate to still be well supported until now.

However, we need to continue doing the right things like listening to our constituency; responding to the changes; innovate in project delivery; be conservative when sharing resources; and spread positive information about the achievements of our members. We must remain actively involved in our organisations, communities, and be proud citizens of our amazing country.

South Africa must become the leader on the African continent, and our approach to this disease should be decisive and responsible with very little political interference.

The United Kingdom’s lockdown came days after similar measures were enacted in France and Germany, ahead of several Italian regions becoming “red zones” as stated on the CNN website. Just as we responded early in March, it is time again to call on you, Mr President, to lead us into the future.

It is still filled with more uncertainty – a trait of 2020 that we have become accustomed to – but we have survived. We have shown tenacity and became a beacon of hope to many of our neighbouring countries.

Let us continue to stay safe, stay positive and stay optimistic that the little contribution by each one of us to combat the Coronavirus will set us on a new growth path in 2021. May this allow us to emerge victorious and enable us to experience the full and equal enjoyment of rights and freedoms as contemplated in the Constitution in all respects. 



Raven Benny has been a C5, 6 and 7 quadriplegic since 2000. He is married and has five children, is mad about wheelchair rugby and represented South Africa in 2003 and 2005. He relocated from Cape Town to Durban, where he was appointed the Chief Operating Officer (COO) of QASA from August 1, 2019. email: coo@qasa.co.za.



ADRENALINE JUNKIES TAKE TO THE SKY

FROM FLIPS IN A POWERED PARAGLIDER TO JUMPING FROM A PLANE, THESE WHEELCHAIR USERS BRAVELY TAKE TO THE SKY TO PARTICIPATE IN SOME EXTREME SPORTS

For many, a spinal cord injury is devastating, mostly because of the perception that they will miss out on so much whether it is because of an inaccessible environment, discrimination or their disability. However, the reality is very different.

Many quadriplegics and paraplegics go on to live very happy and exciting lives with a career, romance and even children.

Even those who dream of adventure need not be discouraged. Two brave wheelchair users proved this by trying their hand at some extreme sports.



MAIN PHOTO AND BELOW: Louis Nieuwoudt strapped in on the tandem paramotor trike in which he flew as a passenger.

LEFT (from the left): Louis Nieuwoudt, Anthony Gibson, owner and instructor at Ynot fly flight school for powered paragliders, and Hendrik Theron, the owner and pilot of the powered paraglider.



TAKING TO THE SKY

It started when a friend, Jaco Swanepoel, invited Louis Nieuwoudt to join him on a flight in a two-seater powered paraglider. Louis finally agreed. Equipped with his courage and a mask, Louis was strapped into the vehicle.

"The backseat was a little tight to get into, but once I was strapped in, and the pilot was in his seat, I felt very safe and secure," Louis recalls.

Even before taking flight, he could feel the adrenaline pump in anticipation of the unknown. Louis says: "Hearing the motor start, seeing the chute fill up with air and moving into position, I thought, 'right, here we go.'

"As soon as you are up in the air, it is very relaxing and you have a full view, in all directions, of what is going on around you," he adds.

While it is strange to imagine the mixture of calm and excitement as enjoyable, it is this exact,

inexplicable feeling that Louis believes everyone should experience.

"I would definitely recommend this to others, disabled or able-bodied," he says. The experience was even more enjoyable with the very welcoming community of pilots in attendance to assist.

While the experience was surely unforgettable, Louis is hardly done with adrenaline-fuelled adventure. Next, he would like to try his hand at skydiving – following the path of Jodie Kroone, another adventurer.

DIVING INTO THE CLOUDS

Similar to Louis, Jodie was introduced to an extreme sport on the suggestion of a friend. She had her doubts about skydiving. "Is it even a possibility if you use a wheelchair? How will it work? What about landing," Jodie thought at the time, but she also lived by the motto of trying anything once. The next week her jump was booked with Skydiving Durban in Eston, KwaZulu-Natal.

"I was slightly panicked and unsure how this was going to play out, but I reminded myself that it was a huge opportunity, and I would regret not doing it," Jodie recalls. After an introduction video and a quick wardrobe change, she was ready for her tandem jump – where you are strapped to a professional skydiver.

Jodie was not the first nor the last person to jump with Skydiving Durban. Wesley Quinn Wagner and the team at Skydiving Durban created a programme dubbed "Free fly for Ferdi" to promote adventure among people with disabilities.

The initiative started after Wesley's dear friend, Ferdi, passed away. He was passionate about adventure and an avid skydiver. Through the programme, Wesley hopes to keep Ferdi's zest for life alive by giving others the experience. This message gave Jodie so much more courage.

About 25 minutes later, the plane had climbed 9 000 feet (three kilometres). The team was ready to jump. Experienced skydiver Vernon Kloppers attached himself to Jodie using extra strapping to keep her legs to her chest. Together, they edged towards the door.

"Before I could blink, we were free falling," Jodie remembers. "The free fall lasted about eight seconds before the parachute opened. This was



ABOVE: An overjoyed Jodie Kroone safely back on the ground after her tandem skydive with Vernon Kloppers.


RIGHT (from the left): Jodie Kroone with Wesley Quinn Wagner who suggested she try her hand skydiving.



my favourite part, going from wind and speed to complete silence and floating. I couldn't believe I was soaring through the sky. It was pure freedom."

The landing, rightfully, worried Jodie. Fortunately, it was very smooth. She notes: "Vernon held me as he glided and landed effortlessly. Laughing with excitement and pure adrenalin, I was in disbelief of what I just did. My family came running to greet me and was speechless!"

She thanks the team and everyone involved for helping her tick off a bucket list item, and encourages others to also try their hand at skydiving.

While not everyone would dream up these extreme experiences, it is much easier to imagine a more independent, happier and fulfilled life even after a spinal cord injury. 

ANOTHER FIRST WITH A VIRTUAL AGM




ABOVE (from the left): QASA project coordinator, Zandile Miya, seated next to QASA COO, Raven Benny, during the virtual QASA Annual General Meeting (AGM) in October.

The new decade has brought with it some unexpected challenges as the world struggles to manage the COVID-19 pandemic with South Africans spending most of the year in lockdown. To ensure the safety of its members and staff, QASA has adapted to these new challenges by hosting its first-ever virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM).

On Saturday, October 17, a select few members and staff gathered at the QASA head office while the rest of the attendees dialled in through Zoom – a virtual meeting application. The three-hour meeting included reports from all the regional offices and the QASA COO, Raven Benny.

A short breakaway session allowed all eligible QASA members to vote on the proposed changes to the QASA constitution by voicing their agreement or nodding on screen.

The full Annual General Meeting was recorded and will be made available to the public on the QASA Youtube channel. For more information, keep an eye on the QASA social media pages or contact the organisation at info@qasa.co.za. 


QASA WELCOMES NEW INTERN

Phindile Dlamini is the most recent addition to the QASA team. Joining as an intern and ambassador, she is a quadriplegic member who completed the QASA Work Readiness Programme in March. She will assist with admin functions.

The reserved, well-mannered young lady had the following to say: "I was so grateful to be selected for Work Readiness Programme. It has made a huge difference in my life. Before, I was at home doing nothing and it was starting to cause stress as I'm a very motivated person.

"Even though I now have a disability, I like to keep myself busy with things that will help me grow and move out of my comfort zone. The programme has given me hope. It taught me communication, computer and knowledgeable skills such as business ethics, telephone skills, stress management, teamwork, problem solving and ability to work under pressure."

Of her position at QASA, Phindile says that she would like to see herself grow in the organisation and play an important role in its success while experiencing personal growth.

We wish Phindile all the best and hope her experience as a QASA intern will be enjoyable, full of learning and memories and have a lifelong impact on career growth. 



ABOVE (From the left): QASA intern Phindile Dlamini with QASA Project Coordinator Zandile Miya.

DILEMMA OF DONATIONS

NON-PROFIT ORGANISATIONS OFTEN HAVE THE CHALLENGE OF DECIDING WHEN AND HOW TO GIVE. GEORGE LOUW BRINGS THE QUADPARA ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA (QASA) UNDER THE SPOTLIGHT



Unemployment and poverty are worldwide issues and very much a reality of life for large segments of the South African population. For persons with disability these realities cut closer to the bone and present challenges that require courage and perseverance to overcome. This is why organisations such as QASA exist; to serve as a facilitator that sources funds, expertise, knowledge and skills; and to channel all these resources to where it is needed.

When a need is specific, the process is relatively easy: Powerchairs need batteries. Many powerchair users cannot afford batteries. To assist, the organisation should find a willing donor of batteries; create a checklist of eligibility criteria; and supply them to eligible applicants.

However, when the need is general and greater than the available resources, things become tricky as we have experienced this year with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our government focused on managing the pandemic and the regulations that were implemented caused our already struggling economy to crash.

Many breadwinners lost their jobs, poverty broadened and intensified. Persons with disabilities suffered along with the rest of the population and persons with quadriplegia and paraplegia turned to QASA for help, particularly those that lived in self-help centres.

Their staff required salaries, their infrastructure needed ongoing financing and living expenses needed to be covered. Donor companies donated less or just walked away, unable to contribute as before. So, expenditure did not change but the income dried up.

QASA's initial response was to jump in with support funding to tide them over, but before payments were made, a finger was raised. Only three percent of quadriplegics and paraplegics live in self-help centres. What about the other 97 percent? The problem here was that, although the argument was valid, the other 97 percent were largely not visible.

Very few approached their regional associations or QASA for help. In general, their needs remained unknown and therefore unquantified. But the principle of fairness to all and equal support prevailed and caused the promised support to the self-help centres to be placed on the back burner. So effectively, in the interest of fairness to all, nobody got anything.

Specific individual needs are still being addressed with specifically dedicated funding, but general needs are drowning in a quagmire of rhetoric on what to do and how to go about it. While this is happening, the pool of donors shrinks as businesses try to stay afloat. As a result, QASA had to tighten its own belt to ensure it will survive this difficult time.

So, what to do? How does QASA sustain its own viability and at the same time address the needs of our constituency in a fair and equitable manner? How does QASA determine what to focus our general, unspecified funding on, in order to get the best value per rand spent? The inward focus is obvious; tighten our belts and make do with as little as possible.

The challenge, however, is in managing the massive needs of our constituents: to identify those needs, triage the needs (for QASA support or not); determine and quantify the needs (what exactly is

needed and what will it cost?); and lastly, allocate the resources (can QASA deal with it or must an external resource be found?). Thus, I propose some ground rules:

QASA MUST FOCUS ON ITS REASON FOR BEING

QASA is not there to feed the hungry. This can become a bottomless pit that rapidly drains our reserves. Also, there are hundreds of organisations that already focus on providing food. So, this is where triage kicks in. Identify quads and paras that are going hungry and refer them to organisations in their area that are providing food parcels.

Alternatively, an itemised voucher could be negotiated with a store; including non-perishable foods and household items to a value of say, R500.

The recipient could then receive three or six post-dated vouchers to be redeemed at the chosen store. This ensures that the family gets food and essentials, and not cigarettes and beer.

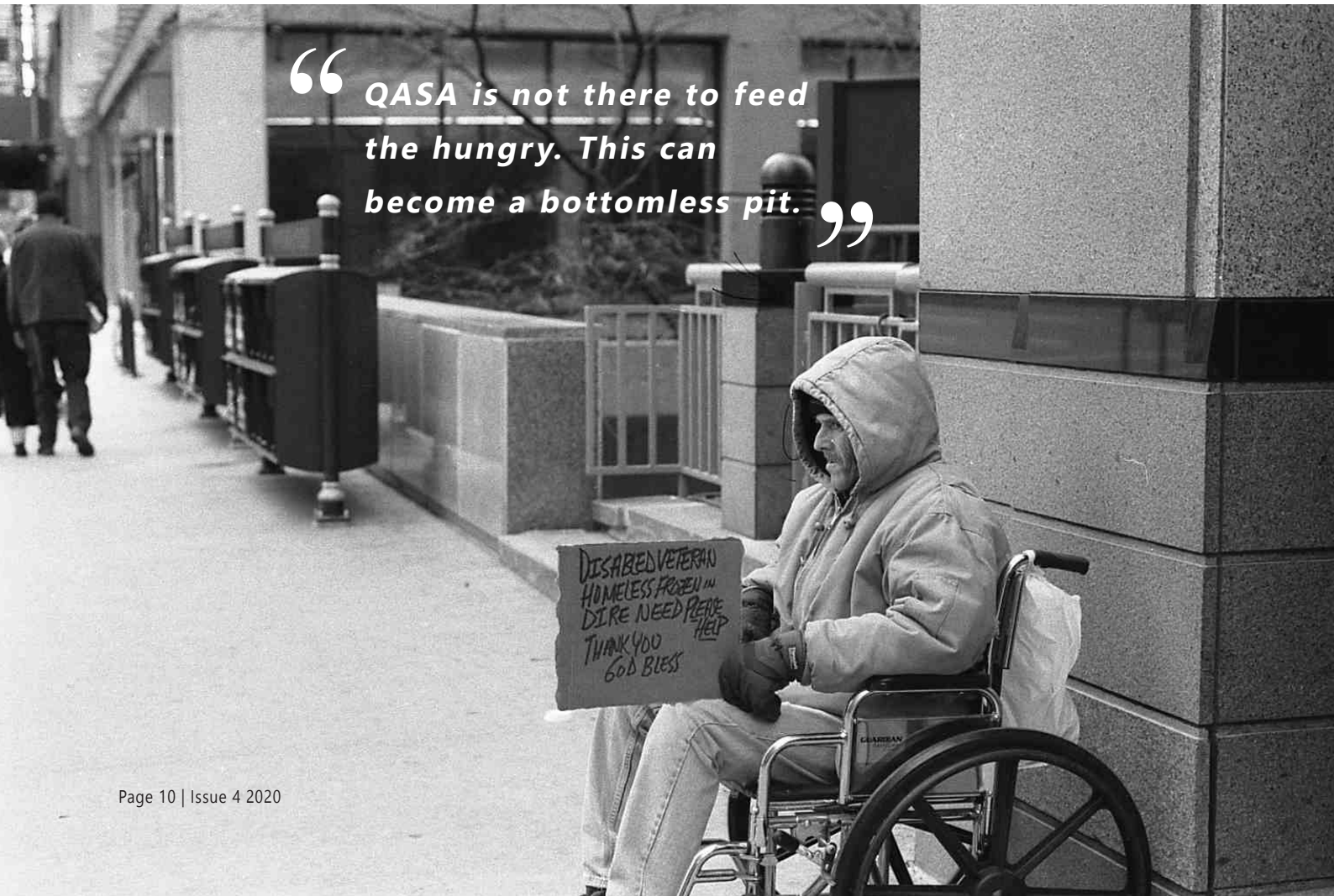
The number of monthly vouchers is determined by the need, with allowance for re-motivated extensions. So, funding must be well structured and dedicated.

QASA FUNDING MUST ADD VALUE

For example, if I have R1 000 per month to donate and I dish it out to 200 recipients at R5 per person, it adds no value to each of the individuals. But, if I decide to support one family in dire need, I will have made a difference for that family.

The same principle holds true for QASA. Don't

“ QASA is not there to feed the hungry. This can become a bottomless pit. ”



donate resources to just delay the inevitable, but rather focus on empowering the receiver to become self-sufficient. For example, skills training rather than financial support. Funding must serve an enabling purpose.

FUNDING MUST HAVE A QUID PRO QUO

For example, tiding a person or even a self-help centre over a difficult period to allow them to find their feet must come with an understanding that funding will only be for a pre-specified period and that the receiver will use the period of reprieve to re-establish themselves. This appears harsh but the interest of the collective QASA constituency must be weighed up against the needs of the individual person or entity.


ADVOCATE, ADVOCATE, ADVOCATE

Actively promote QASA's efforts in using its reserves to support its constituents and challenge donor organisations, existing and new, to follow suit and support QASA in its efforts.

ON THE PRINCIPLE OF FAIRNESS

All QASA members must have an equal opportunity to motivate for assistance, but the granting of assistance must only accommodate actual dire need, based on predetermined need-criteria. Giving to Peter because I gave to Paul,

even though Peter does not need it, is a road to inefficiency and bankruptcy. The fairness lies in the equal opportunity to apply, not in the giving of equal measures.

These ground rules are not cast in stone. They are merely examples on how to channel resources constructively. The better organised and structured QASA's support of its constituents is, the better our chances of securing donor support and the better our chances to survive and fight another day. 

QASA RELIEF FUND

During the height of the national lockdown and COVID-19 pandemic in South Africa, QASA launched its COVID-19 Relief Fund, which aimed to provide financial relief to those most affected.

At the time, QASA COO, Raven Benny stated the reason behind the fund: "QASA is cautious of the effect the national lockdown will have on its members. Many rely solely on the meagre R1 860 per month disability grant from SASSA, while others have lost the change of earning income from not being able to return to work."

The organisation set up a BackaBuddy campaign page to raise money in support of its members.

Read more about the fund here: <https://www.rollinginspiration.co.za/qasa-launches-relief-fund/>.



Ida's Corner is a regular column by George Louw, who qualified as a medical doctor, but, due to a progressing spastic paralysis, chose a career in health administration. The column is named after Ida Hlongwa, who worked as caregiver for Ari Seirlis for 20 years. Her charm, smile, commitment, quality care and sacrifice set the bar incredibly high for the caregiving fraternity. email: yorslo@icloud.com

LEVEL 1 TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

ALTHOUGH INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL IS OPEN, IT IS BY NO MEANS EASIER TO TRAVEL. MANDY LATIMORE TAKES A LOOK AT THE RULES IN PLACE TO PROTECT TRAVELLERS FROM COVID-19

With the president moving the country to Level 1 of the lockdown, there have been conflicting and confusing reports about travel into and out of South Africa. Although the country has opened its borders for international travel, there is still a ban on visitors from countries that are deemed to be "high risk". Tourists from the African continent and other "low risk" areas will be allowed to enter South Africa.

From October 1, international flights to and from South Africa have resumed, under certain restrictions and on a phased basis. Travel from countries that are deemed to be high risk will continue to be restricted, and the list of high-risk countries will remain under review.

The general advice is to avoid non-essential travel, other than to countries that are on the

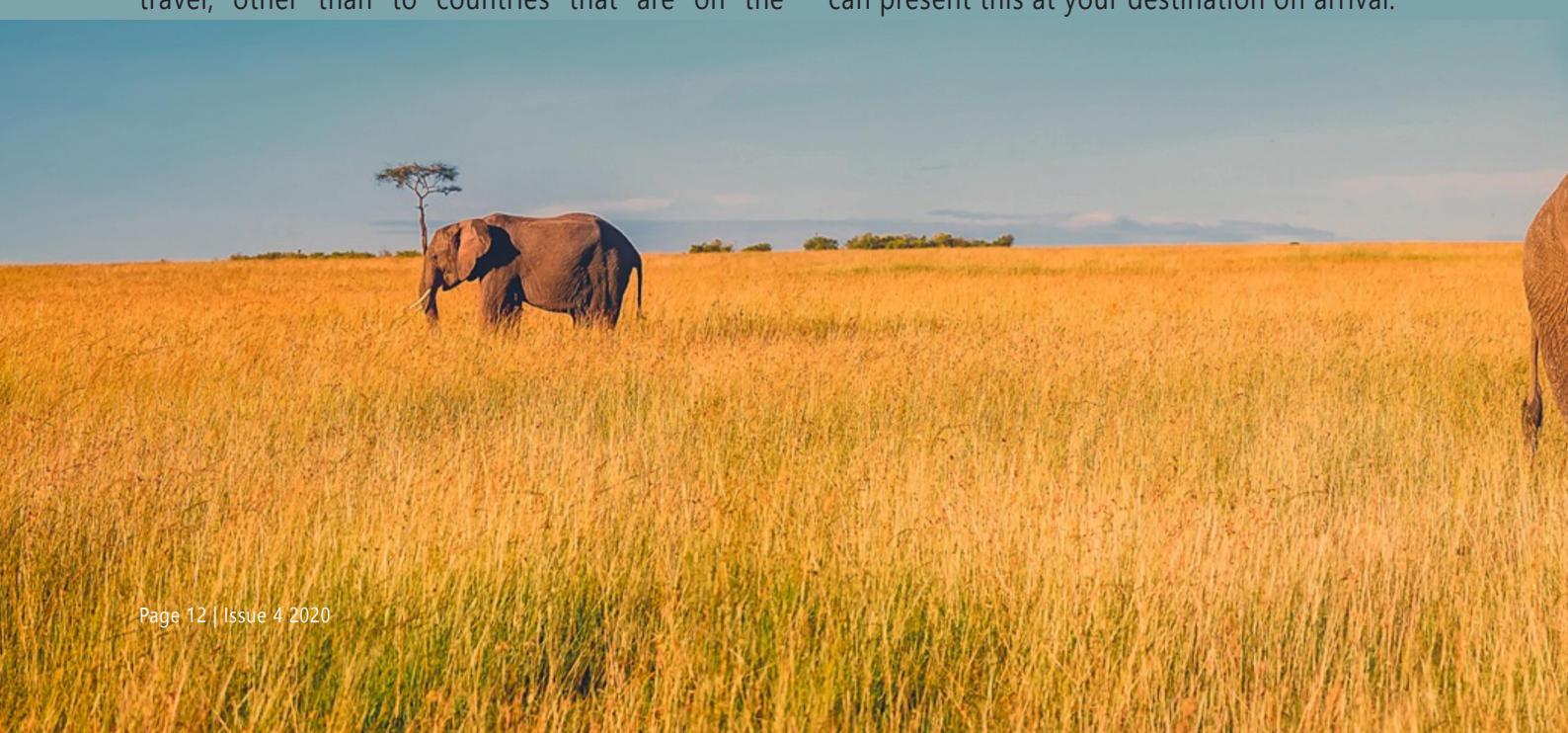
"Green List". Unfortunately, this list is updated on a weekly basis, which makes planning a trip quite difficult. So, unless you must travel for business or an emergency, it is advised to remain in South Africa until there is better clarity. For those who must travel, here is some relevant info:

ON DEPARTURE FROM SOUTH AFRICA

Before you book your trip, check what the incoming requirements are for the country that you are visiting. You may need to be in quarantine for several days on arrival at your own cost.

Check which airlines are flying to your destination as not all airlines are travelling to South Africa.

You will need a negative COVID-19 test result (not older than 72 hours) before leaving so that you can present this at your destination on arrival.



ON ARRIVAL IN SOUTH AFRICA

On arrival, all travellers will need to present a negative COVID-19 test result not older than 72 hours prior to the time of departure. Where a traveller has not done a COVID-19 test prior to their departure, they will be required to remain in mandatory quarantine at their own cost.

All travellers will be screened on arrival and those presenting symptoms will be required to undergo a COVID-19 test. Where necessary, travellers will need to enter mandatory quarantine facilities at their own cost.

Travellers will also be required to download the COVID Alert South Africa mobile app. For up-to-date info visit this website: <https://sacoronavirus.co.za/>.

If you are travelling internationally, always remember to purchase comprehensive travel insurance, which must cover medical and extras.

Should you be travelling locally, please remember that there are still general restrictions:

- The hours of curfew apply between midnight and 04h00.

- The sale of alcohol at retail outlets for home consumption is permitted from Monday to Friday between 09h00 and 17h00*.
- Alcohol will be permitted for onsite consumption only in licenced establishments with a strict adherence to the curfew.
- Masks are to be worn in all public places.
- Social distancing of at least a metre is still highly recommended.
- Regular washing and sanitising of hands is required.

With all the confusion, perhaps "local is *lekker*". Maybe it is best to plan breakaways to the wonderful sights and places within our own borders until it is easier, and safe, to travel abroad. If you have travelled and want to share your adventures, please contact me so that we can include them in this column. Contact me at mandy@noveltravel.co.za.

Safe and happy travels! 🇿🇦

*The restrictions on alcohol purchases has been changed. Please visit www.sacoronavirus.co.za for more information.



Mandy Latimore is a consultant in the disability sector in the fields of travel and access. email: mandy@noveltravel.co.za



DEALING WITH THE SHOCK OF AMPUTATION

IT IS TRAUMATIC TO LOSE A LIMB, BUT THERE IS ALSO HOPE.
HEINRICH GRIMSEHL SPEAKS TO A FEW AMPUTEES

Usually, if somebody asks you what is the worst thing that could happen to you, amputation rates among the top three. The idea of giving up part of your body can send shivers down your spine. We cannot downplay the shock of amputation, because yes, it is a traumatic experience that requires intense physical and emotional adjustments.

But, today, I would like to share with you some of the comments from amputees of

all ages that have successfully adjusted and rehabilitated to prosthetic users:

MR KAMINSKY (AGED 75)

"This is just a flesh wound. I cannot run the Comrades anymore, but I can still spend my retirement comfortably hopping between different game lodges."

MR BOREGO (AGED 48)

"During the day, I mostly forget that I am wearing a prosthesis. If I run around the

factory floor all day long, I am quite tired in the evening, but the extra effort and exercise puts me to sleep quickly."

MRS HERBST (AGED 49)

"Amputation was the best decision. I do not have to worry about my painful diabetic smelly foot ulcer anymore and if the prosthetic foot eventually packs up, I will just buy and bolt on a new one. After the amputation, I can also wear my pretty shoes again."

MR LOXTON (AGED 44)

"No problems, thank you. In the morning, I put a shoe on my left foot and the prosthesis on my right limb and off I go. Dressing the normal side is more difficult, because I have to change the dirty sock every day!"

MR STROUT (AGED 27)

"If I knew using prosthesis was this easy,

I would have amputated a long time ago instead of battling for years with a painful infection, various operations and fractures that did not unite."

MRS BRITS (AGED 42)


"Now we can plan our December holiday!" she said after receiving her final prosthesis in July.

MR DUDULA (AGED 55)

"The problem was in my head. When I sorted out my head, the prosthesis was very easy."

MRS LANGA (AGED 72)

"I thought I was going to die, but now I want to live!"

So, if you are faced with amputation, please take the above into consideration and realise that there is hope and possibly a new life on the other side. Your life is not over yet! 



Heinrich Grimsehl is a prosthetist in private practice and a member of the South African Orthotic and Prosthetic Association (SAOPA). email: info@hgprosthetics.co.za



SEARCHING FOR A CURE

MANY ORGANISATIONS ARE DEDICATED TO FINDING A CURE FOR SPINAL CORD INJURIES. WE TAKE A LOOK AT THE PROGRESS MADE WITH MANY PROJECTS FUNDED BY THE WINGS FOR LIFE FUND

Spinal cord injuries are tricky. It is very difficult to predict how the body will react, what functions will be affected and what can be recovered. Why? Because of the nerve system that runs in the spinal cord. Your brain communicates with the rest of the body through signals that are sent along the nerve system.

When injured, it is difficult to know what signals will no longer be delivered or what can be recovered. An injury could result in a loss of limb movement or feeling, but it can also impact the individual's bladder and bowel function, blood pressure and body temperature regulation to name a few.

Two people, injured at the same point in the spine, could experience completely different body function losses. However, both would benefit from recovering the nerve system so that the brain can communicate with the body (and vice versa).

Although many organisations are dedicated to finding a cure, the Wings for Life Foundation has invested in up to 28 projects. Better known for its annual Wings for Life World Run that raises funds for the various research projects, it has invested in several projects that specifically look for ways to recover the nerve system.

IMPLANTED SOLUTIONS

The Go-2 implantable system, designed by GTX

medical, for example, uses Targeted Epidural Spinal Stimulation (TESS) therapy to promote the recovery of motor function and neurological control in adults with spinal cord injuries.


This is done by surgically placing a paddle lead with 16 electrodes on the spine, in the area that controls leg movement. The system thus reconnects the brain with the leg muscles.

BUILDING A BRIDGE

In another project, researchers are attempting to build a bridge between damaged nerves. Signals in the nervous system are sent between neurons with the help of synapses. When a spine is damaged, these synapses are disrupted.

Scientists created a synthetic synaptic organizer, dubbed CPTX, which mimics the protein that links sending and receiving neurons. During preclinical experiments, it was found that CPTX returned motor function for between seven and eight weeks.

While many of the research projects show promise, all are far from a reliable, safe and guaranteed cure. If you would like to learn more about the Foundation and the various research projects its supports, you can visit the website at www.wingsforlife.com.

You can also assist by donating to or participating in the Wings for Life World Run. Stay tuned for updates on the event. 

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SCORING BIG WITH LEARNERSHIPS

COMPANIES AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CAN GREATLY BENEFIT FROM LEARNERSHIPS AS RUSTIM ARIEFDIEN POINTS OUT

Of all the elements that comprise the BBBEE Scorecard, skills development is one of the more expensive as many companies view it as an expense rather than an investment. Businesses are required to spend 3,5 percent of their payroll on developing the skills of employees to gain six points on their BBBEE scorecard.

If 0,3 percent is spent on disability skills development, they earn four points from a possible total of 25 points in the category. These disability points are probably the most sought-after disability related BBBEE points. If they do learnerships, apprenticeships and/or internships they can earn an additional six points.

Thus, some companies focus mainly on learnerships where they can earn the above mentioned 16 points plus an additional five points when the learner is absorbed permanently into the company after the learnership. This represents 21 of the total 25 points with the other four points allocated for bursaries.

In addition to the BBBEE Scorecard points, companies can benefit from the employee tax incentive and tax

allowances from SARS, as well as discretionary grant funding from their respective Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs). In many cases the cost of a disability learnership project is covered by their SETAs and the learnership then becomes a tool towards the permanent employment of persons with disabilities.

Implementing learnerships could cost about R80 000 to employers, but they are able to recover about R120 000 back in grants and tax breaks for learners with disabilities. This is a good business case and more and more persons with disabilities are benefiting.

So, how does a person with a disability, the aspiring employee or entrepreneur, and disability organisations take advantage of these BBBEE Skills Development opportunity. Companies advertise quite widely on social media and some communicate directly with organisations in the disability field.

Companies look for primarily a Grade 9, but very often Grade 12. It is dependent on the learnership. The candidate learner would need to provide a copy of their ID, a certificate from a medical practitioner to prove their disability, and the latest certificate of their education or schooling.

The learnership is typically a 12-month qualification made up of about 30 percent theoretical components and 70 percent practical experience in the workplace. At the end of the qualification, the learner would have acquired the certificate for that particular qualification and a valuable 12 months' work experience.

“ *Many companies view skills development as an expense rather than an investment.* ”

The learner can then be employed or seek other learnership opportunities to enhance their skills level and add to their work experience.

When starting a learnership, it is imperative that the learner disclose their disability fully so that they can receive the appropriate reasonable accommodation. Transport is often a challenge and finding the right transport solution is imperative before signing up for a learnership. Being absent, like with being employed, can lead to dismissal and a valuable opportunity lost as another person with a disability could have had the benefit. [15](#)



Rustim Ariefdien is a disability expert extraordinaire who assists businesses to “let the Ability of disAbility enAble their profitAbility” through BBBEE, skills development, employment equity and socio-economic development. His purpose is the economic empowerment of persons with disability in Africa. As a person with a disability himself, he has extensive experience in the development and empowerment of persons with disability.

WRITE A JOB SECURING CV

THERE ARE SOME IMPORTANT DOS AND DON'TS WHEN WRITING YOUR CV THAT COULD BE THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING INVITED FOR AN INTERVIEW OR BEING OVERLOOKED

While the interview can be the most nerve-racking aspect of applying for a job, the Curriculum Vitae (CV) is arguably the most important. A well-written and beautifully designed CV secures interviews. Similarly, spelling errors and an incohesive layout could make an employer overlook you despite your qualifications. Fortunately, there are many resources online that can assist. Here are a few of the most important aspects of a good CV:

KEEP IT SHORT

It is very tempting to write pages on pages crammed full of information on your experience and skills but it won't do you any favours. Rather, keep your CV to one or two pages. If the job application requires a motivation letter (a description of why you would be an ideal candidate for the position), you can add an additional page.


KEEP IT SIMPLE

Since you want to keep the CV short, prioritise the most important information. The best way to decide what is important, is by looking at the position description or requirements.

If, for example, the candidate should have experience with Microsoft Office, you can mention the short course you took on the programme. If a previous job or course doesn't apply to the position, you can mention it during the interview instead of listing it on your CV.

KEEP IT CLEAN

It is important to keep the design of your CV simple. It can be very daunting for a potential employer to read entire paragraphs. Instead, list your skills, previous employment and personality traits that suit the position in bullet point format.

In summary, keep it short, simple and clean to grab the attention of a potential employer. 

REGAINING SELF CONFIDENCE

WITH A VISION TO ENABLE THEIR MEMBERS TO LIVE THEIR LIVES TO THEIR FULL POTENTIAL, QASA'S WORK READINESS PROGRAMME IS PROVIDING PARTICIPANTS WITH KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND THE SELF-CONFIDENCE TO ENTER THE FORMAL WORLD OF WORK

I had given up on a lot of things, including myself, says Nokozola Rantso about her life before she participated in the QASA Work Readiness Programme, which assists members in preparing for the world of work through a series of courses. Skills taught in the programme ranges from basic computer skills to soft skills like professional behaviour in the workplace.

After a two-month course, candidates of the programme are placed in internships with the hope that this would lead to permanent employment. For many, like Nokozola, this was the case.

"I'm extremely grateful to the programme as it has helped me in a lot of ways," she says. "It opened doors for me as I was acquainted with a lot of people. I felt at home; that I belonged. The people showed love and support, which meant a lot."

Through the programme, Nokozola regained the self-confidence to pursue a career. She went to several interviews and finally found employment with Sitwell Technologies. In addition to the confidence to find employment, Nokozola is motivated to work hard with dedication and determination following her time in the programme.


"It is my wish that a lot of people will get to know



ABOVE: Nokozola Rantso regained her confidence while participating in the QASA Work Readiness Programme and is now employed with Sitwell Technologies.

about QASA so that they can also get a chance to achieve the same if not more," she concludes.

To accommodate more members from across the country, while also ensuring the safety of members and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Work Readiness Programme is now online. Members are provided with the hard- and software to complete the programme.

Applications for the programme is open year-round. For all enquiries or to apply, contact QASA at projectcoordinator@qasa.co.za. 



BEHIND THE MASK

WHILE MASKS ARE AN ABSOLUTE MUST FOR PROTECTING AGAINST COVID-19, THEY CAN CAUSE OR AGGRAVATE ACNE. JOY DUFFIELD SHARES SOME TIPS ON PROTECTING YOUR SKIN

Photographed: QASA intern Phindile Dlamini.

Photographer: Caregiver Franco Maziya.

Maskne's is the new buzzword in the beauty industry. I am sure most of us have ended up with a spot or two on our face during puberty. And then there are others who have lived with full-blown acne, which is not only unsightly, but can be quite painful.

Either way, we felt as though everybody's focus was on nothing but the pimples. All we wanted to do was to hide behind a mask. Little did we know that such a mask would become a reality to protect us from a deadly virus! Unfortunately, the same mask that protects us from the deadly Coronavirus has brought along some complications with the skin.

WHAT IS MASKNE?

Most acne is caused by bacteria on the skin. With Maskne, this is exacerbated by the prolonged use of masks during which the skin is unable to "breathe". The skin becomes warm and moist, which creates a wonderful breeding ground for bacteria. The constant friction of the mask while talking also irritates the skin to cause various forms of dermatitis with dry, itchy and sometimes raw areas.

HOW TO AVOID IT

We cannot escape the need to wear a mask, but we can ensure that our skin is kept clean and is correctly moisturised before and after wearing

a mask. Avoid reaching for the closest bottle of sanitiser to deal with your skin outbreaks. The alcohol will dehydrate the skin's natural protective barrier!


At the end of the day, make use of a gentle cleanser to remove the build-up of sweat, dirt and bacteria and follow with a suitable moisturiser for your skin. Making use of a gentle fragrance-free protective moisturiser is a must to prevent the dry irritated skin.



Feel free to seek professional advice from a qualified facial therapist to guide you in the right direction for the correct skin care for your skin type. Generally, salons will provide this consultation free of charge.

“ *We wash our underwear daily, so do not forget to apply the same hygiene rule to your face mask.* ”

Selecting the correct fabric mask can also help in the prevention of skin problems. Choose 100-percent cotton or silk masks as your first choice. As a hygiene rule we wash our underwear daily, so do not forget to apply the same hygiene rule to your face mask.

We cannot always hide behind a mask, so my advice to you is give your skin a few minutes of attention each day to avoid chronic eczema or post acne scarring. 



Joy Duffield is a C4 - C5 quadriplegic since 2005. Married with no children, she founded the Beauty Academy International in 2002. She was also a finalist in the entrepreneur category for the Business Woman Association (BWA) in 2015.

EMOTIONAL IMPACT OF SCI ON SEXUALITY

THE LOSS OF SENSATION THAT OFTEN COMES
WITH A SPINAL CORD INJURY (SCI), CAN
LEAD TO LESS ENJOYABLE SEX. FORTUNATELY,
BUILDING AN EMOTIONAL CONNECTION CAN
BE THE REMEDY

Most of sexual rehabilitation following an SCI focuses on physical changes and alternatives, especially for males. The physical changes that people with SCI's experience are more tangible and, therefore, often the primary area of concern for them.

While addressing the physical concerns will assist with some areas of sexuality (such as being able to get and maintain an erection and ejaculation), this doesn't guarantee a satisfying sexual experience or relationship.

The emotional component of sex refers to feelings of intimacy and closeness with your partner. These aspects of a relationship are often neglected in evaluating the experience of sexual encounters.

According to the stereotype, men tend to place more emphasis on the physical aspects of sex while women often focus more on the emotional parts. Although this is not the case for everyone, it definitely accounts for a lot of disappointment and disconnect in romantic relationships.

According to the latest research on the emotional impacts of SCI on sexuality, some people have reported that with the decrease in sensation and physical function, they were "forced" to acknowledge the emotional components more. Suffering an SCI necessitates a redefinition of what is important in sexual relationships.


People who place the physical act of having sex in the centre of their evaluation of the relationship

often become despondent when this is the component that is most affected by their injury. They also struggle to adapt to the challenges that an SCI brings, especially to intimacy.

With an SCI comes the inevitable challenge of relearning how to do activities, often with a different approach. The same is true for sex and intimacy. A recent study found that one of the most important predictors of satisfaction in sexual relationships following an SCI is recognising and prioritising the emotional components.

The participants reported that they experienced significantly higher fulfilment in their relationships when they placed emotional connection and intimacy first (both on an emotional and physical level). Paradoxically, when you primarily focus on the physical aspects, it is often less enjoyable.

When you prioritise the emotional aspects, the physical experience of sex is enhanced with the emotional experience. This is not just the case in relationships where someone has an SCI but has been found to be equally true in other types of romantic relationships.

The core message from this research is that when it comes to sex, the journey makes the destination more enjoyable. Practically, this means that communication, foreplay, and other sexual acts apart from penetrative sex have much more impact on our experiences of sexuality than we often give it credit. 



Dr Danie Breedt is a passionate scholar-practitioner in the field of psychology. He divides his time between training, research and clinical practice. Danie works from an integrative interactional approach in psychotherapy, dealing with a wide range of emotional difficulties and sexual rehabilitation for patients with disabilities. He is the co-owner of Charis Psychological Services, a psychology practice that specialises in physical rehabilitation across South Africa.

A NEW NORMAL



AS SOUTH AFRICA STARTS TO EMERGE FROM LOCKDOWN, THE SPORTING WORLD RETURNS TO A NEW NORMAL. BUT WHAT WILL THIS ENTAIL?

LEON FLEISER REFLECTS

My last column was at the start of this horrible pandemic. The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games made history by being postponed for a year. All sporting competitions and most events came to a grinding halt as South Africa went into a gruelling five-month lockdown.

The athletes were hit very hard by this lockdown; funds dried up and they had no access to training. This caused severe stress on all athletes and coaches. It was and still is not good. Our sporting people are struggling big time!

The Department of Sports, Arts and Culture made


some funding available for COVID relief and I was privileged enough to be placed on the adjudication panel. Some of our elite para athletes and coaches did manage to receive some funding through this avenue and we need to thank the minister and his department officials for assisting.

We are slowly going back to normal in the sporting world with the return to training and matches, however, still no travelling internationally for our para sport heroes. We hope that the international season next year will help them qualify and prepare for the Tokyo Games.

For now, though, we just need to be behind them and cheer them on as it has probably been the worst time in their athlete careers and they really need us.

Please be on the lookout for their social media posts and back them and cheer them and support them, it will make a huge difference to them knowing we behind them through thick and thin.

A big shout out to Wheelchair basketball South Africa and their Partners especially SuperSport for hosting the 23rd SuperSport Series from 21 to 25 October 2020 at the Vodacom Mandeville Indoor Centre. Congratulations to all teams that participated and well done to the Diesel Electric Eagles for winning the competition.

Thanks all and hopefully at the next issue we can celebrate more athletic achievements by our Paralympic Heroes. 



Leon Fleiser has been involved with sport in the disability sector since 1992 when he started playing wheelchair basketball. He captained the national team to the Sydney Paralympic Games and the 2002 World Championships. He started working for Disability Sport South Africa in 2001 as a Coordinator for High Performance. It merged into SASCOC in 2005 and he is now the Manager for Team Preparation and Academy Systems. He has delivered Team South Africa to numerous Olympic, Paralympic, Commonwealth and African Games. email: leonf@sascoc.co.za

SUCCESS WITH FIRST WEBINAR




ABOVE: QASA COO and *Rolling Inspiration* managing editor, Raven Benny, discussing his article on Black Lives Matter (which was featured in the third issue of *Rolling Inspiration*) during the first-ever *Rolling Inspiration* webinar.

On Friday, 23 October, *Rolling Inspiration* hosted its first webinar during which readers could engage with the *Rolling Inspiration* team of disability experts who write for the publication.

With topics ranging from health and beauty to employment and travel, the full-day webinar consisted of ten sessions with 15-minute breaks in between.


The contributors spoke about the articles that they wrote for the third issue of *Rolling Inspiration* (available now) and answered some important questions from the readers.

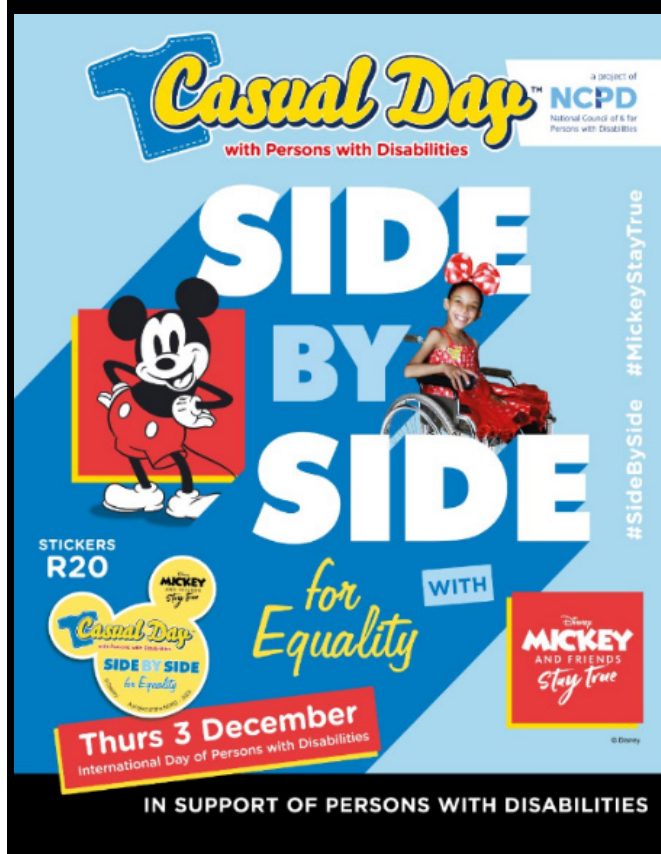
All the sessions will be uploaded to the *Rolling Inspiration* Youtube channel (which can be found here: <https://youtu.be/IJ4urSOq8c4>) in the coming weeks and shared to the *Rolling Inspiration* social media pages. 

CASUAL DAY RETURNS IN DECEMBER

The annual Casual Day event will return on the International Day for Persons with Disabilities, December 3. Originally held in September, the Casual Day is the flagship awareness and fundraising project for the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD). Proceeds from the R20 Casual Day stickers go towards supporting people with disabilities.

This year, the theme is "Side by Side for Equality". The event will run alongside the Disney's Mickey and Friends #StayTrue campaign. Participants are encouraged to embrace polka dots and channel their inner Mickey or Minnie Mouse on December 3.

Stickers for the event can be purchased from QASA. To enquire, phone 031767 0348 or e-mail QASA at info@qasa.co.za. 



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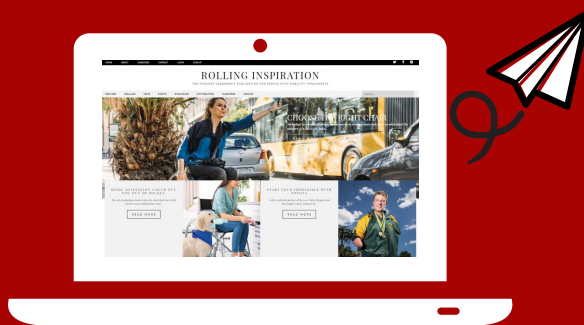
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