ROLLING INSPIRATION

ISSUE 3 2022

The leading magazine for people with mobility impairments

FINDING PURPOSE

Relearning to draw

MUSIC AND ART

Their role in rehabilitation

SPARE PROSTHESIS

The benefit for amputees

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IDA'S CORNER

MOBILITY IMPAIRED FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

A lack of access is frustrating, but a friendly community and willingness to ask for help can make a difference. **GEORGE LOUW** shares

Much has been written about the poor structural compliance of public spaces and buildings (including even hospitals) to the needs of the mobility impaired. Possibly the three most talked-about structural deficits that are absent or inadequate are parking bays, absent or poorly designed access to buildings or public spaces as well as inaccessible accommodation such as hotels, lodges, and Bed and Breakfast accommodation.

Ari Seirlis eloquently addressed these issues in the first two editions of *Rolling Inspiration* for 2022. If the designers and owners of public spaces, buildings and places of accommodation would just realise that the population at large are ageing into their eighties, and even nineties. If they reailse that the accessibility and accommodation needs of the elderly and the frail are very similar to that of the mobility-impaired, they may become more accommodating, because they too will one day benefit from improved accessibility. However, there is another side to the mobility-impaired coin. A side that is far more positive. We have an exceptionally mobility-impaired-friendly community, if we have the boldness, the self-assurance and the humbleness to ask. Put our egos in our pockets and simply ask…

In my twenty years as a wheelchair user, I have never been denied when I ask for assistance. In fact, by asking, we make people aware that we are intelligent, fellow human beings with needs. If we specify our needs, people help. But, if we keep quiet, people think we are coping and seldom offer unless the need is obvious, such as a long ramp in a shopping centre. Then, people don't really ask. They just say, "Let me give you a hand", and push you up the ramp. A smile and a fist-bump is thanks enough.

I learned to ask from a close friend. He once said to me: "I can see you are coping, but also that you are struggling. I want to help you, but I am unsure of how. I am also not sure if I will impose on your independence. Please talk to me. Tell me how I can help." Said with compassion and love. This made me realise that my efforts to get along independently were ego-driven and arrogant. With this attitude, I built a wall around myself that isolated me from other people, even friends and family. However, when I realised that independence is just a figment of imagination in the minds of teenagers and that, in reality, we are all interdependent, no matter how able we are in body or mind, I discovered community.

I realised that if I want to be a part of a community, I should open myself to the empathy and compassion of those who cross my path. This is how friendships are forged, how respect is earned, and how strangers have the candour to say: "You are an inspiration to me." Probably the most momentous example of community happened to me in Cresta Shopping Centre. I was hurriedly rolling along when I noticed a woman with a beautiful young Dalmatian on a leash. When the dog spotted me, she dragged her owner across to me, sat down in front of me, placed her front paws on my legs and her head in my lap. She stayed like that for a minute or so till her owner gently pulled her away. The experience was heart rendering and uplifting, not just for me, but also to all who witnessed it. It will remain with me for the rest of my life.

But, let's look at how accepting assistance has helped me overcome structural obstacles to accessibility. My car is beyond its five year service plan, so I started making use of a nearby Bosch Service Centre. Access to reception is up a flight of about 10 stairs. Instead of throwing my toys out of my cot when I first went there, I parked in front of reception, phoned them and explained my situation.

Their response was that I shouldn't worry and that they'll send someone to the car. A gentleman came down, took my details, retrieved my wheelchair from the back of my car and helped me transfer to my wife's car. In the afternoon when I came to fetch the car, the same routine was repeated. He placed the chair in my car and the card machine was brought to the car so that I could make the payment. Now, after three years with them, they know the routine so well that when they see me arrive, they are ready to do it all again.

I recently wanted to sell my Karet trailer to my daughter, but the registration document was lost. I made an appointment to apply for a duplicate document and explained my situation to the gentleman who took my call. "Not to worry," he said. "Give me your details and we'll sort you out."

I pitch up at the entrance gate and a large security officer approached. "We are expecting you, please follow me," the security officer said. He took me away from the parking area, along a winding private road, to the entrance of the licencing department. I asked him to please lift my wheelchair from the back of my car, but he told me that it wasn't necessary.

He instructed me to remain seated in my car and disappeared into the building. Within a minute he returned with a lady who took my application papers, processed them and brought me a receipt to collect my duplicate document in two weeks. When I came to pick up the documents, I had to go into the offices, but a friendly policeman assisted me there and back. In both instances, access was compromised, but people made the difference.

So, it is wherever I go. At the shops, the car guards know me and I tip them because that is how they make a living. At the gym, the instructors know the routine. I have their cell numbers to call when I arrive. If I park where there are no car guards, I wait until someone passes. Then, I ask them to help me, which they are always happy to do. In all instances, we strike up a conversation and able-bodied people learn that persons with disabilities are also a part of community and that we too contribute to society.

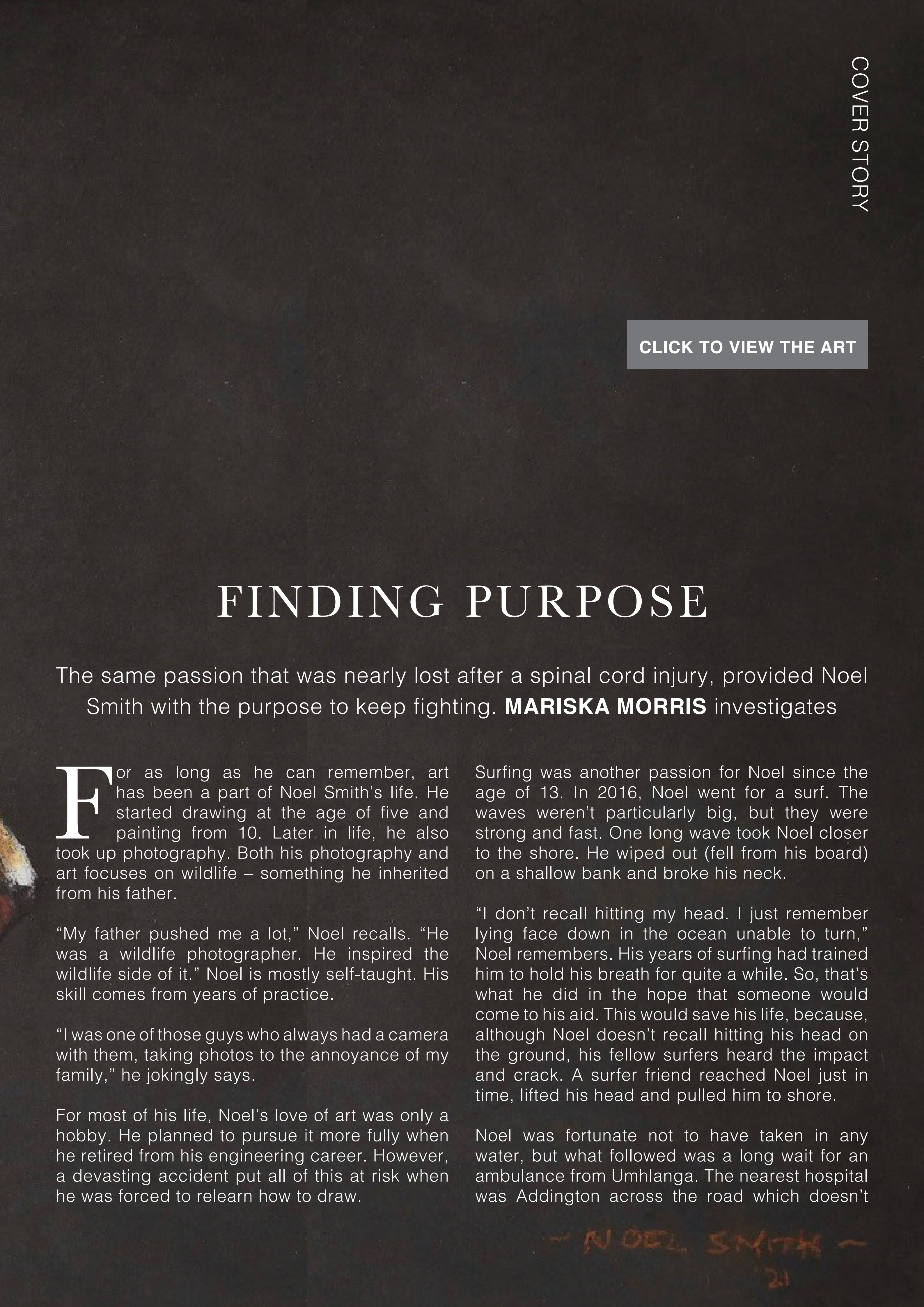
A few years ago, my wife and I visited our son who, at that time, was living in Fishhoek. He wanted to take me to a popular pub in Noordhoek with a deck overlooking the bay. But, he forgot that there were four steps between the entrance and the deck. "Not to worry," said the waiter who received us. He called two of his mates and they carried me up the stairs – chair and all – to the cheers and laughter of the customers, my son and myself. The view was beautiful and the craft beer tasted great. My son and I shared a special afternoon.

Perhaps just a last story. In the last years before retiring, when arriving at work I parked my car in the basement. The person who parked next to me and, more often than not, arrived at the same time, was a man with short stature who walked with callipers and crutches. We shared a lift up to the office and he always made a point of getting out of the lift ahead of me as he took great pride in opening the door to the office space for me. We never became real friends, but this was our moment together. One day I managed to sneak ahead of him and with some difficulty I opened the door for him. He thought it was a huge joke and we both burst out laughing.

So, the message is: By all means advocate for structural changes and accessibility, but drop the sense of entitlement. Society does not owe us anything just because we are mobility impaired. Particularly so if our impairment was caused by our own negligence or stupidity. Even if we were born with an impairment, that is not the fault of society. Sounding off demands with a sense of entitlement just rub people up the wrong way and raises barriers. Integrating into communities by contributing and engaging with others will get us much further than abrasive accusations and demands. R

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

MAIN PHOTO: The latest drawing completed by Noël Smith.



CLICK TO VIEW THE ART

FINDING PURPOSE

The same passion that was nearly lost after a spinal cord injury, provided Noel Smith with the purpose to keep fighting. **MARISKA MORRIS** investigates

For as long as he can remember, art has been a part of Noel Smith's life. He started drawing at the age of five and painting from 10. Later in life, he also took up photography. Both his photography and art focuses on wildlife – something he inherited from his father.

"My father pushed me a lot," Noel recalls. "He was a wildlife photographer. He inspired the wildlife side of it." Noel is mostly self-taught. His skill comes from years of practice.

"I was one of those guys who always had a camera with them, taking photos to the annoyance of my family," he jokingly says.

For most of his life, Noel's love of art was only a hobby. He planned to pursue it more fully when he retired from his engineering career. However, a devasting accident put all of this at risk when he was forced to relearn how to draw.

Surfing was another passion for Noel since the age of 13. In 2016, Noel went for a surf. The waves weren't particularly big, but they were strong and fast. One long wave took Noel closer to the shore. He wiped out (fell from his board) on a shallow bank and broke his neck.

"I don't recall hitting my head. I just remember lying face down in the ocean unable to turn," Noel remembers. His years of surfing had trained him to hold his breath for quite a while. So, that's what he did in the hope that someone would come to his aid. This would save his life, because, although Noel doesn't recall hitting his head on the ground, his fellow surfers heard the impact and crack. A surfer friend reached Noel just in time, lifted his head and pulled him to shore.

Noel was fortunate not to have taken in any water, but what followed was a long wait for an ambulance from Umhlanga. The nearest hospital was Addington across the road which doesn't have a trauma unit. So, Noel had to wait. Thereafter, he spent five weeks in intensive care followed by three and a half months in hospital for rehabilitation.

The injury to his neck resulted in Noel being an incomplete quadriplegic. Aside from having to get used to the physical changes to his body, he had to come to terms with how his life plan was altered.

"I was looking forward to retirement in a few years and it was almost taken away," Noel says. He would now have to spend his retirement exercising to regain as much function of his body as possible and relearn his passions.

First, Noel would have to relearn how to draw. He started with a very rudimentary hand splint that assisted with gripping the pens and pencils. While he had always been right-handed, Noel quickly discovered that his right hand was now weaker than his left hand.

"I drew with my right hand. After the accident, I drew using a splint, but my right hand is actually the weaker of the two. I had to learn to draw with my left," he recalls. Now, he uses his left to do most of the drawing. While he still can't move in all the desired directions, he can do much more with his left hand.

Secondly, Noel had to find a medium that would accommodate his limited movements. Oil paint was his preferred medium for many years, but proved challenging when Noel returned to art. Oil-based paint needs to be cleaned using turpentine, which was no longer possible.

So, Noel turned to watercolours, but found it tricky. While he would still like to trial gouache, he uses pastel pencils for the time being. Noel also makes use of a tilt table to reach the artwork more easily. It takes him much longer to complete his artwork as he can only work for about two hours at a time. An A3 drawing takes roughly 25 hours.

Although a challenge, returning to art has proven very therapeutic, as Noel explains: "[After an accident], you ask yourself what is your purpose in life. You need to have goals, something to contribute, a purpose. Art and completing a piece gives me such a sense of accomplishment."

"Find something to concentrate on, something that you love, or you could easily fall into depression. Work on it," he advises. This purpose of creating art also kept Noel motivated to do the exercises that would improve his hand dexterity.

RIGHT: Noel Smith in his studio with his latest artwork.
BELOW: The first drawing that Noel attempted after his accident.
BOTTOM RIGHT: Noel uses a tilt table to draw.

He also continues to see his physical therapists to help him stay motivated. He urges others: "Keep up occupational and physical therapy or it might be easy to slip back and do nothing."

He adds that it is worthwhile pursuing even the smallest flicker of improvement. Years later, there are parts of Noel's body that have recovered somewhat after being completely immobile at the start of his rehabilitation and continue to grow stronger.

While it has been emotionally hard for Noel's wife to adjust to his disability, it is her support, and that of the rest of his family and friends that helped Noel through his recovery. They visited him frequently while he was rehabilitating and showed pride in his achievements. Noel also urges people to try to remain positive: "No good comes from being negative. Always keep trying."

His dedication over the past six years has made it possible for Noel to once again create beautiful art. In fact, several of his photos and artworks have recently been purchased for a new hotel in Zambia!

He recently redeveloped his website, re-edited some of his photos and selling them along with his artwork. He has also been documenting his recovery on the website blog. You can read more about his journey and view his art at www.noelsmith.co.za.

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MUSIC AND ART IN REHABILITATION

Both music and art can greatly assist patients during their rehabilitation process, as **DANIELLA WINER** explains

For centuries, music and art have been a source of universal joy and interest. For some, it provides a form of income, while for others it is a place of comfort or relaxation. Music and art are also reliable therapeutic modalities in the rehabilitation of physical, cognitive and emotional disability or dysfunction.

When individuals are faced with a sudden or gradual illness or disability they can find themselves regularly needing to adjust to a variety of changing emotions. In these cases, it is common for someone's mood and internal drive to be negatively affected. They may need help moving through the process of healing. When asked why she enjoyed incorporating art and music into her therapy, one patient explained that it helps her relax, live in the moment, and forget about her current worries, helping her to focus more on the therapy session.

Engaging in these forms of leisure in order to achieve therapeutic outcomes is a fun and stress-free modality, which allows enjoyment alongside improvement. Furthermore, engaging in these hobbies encourages constructive and purposeful use of free time which helps maintain quality of life.

Using musical instruments or producing art are also natural ways of encouraging active use of affected limbs. Take the drums for example. This requires someone to use their legs to balance the instrument, while using their arms to bang on the surface. This encourages spontaneous and active use of the legs and arms within a fun activity, which is often much more motivating and natural than a more rigid and precise exercise regime.

Another example is where those who struggle to use one side of their bodies, such as stroke survivors, can be encouraged to use their affected arm to stabilise the paper while using their unaffected hand to draw, paint or colour. This facilitates improved awareness of the affected side (which has often lost sensation), and helps the brain more naturally recall that the limb exists and is important. It also assists with visual scanning, a necessary skill for someone who has lost vision on one side following their stroke.

In addition to being a form of enjoyment for many, music often makes people want to dance! Dance encourages gross motor movement, which in turn stimulates movement in weak arms and legs. Dance is also a great form of exercise, which gets the heart rate up and the blood flowing. It allows people to work on their endurance and stamina. Additionally, the beauty of dance is that it can be done in any position. No matter if you're standing, using a wheelchair, or even lying down, movement is possible and encouraged.

For some, participation in music includes singing, which is on its own an effective form of therapy. In some conditions, such as higher spinal cord injuries, brain injuries, or strokes, breath support can be affected. Partaking in singing is an enjoyable way of strengthening intercostal muscles, the diaphragm and the lungs, all of which are necessary for effective breathing.

Conditions such as aphasia or verbal apraxia, common in people who have had brain injuries or strokes, can also be treated with singing, as it encourages both spontaneous and active speech in a natural and pleasurable way.

Group participation is a key piece in the rehabilitation puzzle. It encourages people to learn from one another, interact with others in similar situations, and allows for social interaction. Group music and art sessions have also been highly successful in the rehabilitation setting as they allow for people to form relationships through shared interests while having a whole lot of fun. Moreover, these groups assist with treating cognitive skills such as attention, following of instructions, and sequencing.

It is clear that the use of music and art is a powerful tool in increasing one's motivation, uplifting emotional wellbeing, and improving overall outlook. This in turn improves a person's enthusiasm to participate actively in therapy. Providing a space for people to work on physical or cognitive challenges, while enjoying themselves, is something which should regularly be encouraged, and even celebrated!

So whether it's picking up a new instrument, giving painting a go, or singing out a tune, make music and art a part of the therapeutic journey and just watch the magic happen.

Daniella Winer is an occupational therapist with a special interest in post-stroke rehabilitation. She works as the deputy unit manager of the stroke unit in a physical rehabilitation centre in Johannesburg.

CLICK TO READ MORE

LEFT: The Casual Day team announces the 2022 theme that commemorates South Africa, its people and culture: #ICelebrateSA.

CELEBRATE SA WITH CASUAL DAY

This year, the Casual Day initiative, which raises funds to support people with disabilities, is commemorating all things South African with its #ICelebrateSA theme. The organisers, National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD), states: “With so much holding us down, now is the time to find our strength and joy and rise up! This year Casual Day project owners, the NCPD, have decided to have a celebration! So, our Casual Day theme for 2022 is … #ICelebrateSA! We want to start a conversation about everything going right for you and our country!”

There are stickers and merchandise, such as shirts and caps, available to purchase to celebrate the day and support the campaign. All stickers and merchandise can be purchased from QASA, which will also support our organisation. Contact us to enquire or order your Casual Day gear at info@qasa.co.za or at 031 767 0352.

COMFORTABLE SEATING

QASA assisted Joseph Machweu with securing a cushion so that he would be more comfortably seated in his wheelchair and avoid pressure ulcers. Joseph writes to the organisation: “I am pleased to extend my humble gratitude for your assistant. I would like to thank the QuadPara Association of South Africa for assisting me in getting a wheelchair cushion.”

DRIVING SUCCESS

Congratulations to Lulama Lento from the Western Cape region who passed her driver’s licence with the assistance of the QASA Driving Ambitions programme and Buwento Driving School. We wish her all the best and a safe journey on the road. Well done, Lulama!

SABAT POWER WHEELCHAIR RACE RETURNS

QASA is excited to announce that Sabat Batteries will again be hosting our members at the Zwartkops Raceway in Centurion for the Sabat Power Wheelchair Race – an event that gives power wheelchair users the opportunity to race around a track to determine who has the fastest vehicle.

This event was held annually to commemorate the relationship between QASA and Sabat Batteries, which donates batteries to QASA members who use power wheelchairs. While cancelled during the national lockdown, the event will return again on 31 July 2022. We look forward to the event and remain grateful for this invaluable relationship.

SPARE PROSTHESIS

Amputees can benefit greatly from having a spare prosthesis. **HEINRICH GRIMSEHL** discusses

Talk to a patient about a "spare prosthesis" and their face lights up! Talk to a funder about the same thing and it feels like you just opened a fridge door. You get responses like: "But surely the patient cannot wear two legs at the same time?" This is true.

But so is the following:

- A normal limb maintains itself while still attached to the body. No extra maintenance is required, accept of course to eat your vegetables. A prosthesis, on the other hand, does not maintain itself. You must remove it from the body for maintenance, which often takes more than 24 hours.
- I hate car-leg comparisons, but let's throw one into the mix. If your car needs a service, you can take it to several garages with literally dozens of mechanics qualified to do the job. Your limb, on the other hand, needs the attention of the very artisan who carefully crafted your appliance – the certified prosthetists orthotists who understands your prosthesis, but also your needs as an individual; the prosthetist who walked years with you. Blood, sweat and tears comes to mind. If he or she is not immediately available, what then?
- Different prostheses have different functions. The fast and slow-walking everyday prosthesis is usually not suitable for a jog or run. Total different components are needed. The same applies for swimming, diving, showering, and riding a bicycle.
- If a component breaks and needs replacement, it might not be in stock. It might even have to be sourced from abroad.

PHOTOS: Whether it is for sport, comfort or fashion, most amputees could benefit greatly from a spare prosthesis.

- There are different cosmetic finishes for different functions or activities. You might want to dress up and look beautiful, but you don't want to necessarily carry the heavy cosmetic finish with you every single day. It's just not dynamic and comfortable for everyday wear. The same might apply to wearing high or low-heel shoes. The prosthetic foot that works with the heel height of a stiletto will not work barefoot on the beach.

I have touched on but a few examples of why a spare prosthesis is necessary. So please, whoever makes these usually "financial" decisions, keep the above in mind!

By not supplying these much-needed spare limbs, an amputee's daily routine and responsibilities might grind to a screeching halt. Leaving them dysfunctional, stranded and frustrated.

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

VALUE OFFERED WITH RIVERSIDE HOTEL

MANDY LATIMORE recently stayed at the Riverside Hotel in Durban and found it offered great value. She shares her experience

During a recent, extended visit to Durban, I was lucky enough to stay at The Riverside Hotel for 12 nights, which is situated on the North side of the Umgeni River. This fully accessible hotel features 169 spacious guest rooms with a kitchenette, a mini fridge and microwave, work desk and an air-conditioner.

Two of these rooms are accessible with a roll-in shower, wet room with shower seat and grab rails. They are situated on the ground floor just off the lobby. There are other rooms that offer a combination of double or triple accommodations with baths and showers; family rooms and suites.

There are two elevators that offer access to all the floors with ease. There is free Wi-Fi and a generator to ensure that there are no interruptions to the power supply for the entire complex.

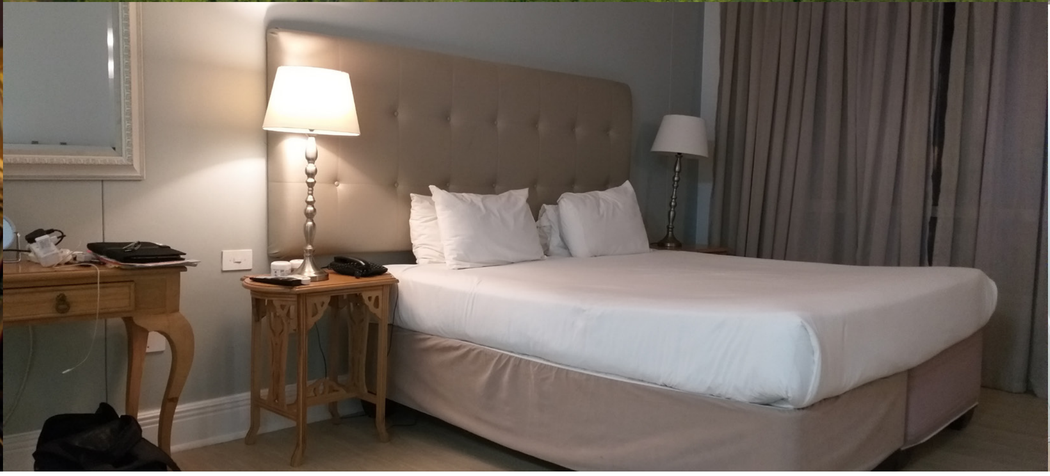
The selection of TV channels within the rooms is quite limited; however, for those who are sports fanatics, there are many TV screens within the patio and bar area offering various sporting events. The staff are happy to change one of the stations to a specific request if there are limited people within this area. I was able to watch the F1 Grand Prix on a rain-soaked Sunday afternoon in the bar!

The restaurant, pool and bar are all on the lower ground area and have ramped access. On Friday evenings, there are live music on the patio, which was an unexpected bonus.

There is room service with a good selection of dishes, a laundry service, hair salon and mini gym. There is also an in-room spa service offered by Neno Spa that has a contract with the hotel.

The conference facility is situated in the grounds opposite the main entrance and has five venues for conferences, business meetings and functions. There is also a business centre.

The hotel offers a shuttle service in standard vehicles. There is plenty of open parking for those who are driving their own vehicles. They also



have two accessible parking bays outside the conference facility and one to the east side of the main hotel building. These have lockable posts and are monitored by the security staff to ensure that they are available to persons with mobility devices.

The staff are all extremely friendly and helpful, especially Benjamin who assisted us with our sports gear, whenever we needed him.

This hotel is close to the main arterial routes into and out of Durban. It offers very good value for money! It's a definite favourite of mine for both business and leisure travel. We were offered very competitive rates for our players from around South Africa who were in Durban for the National Disabled Bowls competition.

So, should you be deciding to stay within the greater Durban area, have a look at their website as they are always offering great specials www.theriversidehotel.co.za.
Happy Travels! Ⓡ

MAIN PHOTO: The Riverside Hotel in Durban boasts 169 rooms, which includes accessible rooms.
TOP LEFT: There is a restaurant, pool and bar on the ground floor of the hotel.
TOP RIGHT: The rooms include a small kitchnette.
BOTTOM LEFT: The rooms offer ample space to move around in a wheelchair.
BOTTOM RIGHT: The accessible rooms include a wet room with roll-in shower.

CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE RIVERSIDE HOTEL WEBSITE

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

IF ISTANBUL CAN, WE ALL CAN

ARI SEIRLIS recently had the opportunity to travel to Istanbul, Turkey. He shares his experience in this historic city

I recently had the opportunity to visit Istanbul to present at a conference. Having watched the movie Midnight Express many times, I was quite nervous to accept the invitation. I was totally influenced by the brutality of the prison that Billy Hayes had spent some time in, albeit in 1977.

Invitation accepted, I flew Turkish airlines from OR Tambo International Airport (ORTIA) to the new Istanbul Airport (IST). The airline was pretty average although I was seated in the bulkhead row, courtesy of the kind Turkish airline manager at ORTIA, for which I was very grateful.

Menzies provided an excellent passenger assistant service when leaving Johannesburg and also on arrival again seven days later. They were superb.

In Istanbul, I stayed in the Divan Hotel in Taksim square. The hotel ticked most of the boxes for wheelchair access and Taksim square is the right place to stay if you want to spend some time in this beautiful city.

I was certainly contemplating how I was going to get around knowing that this is one of the oldest civilisations in Europe and Asia. With some information from the concierge, I ventured out to look for public transport, hoping for an accessible experience. There are plenty of pedestrian areas and streets. All of these were wide and relatively smooth.

> “Taksim square is the right place to stay if you want to spend some time in this beautiful city.”

I was surprised at how independent I was in my power-assist wheelchair. It took me a while to find an accessible toilet facility and whenever I did, I noted these on my map.

They were few and far between. But the concept was the following: Where there is a renowned tourist attraction, you will find an accessible toilet facility. It will cost you a couple of Turkish lira, but

MAIN PHOTO: Ari found the public transport in Turkey, especially the trains, very accessible.
ABOVE: Ari Seirlis in Istanbul, Turkey.

it is well worth those coins. Public transport using the vernacular and tram system was superb. I soon got used to the universal transport card, which was dispensed from a machine using cash.

Every time it got low, you could replenish the credit and continue your journey using any of the public transport systems available. The vernacular takes you from the main Taksim square to the source of the tram at Kabatas.

This is a new modern tram system, running every five minutes with an easy roll-on and roll-off on any particular platform. I could access the coach without so much as tipping my wheelchair.

They are really fast and efficient. If you miss a tram because it's quite full, don't despair. They run every few minutes. We could navigate all of the main tourist attractions in Istanbul using this transport system.

What a delight and what a wonderful experience being in a city and managing to move around without much trouble at all; relatively cheap and fast.

The staff at the platforms were very helpful and that makes a huge difference. The general population were very tolerant of the space I needed when getting on and off.

> “What a delight being in a city and managing to move around without much trouble at all.”

If you want great street food, amazing markets, incredible history, and value for money, Istanbul is the place to go. The major tourist attractions like the spice market, the grand Bazaar, the mosques and historical sites are not always as accessible as you would like, but, bearing in mind how old they are, it was sometimes understandable.

However, I did notice that there were always willing hands to help me over an obstacle or up a steep alleyway. That was impressive.

After a week of fun, sights and sounds of a very interesting city, my last port of call was navigating the airport at Istanbul. This has got to be one of the biggest and busiest airports in the world.

Modern, absolutely accessible, a superb assistant passenger service available, clean and everything works. All you need to do is have a few useful words in Turkish to get someone to go out of their way to assist you with any query.

I have never seen an airport in all my travels globally that is so functional for a wheelchair user as the new Istanbul Airport.

Ari Seirlis is the former CEO of the QuadPara Association of South Africa and, presently, a member of the Presidential Working Group on Disability. He is a wheelchair user and disability activist.

DARK SIDE OF LEARNERSHIPS

While learnerships can offer invaluable opportunities, there are still some obstacles. **RUSTIM ARIEFDIEN** takes a closer look

Learnerships are a wonderful opportunity for persons with disabilities to improve their skills and develop their passport to employment or entrepreneurship. However, the outcomes of learnerships do not always deliver as desired.

A learnership is an accredited qualification. It provides a learner with a theoretical and experiential-learning base through workplace experience over a 12-month period. During the learnership, the learner earns a stipend. An employer has financial benefits in the form of SETA Discretionary Grant Funding, tax benefits and can earn BBBEE points.

Through learnerships, government achieves its goal of decreasing unemployment, reducing the poverty and inequality gaps, and growing the economy. A win-win for all concerned. The learnership is a very complex process. The learner has training for roughly three out of the 12 months with the remaining time spent in the workplace.

The training provider’s responsibility includes facilitating, assessing, moderating, and uploading the results to the SETA. The employer ensures that the learner gets the appropriate exposure to activities in the workplace that speaks to the theory component of the learnership. The SETA has the responsibility of certifying the learner.

Learners with disabilities are not always ready to enter the world of work and not enough thought is provided to reasonable accommodation by both the skills development provider and the employer. This inevitably leads to challenges for the learner that manifests in behaviour and attendance challenges.

Absenteeism is the one challenge that adversely affect the skills development provider and employer. It means that the learner cannot be trained and the financial benefits for the employer is placed at risk as the learnerships are not able to be exited. The SETA considers learnerships that are not exited as incomplete, which is a waste of funding.

Transport is another inhibitor for learners with disabilities. If not thought through, it could mean that the learner is not able to get to training and work effectively. This again leads to absenteeism and other challenges. Unfortunately, unscrupulous employers and skills development providers do not fulfil their obligations in the process.

It is imperative that learners be guided to the value of a learnership and be assisted to complete their journey. A work readiness programme, such as the programme offered by QASA, will go a long way to ensuring success.

Employers and skills development providers need to be sensitised and their premises accessible for the types of disabilities that will be entering their space.

SETA's need to be understanding of the needs of the learner with a disability as well.

For all stakeholders an understanding of reasonable accommodation is critical, and learners need to be supported. What can help in this regard is a psychosocial-based programme that assists learners with the emotional intelligence that they need to succeed.

> "It is imperative that learners be guided to the value of a learnership."

Through empathy and innovation, the stakeholders can achieve the objective of certification that provides the learner with a disability with a qualification on their life-long learning journey.

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.

RENTAL INDUSTRY POST-LOCKDOWN

As the National State of Disaster ends, several regulations around evicting tenants from a rental property fall away. **CILNA STEYN** investigates

The National State of Disaster, in particular the lockdown regulations, had a profound impact on the rental industry. Some of these regulations pertained specifically to rental housing. These included the prohibition of charging a late-payment penalty if the reason for the late payment resulted from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tenant.

The regulations granted the Rental Housing Tribunal the authority to hear spoliation (the wrongful deprivation of another's right of possession) applications on an urgent basis. The Tribunal could make appropriate orders when an unfair practice is created in terms of the Rental Housing Act where either landlord or tenant did not comply with the provisions of the lockdown regulations as it pertains to rental housing.

In terms of evictions, the lockdown regulations echoed the provisions of Section 26 of the Constitution in that no eviction may be granted or executed without judicial oversight and the consideration of the personal circumstances of the illegal occupants.

Even though these provisions where not foreign to our law, it placed the new and refreshed emphasis on the provisions of Section 26 of the Constitution.

Many eviction orders that were granted prior to 16 March 2020 could not have been executed without the variation of those specific orders as a result of the lockdown regulations.

The lockdown regulations dealing with evictions afforded an illegal occupant an extra layer of protection over and above the rights already protected in terms of the Constitution.

These extra protection measures in respect of evictions included the court's ability to stay an order for eviction or demolition until the lapse or termination of the National State of Disaster; meaning that the only evictions which could be executed were those that the courts specifically ordered during the State of Disaster.

Very few evictions were stayed until the end of the National State of Disaster. In most instances, the court considered the personal circumstances of

the illegal occupants and allowed execution of the eviction orders at a time that was just and equitable.

The courts had to consider the restriction of movement; the impact of the disaster on the parties; the prejudice to either one of the parties in delaying the execution of the eviction order; the prejudice either party would suffer because of the inability to obtain legal services as a result of the disaster; whether adequate measures would be in place to protect the health of any of the parties affected by the relocation; whether either one of the illegal occupants are causing harm to others or whether a threat to life exists; and whether the party applying for the eviction took all the reasonable steps to, in good faith, come to alternative arrangements that might avoid the necessity of an eviction order.

The National State of Disaster was uplifted by a notice published by the minister of co-operative government, Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, together with the cabinet on 4 April 2022. As of midnight, on 5 April 2022, there were only a handful of regulations that outlived the end of the National State of Disaster. None of these regulations pertain to evictions or rental housing. Thus, we are back where we were prior to 15 March 2020 in these aspects.

The Rental Housing Act allows the Department of Human Settlement to promulgate regulations of the Rental Housing Act applicable to each individual province. The lockdown regulations with regards to rental housing and evictions had national application and brought a sense of uniformity and stability, nationally.

We are currently no longer labouring under those regulations; and accordingly certain things that were not permitted under the National State of Disaster will no longer be seen to be illegal.

Many tenants enjoyed the benefit of these prohibitions and will accordingly no longer have the protection of these regulations. The Rental Housing Act and the regulations promulgated in terms of this Act remains unaffected by this upliftment of the National State of Disaster and will remain in force and enforceable.

As of 1 May 2020, evictions continued as close to normal in as far as it pertained to evictions granted by court. This position remains exactly the same as it was prior to the State of Disaster and for all practical purposes for any time after 1 May 2020.

> “There are only a handful of regulations that outlived the end of the National State of Disaster. None of these pertain to evictions.”

There was a false and dangerous misinterpretation of the lockdown regulations that created the false impression that tenants were allowed to withhold rent or pay reduced rent, and that illegal occupants could not be evicted during the National State of Disaster. The result of this was sadly that many landlords suffered serious financial strain.

The upliftment of the National State of Disaster should not have a disastrous impact on the property industry, quite to the contrary, it will most likely boost investor confidence.

It will allow the landlords who previously believed that they had no recourse against non-paying tenants or a tenant in breach of his lease agreement to act in accordance with the law to protect their investment and ensure a favourable return on investment.

Cilna Steyn is the managing director at SSLR Inc. Attorneys. She completed her LLB Degree at Unisa, after which she was admitted as an attorney in 2007. She co-founded Steyn & Steyn Attorneys. She regularly presents training session, where she advises groups of rental agents and private landlords on matters relating to Landlord and Tenant Disputes and broader scope Property Law related matters.

FROM PARALYSED TEEN TO MASTER OF MOVEMENT

QUINTIN VAN JAARSVELD follows the journey of Yusuf Price who became a biokineticist after a paralysing neck injury

A freak neck injury during rugby practice changed Yusuf Price's life in more ways than one, with a remarkable journey during which he went from a paralysed teenager to a master of movement.

On September 19, 2001, during training at Primrose Rugby Club, a collision after an ankle-tap left 16-year-old Yusuf motionless. The promising flank had suffered a compression fracture of his C5 vertebra.

Almost 21 years on and a world removed from the perils of a frightening three-month period of paralysis, Cape Town-based Yusuf remarks: "I'm very fortunate that I never lost feeling in my body. Even right after I got hurt and went to the hospital, I could feel the doctor touching my leg, but I couldn't tell with what he was touching me."

After an agonising week in intensive care and a successful neck fusion at Southern Cross Hospital, the teenager, now using a wheelchair, faced an uncertain future, starting with four months of intense rehabilitation at the same facility.

Four weeks in, the Norman Henshilwood High School Grade 10 learner regained the use of his right hand – a major moment. But, the turning point came two months later.

"It happened by accident," Yusuf explaines. "I loved swimming as a kid and it was a nice day outside, so my physiotherapist suggested we try to go into the pool as a change of therapy.

"We did, and to our surprise, I was able to move my right leg! That was the moment when I thought to myself, 'You can really do this! You can stand and walk and get out of the wheelchair'. And I went all out from there," he adds.

It was far from an instant turnaround. Rehabilitation was ramped up, but it planted the seeds for what would go on to define and see him reach unthinkable heights – an unwavering willingness to do the hard work day in and day out to achieve his goals.

"By the time school started the following year, I was able to walk with two crutches, quite slow at first, but with ongoing treatment, I gradually got stronger, and by Grade 12, I walked with one

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crutch up until my last year of university," Yusuf says.

As fate would have it, it's due to the very injury that so drastically altered his life that he found his calling. Yusuf recalls: "While going through rehab and talking with the physiotherapists, I became fascinated with movement and exercise. I realised that's the field I wanted to work in one day."

He matriculated in 2003 and bursaries from both the Chris Burger Petro Jackson Players' Fund and Ashcroft Fund afforded him an opportunity to pursue his professional dream by enrolling at the University of the Western Cape where he graduated with an undergraduate degree in Sport Recreation and Science in 2006, and an honours degree in biokinetics the following year.

Although he finally 'graduated' from using a crutch to walking unassisted at the same time, he still had limitations in the form of neurological fallout, which he lives with to this day.

> "To our surprise, I was able to move my right leg! That was the moment when I though to myself, 'You can really do this!'"

"I can't do fine motor skills with my left hand and experience phantom pains as well. So, I wear a glove to help with that and I wear a splint on my left leg. The Players' Fund, who'd sponsored my wheelchair and first splint, also sponsored the carbon fibre splint I'm wearing now, which is much lighter and easier to walk with," Yusuf says.

In an active field, limitations present challenges, which he solved with such aplomb that he rose to the top of the 2008 class of interns at the Sports Science Institute of South Africa (SSISA) where he's been a staple ever since.

As senior biokineticist, he specialises in geriatric and cardiac rehabilitation and has come full circle by improving the quality of life of others.

"It's an honour to be part of the team, but as much as it is an accomplishment for me, I take my hat off to SSISA for not judging a book by its cover and giving me an opportunity to prove my worth as an intern," Yusuf says.

While he's admittedly more fortunate than most of the 100 other Players' Fund recipients, he was able to obtain a position and thrives despite not making a "full" recovery, which he believes makes him living proof that life after a life-changing injury isn't black or white.

"You can still achieve what you set out to do, as long as you work hard," he commentes. Yusuf, however, stresses he wouldn't be where he is today without the support of his family and the Players' Fund.

"The Players' Fund's played such a big role in my life, as has my parents, family and friends. It means a lot to me knowing that there's always someone there who supports me and I cannot thank them enough," Yusuf concludes.

Should you wish to support the Players' Fund in anyway, please contact either Gail or Aashia on contact@playersfund.org.za. Every donation is gratefully accepted. You can also scan the QR Codes below to donate. Section 18a Certificates are available on request.

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PARENTS NEED TO TRUST THEMSELVES

EMMA MCKINNEY interviews Razia, mother to a child with a disability, about caring and advocating for a child with a disability

Razia is mother to Nura who has Cerebral Palsy with quadriplegia and Global Developmental Delay, which resulted from a lack of oxygen before and during birth. Nura had a difficult start as a newborn. In addition, Nura has Cortical Visual Impairment, which makes it difficult to understand what she is able to see as she is unable to verbalise what is visible. Five days after her birth, Nura was taken off life support, but she pulled through.

Together with her husband, Razia tried many traditional therapies including occupational therapy and physiotherapy. They also explored alternative therapies such as behavioural neuro-feedback therapy. Razia reflected on how Nura received physiotherapy as a newborn before they left hospital.

She shared how they integrate physiotherapy in all daily activities including dressing, feeding and moving. Nura uses hand and wrist braces, and foot orthotics. She has had some significant surgeries including a spinal fusion in 2015. These surgeries are always very scary as Nura has experienced seizures while under anaesthesia. The risk of complications, including infection, is high.

Razia and her husband know Nura better than any healthcare professional. They know when something is wrong (such as when she stops eating or gets very sleepy). When asked for advice for other parents of children with disabilities, Razia highlighted that all children are different; however, here are some ideas she wanted to share:

- Allow yourself to grieve.
- Don't bombard yourself with too much medical information.
- While information is important, it is also vital to remember that your baby is still your baby and that you need to bond with them.
- Even though time in the intensive care is emotional, focus on your baby.
- Try to nurse if you are able. But, also be prepared that your baby might not be able to nurse if they are premature or have a medical condition that prevents them from latching. Try Kangaroo Mother Care to help with bonding if you can.
- Realise that you cannot "fix" your child. Trying to get them to "fit into" a neurotypical world is not helpful.
- Don't focus on the "normal" developmental milestones, let them go.
- Parents need to trust themselves as they know what is best for their children.
- Talk about future issues sooner rather than later, such as hysterectomies, which can be very emotional topics and require time to process.
- While the path that every parent walks may be similar, their footsteps and pace will differ. Some arrive sooner while others later and that is okay.
- Listen to adults with disabilities.
- Speak with your child and include them in decisions about their bodies and health, especially when they are older. Don't underestimate how much they take in and understand. R

ABOVE: Razia (on the right) with her daughter, Nura (centre), and husband (left).

Dr Emma McKinney is a lecturer at the University of the Western Cape. She is also the owner of Disability Included, a company specialising in disability research, children, and employment of adults with disabilities. email: emma@disabilityincluded.co.za

BEATING THE WINTER DRY-SKIN BLUES

With the cooler weather, the heaters come out and we take more hot showers, but this can dry out our skins. **JOY DUFFIELD** investigates

Extremely dry and dehydrated skin is normal in the winter, but it brings on a plethora of skin problems like rashes, itching, redness, cracks or flaky skin. While all these problems make you uncomfortable, it can be treated easily at home.

DRY SKIN

Dryness is often evident in the winter months because of the cold, lack of humidity in the air and the use of heaters. The secret is to increase moisturising efforts. Moisturise the skin right after getting out of the bath or shower while the skin is still a little damp. Using a slightly thicker or heavier cream during the winter months also helps.

Making use of a humidifier in the home to replace moisture in the air is beneficial, especially when using a heater.

Don't forget that keeping oneself hydrated and well-nourished will also reflect on the skin. The vitamins D, C and Fish oils are most beneficial for repairing the skin.

Dry skin and Eczema causes itchy, dry, and irritated skin. It's most common on the elbows, knees, hands, and face. The best way to treat the irritated skin is to use a fragrance-free moisturiser and avoid bathing more than once per day.

If severe dryness is persistent, it is best to contact your doctor to check for any underlying conditions or to prescribe a cream.

CHAPPED LIPS

Nothing is worse than cracking, red, chapped lips. It is one of the biggest issues people complain about during the winter season. Lips have a very thin layer of skin and are the part of your face that dries out the quickest due to the dry winter air, wind and low humidity. Splitting and cracking can also occur in severe cases, which is painful, does not heal easily and can act as a breeding ground for infection.

It is a natural reaction, but avoid licking the lips as it just aggravates the problem. Lip balm applied twice daily can ease and heal chapped lips by adding moisture and extra hydration.

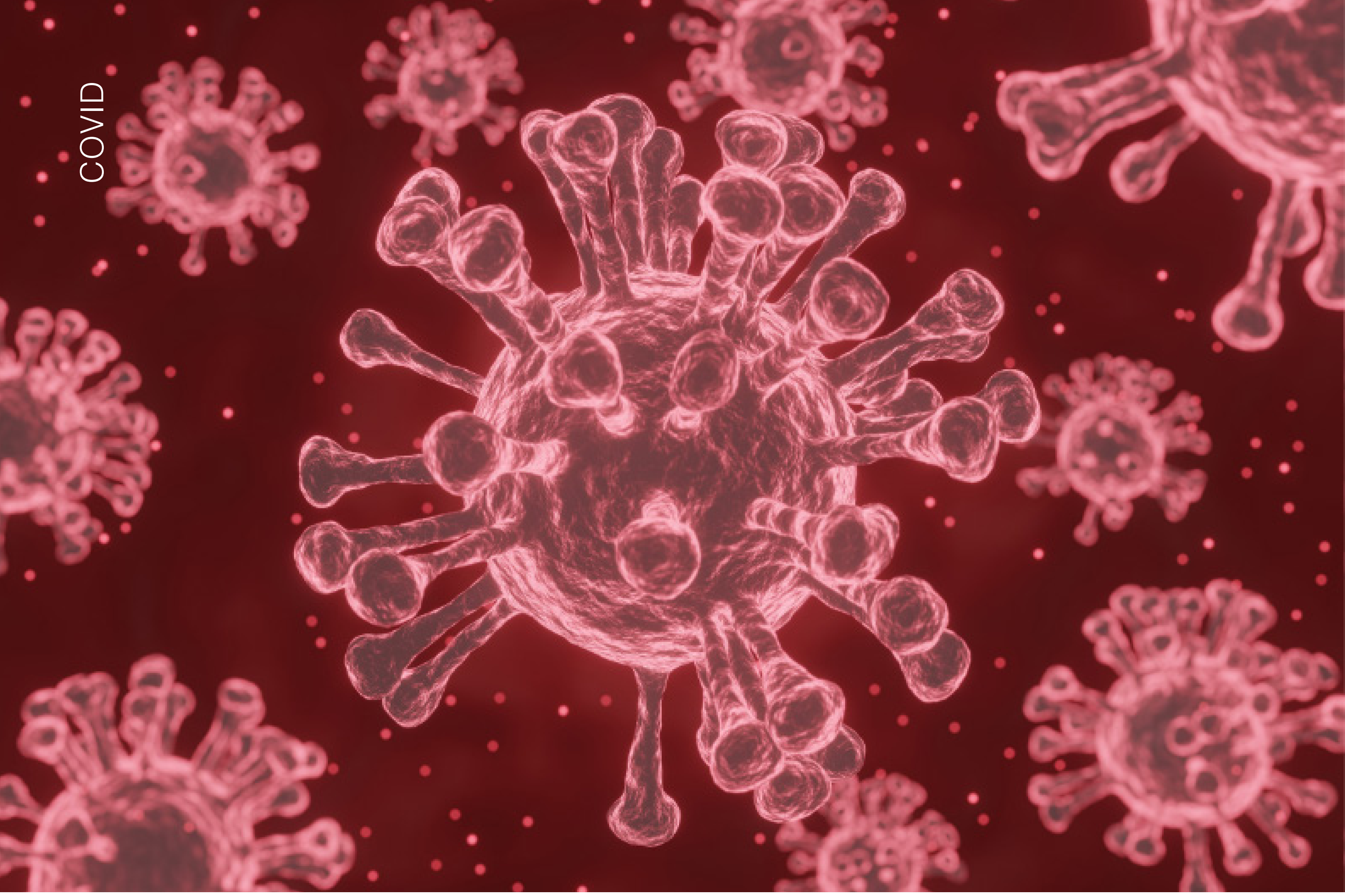
Many lip balms also contain healing medication that can cool and ease lip pain. It is not advisable to use Vaseline, which contains petroleum. Petroleum-based products generally do not moisturise, but only act as a barrier. Check ingredients on the balms.

GENERAL TIPS

- Avoid fragrances touching the skin, this includes laundry detergents/softeners.
- Protect your hands from cleaning products by wearing gloves and keep them well moisturised.
- Use a gentle exfoliator once or twice a week to remove the dead skin cells.
- Lastly, turn down the heat! A hot, steamy shower is a real treat, but the hot water can take the protective moisture out of the skin and leave it dry.

I, for one, cannot live without a heater, but we cannot avoid the fact that it does dry out the skin. Stay warm, well nourished and well moisturised. R

Joy Duffield has been a C4-C5 quadriplegic since 2005. She is the owner of Beauty Academy International, an international training Institute for the beauty industry and a distributor of hair and beauty products in South Africa.



IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Independent transformation and disability specialist, **TSHEPO MOTHIBA**, looks at how people with disabilities were impacted during the global COVID-19 pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic is undeniably one of the greatest global humanitarian emergencies since the Second World War. Its adverse impact has once again highlighted the deep-seated societal inequalities emanating from, among other things, perpetual discriminatory practices against vulnerable groups, particularly persons with disabilities.

In April 2020, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) observed that, even though the COVID-19 pandemic endangered all members of society, persons with disabilities have been disproportionately impacted due to attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers that are reproduced in the COVID-19 interventions.

The OHCHR further contended that the myriad of constraints and exclusions confronted by persons with disabilities on a daily basis have undoubtedly been exacerbated by the untimely outbreak of the pandemic.

Some of the challenges that confronted persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic

ABOVE: Tshepo Mothiba, independent transformation and disability specialist.

include their greater susceptibility to the virus due to pre-existing health conditions; the inability to engage in preventative measures such as physical distancing due to reliance on their caregivers; disruptions to health services that they normally rely on; and inaccessible telehealth tools which are not compatible with certain programmes such as screen readers for those who are blind or visually impaired.

> “People with disabilities have been disproportionately impacted due to attitudinal, environmental, and institutional barriers.”

It is, therefore, crucial that the government, healthcare system, non-governmental organisations and the general population understand the reality of people with disabilities in order to support their needs, particularly during humanitarian crises such as those caused by the pandemic.

Article 11 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which South Africa became one of the first countries to ratify in November 2007, deals with “situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies”.

It obligates state parties to implement “measures to ensure the protection and safety of persons with disabilities in situations of risk, including situations of armed conflict, humanitarian emergencies and the occurrence of natural disasters”.

To this end, states and other pertinent humanitarian actors are required, inter alia, to reform their policies and practices in the context of situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies under the CRPD; ensure active coordination, participation and meaningful consultation with persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, including women, boys and girls with disabilities, at all levels; and build capacity across stakeholders, including both military and civilian, peace-keeping personnel, and other field workers intervening in emergency situations regarding the rights of persons with disabilities.

Considering the capacity constraints and limited financial resources often associated with developing countries like South Africa, the role of the NGO sector has become increasingly crucial in the quest to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in the design and implementation of interventions during humanitarian disasters and pandemic eruptions.

The NGO sector through its human and financial resources should complement government efforts by providing the necessary support in cases of government inadequacies.

These may include providing expert advice on appropriate policy interventions, including capacity development programmes to public servants and communities on appropriate response measures for persons with disabilities during a pandemic; conducting research on the efficacy of existing interventions; and evaluating the long-term impact of these interventions on the wellbeing of persons with disabilities.

In conclusion, while governments globally undertook measures to mitigate the lethal nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, the need to consider persons with disabilities at the planning and implementation stages of these interventions cannot be over-emphasised.

The public sector working with the NGO sector must forge effective collaborations with the intention of utilising the available resources judiciously to ensure substantive inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of human development and protection.

This article first appeared in the Inyathelo 2021 Annual Report*. Inyathelo works to sustain and strengthen civil society organisations and grow local giving in support of a vibrant democracy in South Africa.*

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DISCOVER WHAT MAKES YOU TICK

Feeling sexy can be a challenge after an injury, but discovering the new ways in which you are “turned on” can assist, as **DANIE BREEDT** explains

It’s true that sex is a very different after a spinal cord injury (SCI). Some people get so frustrated that they stop having sex altogether. But, the vast majority opt not to give up on their sexuality. It’s such a vital aspect of being human that we can’t just ignore it. Sex is about much more than nerve endings; it’s about intimacy, closeness and a connection with another person.

Despite what some people may think, sex doesn’t have to be one-sided after a SCI. Many people with new SCIs quickly discover that there’s still a lot of enjoyment to be had in the sex department. They find new ways to make things fun and exciting. They become better at different things in bed.

The first tip is to continue incorporating the aspects of sex that you enjoyed before (that you can still do) into the experience as your body will likely respond to it well. Take your time during foreplay to enhance the sensations of the SCI partner.

Reaching orgasm is always a combination of the physical and psychological experience of sexual activities. With certain physical aspects of sex being affected by a SCI, orgasms become much more psychological. This means that emphasising intimacy and the build-up to sex more than the physical act will pay off greatly in your enjoyment of the sexual encounter.

On a physical level, communicating about what feels good and discovering where your new erogenous zones are (scars, the face, neck, the line on body where injury stops or begins), could help achieve physical orgasms from new areas.

People who are comfortable with themselves and their disability are sexy and a massive turn-on for partners (or potential partners). Humour and confidence are helpful ways to learn how to feel sexy again. Don’t take yourself too seriously, when you are comfortable within yourself, it shows and makes others feel comfortable when they are with you.

To achieve great sex after a SCI, you will absolutely need a lot of communication with your partner. Try to communicate your needs and wants, especially if you are the paralysed counterpart. It’s up to you to let your partner know what you like. So, experimentation is key.

If you were a couple before the injury, continue hugging and touching like before. It can be easy for sex and intimacy to be side-lined, but this can be problematic long-term. If you have a partner and your injury is new, don’t worry about having sex right away, but remember that trial and error will be the most important thing when you decide to start having sex again.

If you weren’t in a relationship before your injury, finding a person who sees past your wheelchair and get to know you for who you really are, somebody who is open-minded, is important. Try to combat shyness by being the person who approaches people first.

Sometimes people may find you attractive, but your disability might make them unsure of what to do. Making the first move is a good rule of thumb. Also, while struggling to find a good partner may be hard, it helps to remove the close-minded people to make the search a little easier.

Sex is different for everyone, and the loss you’re feeling can be profound. Just remember, while your injury has taken a lot of from you, you can limit how much it affects your sex life with a positive and proactive attitude.

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.

PASSING OF ROBIN EMSLIE

ABOVE: (from the left) Robin Emslie with Raven Benny, QASA COO, in 2012 during a stratefic meeting for *Rolling Inspiration* held at the Wanderers Club in Johannesburg.

The *Rolling Inspiration* team was devasted to learn that Robin Emslie recently passed away. QASA COO and *Rolling Inspiration* managing editor, Raven Benny, says: “We are ever grateful for Robin’s dedication and support with the strategic conversations and planning around the magazine.”

Robin’s company was the second publisher of the magazine. Ari Seirlis, former managing editor of *Rolling Inspiration* and Robin’s nephew, recalls: “He was the second publisher of *Rolling Inspiration*. His company published the magazine for about eight years. He took the risk of guiding us through the purchasing of the brand from Prime Media and put his team to work to elevate the publication to a readership of 4000.

“He ensured we understood all of the elements of publishing and through the regular editorial meetings, empowered us to understand the important elements of a publication. He was responsible for the sustainability of the publication and handed over the reins to the next publisher when he retired. Robin was totally committed to the well-being of the magazine and keeping subscribers informed. Robin Emslie must take credit for the well-being of the publication in his time. Many of us who worked with him in the publication will miss him dearly.”

Our condolences to Robin’s friends and family. May he rest in peace.

CASUAL DAY CELEBRATES SOUTH AFRICA

Casual Day returns again in 2022 with its theme #ICelebrateSA for its 28th year. Run by the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities, Casual Day aims to raise funds for the organisation to support people with disabilities. This is done through the sales of Casual Day stickers and other merchandise, which includes shirts, caps, bucket hats and limited edition face masks.

This year, the theme for Casual Day aims to celebrate South Africa and its people. The organisation states:

“Our gratitude goes to our loyal supporters who have over the years assisted us in raising more than R411 million for persons with disabilities. A special thank you to supporters big and small who participated in last year’s Casual Day and helped us make a difference in the lives of persons with disabilities during some of our country’s hardest times. And now… slowly but surely, the green shoots of positivity are making their way back to the light!”

“Negative narratives about South Africa are not the whole story of our beloved country. With so much holding us down, now is the time to find our strength and joy and rise up! This year Casual Day project owners, the National Council of and for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD), have decided to have a celebration! So, our Casual Day theme for 2022 is… #ICelebrateSA!”

“We want to start a conversation about everything going right for you and our country! So make your voice heard and join a chorus of South Africans highlighting the good and great in their lives.”

Participants of Casual Day are urged to reflect on what makes South Africa special, perhaps the rich cultural heritage, Malva pudding or the renowned friendliness of South Africans.

If you would like to participate, you can order stickers or merchandise from QASA. Contact the organisation at info@qasa.co.za or at 031 767 0352 to enquire.

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QASA SERVICES & PROGRAMMES

Contact the QASA Head Office for all projects and services, including Driving Ambitions, Work Readiness Programme and QuadPar Transport, an accessible transport service based in Gauteng.

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