

ASAMBENI TAXI TIMES

Moving Minds, One Journey at a Time

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Setting Yourself Up for Success: Practical Ways to Start the Year Right

A new year brings fresh energy and hope. For many families, workers and learners in Johannesburg and Pretoria, it also brings busy mornings, tight budgets and long taxi rides. The good news is that small daily habits can make a big difference. You do not need money or special tools to start the year feeling more organised, healthier and calmer.

Start with simple planning

Being organised does not mean having a fancy diary. A small notebook or a few notes on your phone can help. Write down three important tasks for the day. This could be school homework, work deadlines or household jobs. When you focus on just three things, life feels less heavy. At home, plan meals for the week if you can. Even knowing what you will cook for two or three days helps save time and money.

Create calm mornings

Mornings often set the mood for the day. Try to prepare the night before. Lay out school uniforms, work clothes and bags. Check that phones are charged and keys are easy to find.

Waking up ten minutes earlier can also help you move at a calmer pace. A calm morning means fewer arguments and less stress before the day even begins.

Look after your body

Good health starts with small choices. Drink water when you wake up and carry a bottle if possible. Simple meals like pap, eggs, fruit and vegetables give the body energy without costing too much. Try to move your body every day. This could be walking to the taxi rank, stretching at home or playing with children outside. Sleep is also important. Aim for a regular bedtime, even on weekends, so your body can rest properly.

Support young learners

Children do better when they feel supported. Set a regular time for homework and reading, even if it is just twenty minutes. Praise effort, not just marks. Ask children what they learned at school and listen to their answers. This builds confidence and trust. If school fees or supplies are a worry, speak to the school early. Many schools can guide families to support options.

Manage money with care

Money stress affects many households. Start by writing down your main expenses. This helps you see where your money goes. Try to save a small amount, even if it is coins in a jar. Joining a stokvel or savings group can also help. Avoid borrowing for small wants if possible. Planning ahead for school costs, transport and food can prevent panic later in the year.

Protect your peace of mind

Life is busy, but rest is not a luxury. Take short breaks from bad news and social media. Talk to someone you trust when you feel overwhelmed. Prayer, quiet time or deep breathing can help calm the mind. Remember that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness. Starting the year right is about progress, not perfection. One small habit at a time can help families, workers and learners feel more in control. With steady steps, this year can be calmer, healthier and more hopeful for everyone.



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Next Edition (27 February 2026) Sneak Peek:

Love That Builds Stronger Communities

New Year, Clear Mind

The start of a new year often comes with mixed feelings. While many people hope for a fresh start, the busy festive season can leave bodies tired and minds overwhelmed. For families, workers and learners returning to daily routines, stress can feel hard to escape. The good news is that calming your mind does not need special equipment or long hours. Simple habits can help regulate your nervous system and set a positive tone for the year ahead.

Your nervous system controls how your body responds to stress. When it is under pressure, you may feel anxious, short tempered or exhausted. Learning how to calm it helps you think clearly and feel more balanced. One of the easiest ways to do this is through slow breathing.

Try this simple breathing exercise. Breathe in slowly through your nose for four seconds. Hold for two seconds, then breathe out gently through your mouth for six seconds. Repeat this a few times. This tells your body that it is safe to relax. You can do this while sitting in a taxi, lying in bed or waiting in a queue.

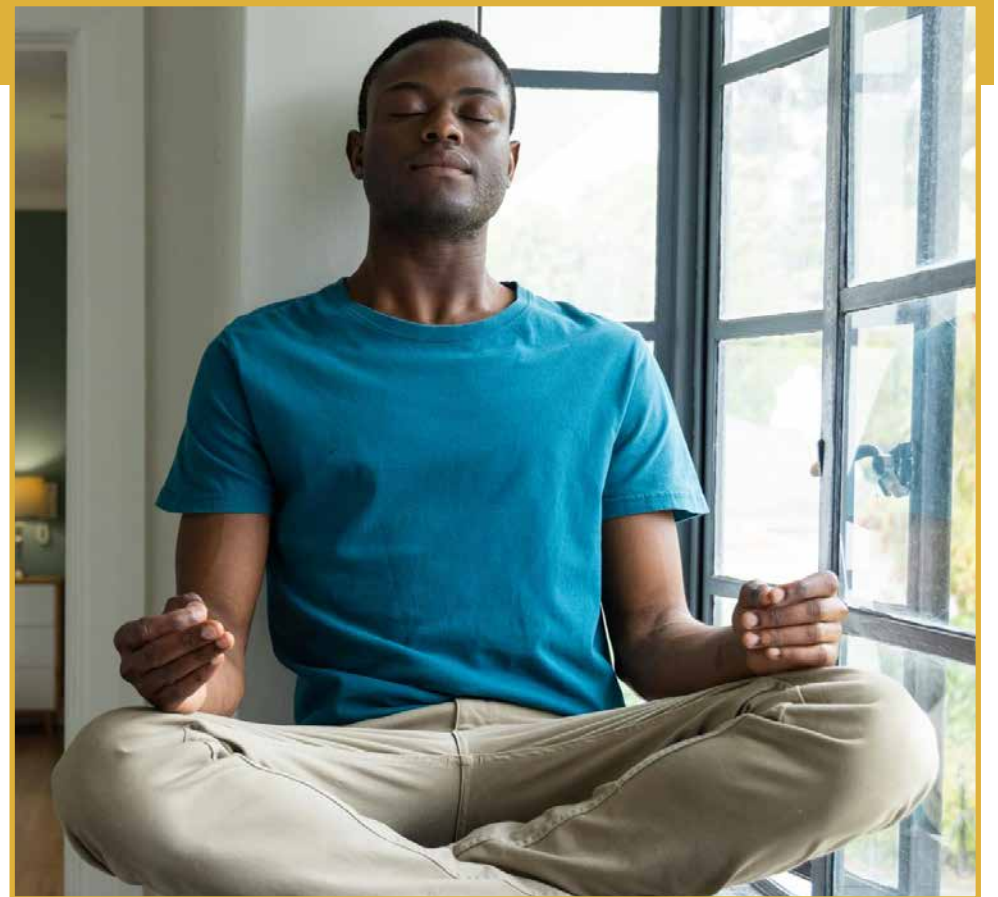
Gentle movement also helps calm the mind. You do not need a gym or special clothes. Stretching your arms and legs in the morning, walking at a steady pace or doing light

household chores can release tension. Moving your body helps burn off stress hormones and improves your mood. Even five to ten minutes can make a difference.

Proper rest is another key habit. Many people go to bed late and wake up early, especially during the festive season. Try to return to a regular sleep routine. Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day if possible. Before sleep, turn off bright screens and lower the noise around you. A calm bedtime routine helps your brain slow down. Grounding is another useful tool. This means focusing on what is happening around you right now. You can name five things you can see, four things you can hear and three things you can feel. This simple exercise brings your attention back to the present and reduces anxious thoughts.

Talking also helps. Sharing your worries with a trusted friend, family member or community leader can lighten the load. You do not have to carry everything alone.

A clear mind is built through small daily choices. By breathing slowly, moving gently and resting properly, you give your nervous system the care it needs. Step by step, the new year can become calmer, healthier and more hopeful.



Detox Without the Danger

enough water. Water helps your kidneys flush out waste and keeps your body working properly. Try to sip water throughout the day, especially in hot weather or if you are active. Eating regular meals with fruits, vegetables and fibre also supports digestion and bowel health. Foods like apples, spinach, beans and whole grains help your body remove waste naturally.

Movement is another safe way to support cleansing. Walking, stretching or light exercise improves blood flow and helps your organs function well. Sweating during movement also helps your body release toxins through the skin. You do not need intense workouts. Gentle, regular movement is enough.

Proper rest is often overlooked. Sleep gives your body time to repair and reset. Without enough rest, your natural cleansing systems do not work as well. Aim for a regular bedtime and allow your body time to recover each night.

It is important to warn against the misuse of laxatives. Some people use laxatives to feel lighter or clean inside. This is dangerous. Taking laxatives when they are not needed can cause dehydration, stomach cramps and damage to the bowels. Over time, the body may become dependent on them, making it harder to pass stools naturally. In serious cases, incorrect use can lead to heart and kidney problems. If you are struggling with constipation or digestive discomfort, speak to a healthcare worker before taking any medication. Clinics can offer safe advice and treatment options.

Never take laxatives without guidance or for weight control.

A healthy body does not need extreme measures. By drinking water, eating balanced meals, moving your body and resting well, you support your natural detox systems safely. Detoxing should never put your life at risk. Choose care, not danger, when looking after your health.

Safe, everyday ways to support your body's natural detox

- Drink water regularly throughout the day to help your kidneys flush out waste
- Eat plenty of fruit and vegetables to support digestion and liver health
- Choose high fibre foods like beans, oats, brown bread and vegetables
- Move your body daily through walking, stretching or light exercise
- Sweat safely during activity to help your skin release waste
- Get enough sleep so your body can repair and reset
- Limit alcohol and sugary drinks to reduce strain on your liver
- Reduce salty and highly processed foods where possible
- Manage stress through slow breathing, prayer or quiet time
- Use medication only as directed and avoid laxatives unless advised by a healthcare worker.



At the start of the year, many people look for ways to cleanse their bodies after festive eating and drinking. Detox teas, extreme diets and quick fixes are often promoted as the answer. While the idea of a fast cleanse may sound appealing, some of these methods can be harmful and put your health at risk. The truth is that your body already knows how to

detox safely.

Your liver, kidneys, lungs and skin work every day to remove waste from your body. They do not need special drinks, pills or harsh treatments to do their job. Supporting these natural systems through simple, healthy habits is the safest way to feel better and more energised.

One of the most important habits is drinking

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Asambeni Group Pty Ltd

012 655 0205 063 901 7786

sales@asambenitimes.co.za

24 Jan Kemp Road, Rooihuiskraal, Centurion, 0157

Protect Your Skin, Protect Your Life

Many people still believe that black people do not need sunscreen. This is a dangerous myth. While darker skin has more natural protection than lighter skin, it does not mean it is safe from sun damage or skin cancer. During SunSmart Skin Cancer Awareness Month, it is important to share the truth and encourage simple habits that can protect lives.

Melanin, the pigment that gives skin its colour, does help block some harmful sun rays. However, it does not block them all. Black people can and do get skin cancer. When it happens, it is often found late because many people do not expect it. Late detection makes treatment harder and more serious. Protecting your skin is not about fear. It is about care and awareness.

Sun damage does not only cause cancer. Too much sun can lead to painful burns, dark marks, wrinkles and uneven skin tone. For people who

work outdoors, walk long distances or wait at taxi ranks, the sun is part of daily life. Over time, this exposure adds up and harms the skin.

The good news is that protecting your skin is simple. Wearing a wide brim hat or cap helps shield your face and neck. Long sleeves made from light fabric can protect your arms without making you too hot. Try to stand in the shade when possible, especially between late morning and mid afternoon when the sun is strongest.

Sunscreen is also important for everyone, no matter their skin colour. Choose a sunscreen with SPF 30 or higher. Apply it to areas that are not covered by clothing, such as the face, ears, neck, hands and feet. Put it on about twenty minutes before going outside and reapply if you are in the sun for long periods. Sunscreen is not only for the beach. It is for daily life.

Checking your skin regularly can also save your life. Look for new marks, sores that do

not heal, or changes in colour or size of spots. Skin cancer in black people often appears on the hands, feet or under nails. If you notice something unusual, visit a clinic or healthcare worker as soon as possible.

Protecting your skin is protecting your life. By breaking the myth and sharing the facts, we can help our communities stay healthier and safer in the sun.



From Silence to Support: Tackling Bullying in Our Schools

Bullying in schools is a serious issue that affects learners and families across South Africa, and recent incidents in Gauteng have brought the problem into sharp focus. Videos and reports of violence have been shared widely on social media, showing how quickly these situations can escalate and why everyone needs to take bullying seriously.

In Johannesburg, a video of a group of students assaulting a fellow pupil in Yeoville went viral earlier this year. The learners involved were arrested and suspended, and the Gauteng Department of Education condemned the attack, urging learners to speak out and report bullying rather than stay silent.

Elsewhere in the province, cases of bullying have involved serious physical harm. At Thuto-Lesedi Secondary School in Vosloorus, a Grade 8 learner was reportedly hospitalised with severe injuries after an assault by older pupils. Parents protested after feeling the school did not act quickly enough, and the department responded by deploying support teams and beginning investigations.

The Gauteng Education Department has also had to deal with stabbing and assault incidents at schools in Boksburg and Pretoria, where videos of pupil violence circulated online and prompted official action. The department has pledged zero tolerance for bullying and increased safety measures, including counselling for victims.

Sadly, bullying can have deep emotional consequences. There are reports of learners feeling isolated, mocked or targeted over time, and in some cases this has led to tragic outcomes, including a pupil taking their own life after prolonged bullying.

What you can do if bullying happens

Talk to someone you trust

Speak with a teacher, school leader, parent or guardian. Sharing what is happening is the first step to getting help.

Report the incident

Make sure the school knows about the situation. If no action is taken, contact the district office of the Gauteng Department of Education or a child protection organisation.

Keep evidence

If bullying happens online or in person, save messages, videos or photos that can help adults understand the problem and act on it.

Ask for support

Learners who feel hurt or scared can speak to school counselors or child support organisations. Parents and caregivers can also access help from community support groups.

No learner should feel unsafe at school. By talking about bullying, reporting it early and getting support, we can help protect young people and build a kinder, safer learning environment.



A New Year of Learning and Hope



for homework, meals and rest creates structure and supports learning throughout the term.

Emotional readiness is just as important. Some children feel nervous about new grades, new teachers or new schools. Parents and caregivers can help by listening to their concerns and offering reassurance. Talking positively about school and learning builds confidence and motivation. Encouraging children to ask questions and express how they feel helps them settle in more easily.

Teachers also play a key role in the back to school period. They work to create welcoming classrooms and support learners as they adjust. Good communication between schools and families helps identify challenges early, whether academic or emotional. When parents and teachers work together, learners benefit.

Health and safety remain important at the start of the year. Ensuring children eat balanced meals, drink enough water and practise good hygiene supports their wellbeing. Walking or commuting safely to and from school should also be discussed with learners, especially those travelling long distances.

Back to school can be a fresh start. With preparation, support and positive routines, the new school year offers a chance for growth and learning. Despite the challenges many families face, education remains a powerful tool for building a stronger future in South Africa.

The start of the school year is an important time for families across South Africa. School uniforms are pressed, bags are packed and early mornings return after the long holiday break. For many households, back to school brings a mix of excitement, stress and hope for a better year ahead.

Preparation plays a big role in a smooth return to school. Making sure learners have the basics such as stationery, uniforms and school shoes helps them feel confident on their first day. Families are encouraged to label clothing and books to avoid items getting lost. Preparing school bags and lunches the night before can also make mornings calmer and reduce rushing.

Back to school is not only about supplies. It is also about routines. During the holidays, bedtimes and wake up times often change. Adjusting sleep schedules before school starts helps children feel more alert and ready to learn. Setting regular times

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Budgeting After Festive Spending



The festive season is often joyful but expensive. By January, many commuters feel the pressure of stretched budgets, school costs and daily transport expenses. While it can feel overwhelming, taking control of your money after festive spending is possible with a few practical steps.

Start by looking honestly at your finances. Write down what money is coming in and what must go out each month. This includes taxi fares, food, school needs and airtime. Seeing the full picture helps you understand where your money is going and where small changes can be made.

Focus on essentials first. Make sure rent, transport, food and school costs are covered before spending on extras. If festive spending left you with debt, include repayments in your plan so they do not fall behind. Paying even small amounts regularly helps reduce stress over time.

Planning weekly rather than monthly can also help commuters. Break your budget into weekly amounts for food and transport. This makes it easier to manage daily spending and avoid running out of money before month end. Carry only what you need for the day to reduce impulse buying.

Look for ways to save on everyday costs. Preparing food at home instead of buying takeaways can make a big difference. Buying basic items in bulk or sharing transport where possible can also help stretch your money further.

Most importantly, be patient with yourself. Festive spending happens, and recovery takes time. Small, steady budgeting habits can help you regain control and move forward with confidence.

Practical budget tips

- Write down all income and fixed monthly expenses
- Plan your budget weekly to manage daily spending
- Pack lunch and snacks to avoid extra food costs
- Limit small daily buys like sweets and fizzy drinks
- Use cash for transport and food to control spending
- Set aside coins or small notes for savings
- Avoid new debt until your budget stabilises
- Review your budget at the end of each week.

Building a Credit Record the Right Way

A good credit record can open doors to better opportunities such as housing, education funding and business finance. In South Africa, the National Credit Regulator, known as the NCR, encourages consumers to use credit responsibly so they can improve their financial future without falling into debt.

Your credit record shows how you borrow money and how well you repay it. According to the NCR, lenders use this record to decide whether to give you credit and on what terms. Paying your accounts on time every month is one of the most important ways to build a positive record. Late or missed payments can damage your profile and make future borrowing more difficult and expensive.

If you are starting out, the NCR advises consumers to begin small. This could be a low value store card or a small loan from a registered credit provider. Only take credit that you can afford to repay comfortably. Before signing any agreement, you have the right to receive a full breakdown of costs, including interest and fees. This helps you understand the true cost of borrowing.

Using credit wisely also means limiting how many accounts you open. The NCR warns that borrowing from too many places at the same time can harm your credit record. Multiple loans increase the risk of missed payments and can make lenders see you as financially stretched. It is better to manage one or two accounts well than several poorly.

Paying on time should be a priority. Setting reminders, paying as soon as you receive your income and keeping track of due dates can help. If you experience financial trouble, the NCR encourages consumers to contact their credit provider immediately. Early communication can lead to payment arrangements or assistance before the situation worsens.



South African consumers also have the right to check their credit record. The NCR confirms that every consumer is entitled to one free credit report each year from registered credit bureaus. Reviewing your report helps you understand your financial position and correct any errors that may affect your score.

The NCR also warns against unregistered lenders and informal borrowing. These often come with high interest and unfair practices. Always make sure the lender is registered with the NCR before taking credit.

Building a good credit record takes patience and discipline. By following NCR guidance, borrowing responsibly and paying on time, you can protect your finances and create better opportunities for yourself and your family.

BACK TO SCHOOL

BACK TO SCHOOL QUIZ

How many letters are in the word SCHOOL?
A) 4 B) 6 C) 8

Which one is used for writing?
A) Pencil B) Plate C) Shoe

Who teaches you at school?
A) Driver B) Teacher C) Chef

What do you carry your books in?
A) Bag B) Cup C) Ball

Word Search

S C H O O L B A G
P E N C I L B U S
T E A C H E R F R
B O O K C L A S S
F R I E N D S C H
A B U P E N C I L
G T E A C H E R S

Find and circle the words:
SCHOOL • BOOK • PENCIL • BAG • BUS
• TEACHER • CLASS • FRIEND

Can You Colour This Picture?

Use your favourite colours and make it look bright.

Draw Your Dream School Bag

What would your perfect school bag look like? Draw it here!

School Jokes

Why did the student eat his homework?
Because the teacher said it was a piece of cake!

Why did the pencil go to school?
Because it wanted to be sharp!

Help the Kids Get to School!

Let's Solve Some Math!

5 - 2 =

6 - 1 =

8 - 4 =

5 - 3 =

9 - 7 =

Getting Ready For the Year Ahead

As schools and workplaces settle into their routines, many households feel the pressure of busy mornings. Rushing to get out the door can lead to stress, missed items and bad moods before the day has even begun. The start of the year is a good time to build simple habits that make mornings smoother and help everyone feel more prepared and positive.

A daily routine is one of the most powerful tools a household can have. It does not need to be strict or complicated. Start by agreeing on regular times for waking up, getting dressed, eating and leaving the house. When children and adults know what to expect, there is less confusion and fewer arguments. A routine helps everyone move with purpose, even on early mornings.

Preparation the night before can save valuable time. Packing school bags and work bags in the evening means no last minute searching for books, chargers or keys. Lay out uniforms, work clothes and shoes so they are ready to go. This small step helps mornings feel calmer and more organised. It also teaches children responsibility and planning.

Lunch preparation is another area where evening planning helps. Making sandwiches, cutting fruit or deciding what leftovers to pack reduces

morning pressure. It also supports healthier eating and can save money during the week. If possible, involve children in helping with lunch preparation. This builds good habits and makes them more interested in what they eat.

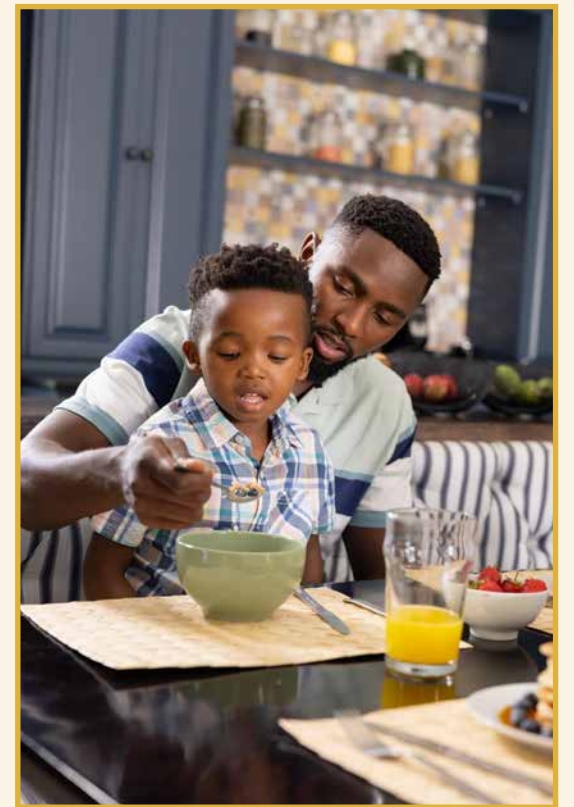
Setting goals for the year is also important, but they should be small and realistic. Instead of trying to change everything at once, focus on one or two simple goals. This could be arriving on time more often, saving a small amount of money each month or creating a quiet homework time in the evening. Small wins build confidence and keep motivation strong.

It is also helpful to plan for flexibility. Some mornings will still be difficult. Taxis may be late or children may feel tired. When this happens, take a deep breath and adjust where needed. A routine is there to support your household, not to add pressure.

Getting ready for the year ahead is about creating systems that work for your family. With simple routines, night before preparation and realistic goals, school and work mornings can become calmer and more positive. Starting the year this way helps everyone feel more in control and ready to face the months ahead.

Quick tips for smoother mornings

- Wake up at the same time every weekday to train your body clock
- Use a simple checklist near the door for keys, bags and lunch boxes
- Keep school and work items in one place so nothing gets lost
- Choose clothes for the week over the weekend if possible
- Prepare lunch ingredients in bulk to save time during the week
- Set an alarm reminder in the evening to start night time preparation
- Encourage children to pack their own bags with adult guidance
- Keep mornings calm by limiting phone use and loud television
- Leave the house five minutes earlier to reduce rushing and stress



Don't Get Left Behind, Start Your Stokvel Journey



Stokvels remain one of the strongest ways South Africans save, plan and support one another. They bring discipline, shared goals and community trust together. If you want to take better control of your money this year, starting or joining a stokvel can help you move forward with confidence.

There are different types of stokvels, and it is important to choose one that suits your

needs. Savings stokvels are popular for people who want a lump sum payout during the year. These payouts are often used for school fees, home improvements or paying off debt. Grocery stokvels focus on buying food in bulk, especially towards the end of the year, helping households manage festive season costs.

Organisations like Stokvel Association of South Africa, known as StokvelASA, encourage stokvel members to formalise their groups. This includes having a written constitution, clear leadership roles and proper financial records. According to StokvelASA, well managed stokvels are more sustainable and reduce the risk of conflict or loss of funds.

Burial stokvels are another common option. They provide financial and practical support when a member or their family experiences a loss. These stokvels help ease pressure during emotional times and ensure members are not left struggling alone.

Many grocery stokvels work closely with cash and carry stores. Cash and Carry outlets allow stokvels to buy in bulk at lower prices, helping members stretch their money further. Some cash and carry stores also offer stokvel

friendly services, such as dedicated shopping days, bulk deals and easy order systems. This makes planning and budgeting much easier for groups.

No matter the type of stokvel, clear rules are essential. Members should agree on contribution amounts, payment dates, penalties for late payments and how money will be stored. Writing these rules down helps avoid misunderstandings. Honesty and commitment are just as important. Members need to communicate openly and respect the group's

agreements.

Good record keeping protects everyone involved. Keeping track of payments, payouts and balances builds trust and accountability. Many stokvels now use simple spreadsheets or notebooks alongside a group bank account. Starting your stokvel journey is about teamwork and planning. With guidance from organisations like StokvelASA and smart use of cash and carry savings, stokvels can help households build security, confidence and a stronger financial future together.

Prioritise Your Mental Health

The start of a new year often brings new responsibilities, financial pressure and high expectations. Many people focus on work, school and family needs, while their own mental health is pushed aside. Taking care of your mental health early in the year can help you cope better with daily pressure and prevent stress from building up.

Mental health is about how you think, feel and handle life's challenges. When it is neglected, small problems can feel overwhelming. You may feel tired all the time, lose patience easily or struggle to sleep. Paying attention to your mental wellbeing is not selfish. It is a necessary part of staying healthy.

One simple way to support your mental health is to create balance in your day. Try not to fill every moment with tasks. Even short breaks can help your mind rest. Sitting quietly, listening to music or taking a slow walk can calm your thoughts. These moments help your brain reset and improve focus.

Talking about your feelings is also important. Many people carry stress alone because they do not want to worry others. Sharing your thoughts with a trusted friend, family member or community leader can bring relief. Sometimes just being heard makes a big difference. If you feel overwhelmed for long periods, visiting a clinic or speaking to a counsellor can help.

Healthy routines support mental wellbeing. Eating regular meals, drinking enough water and getting enough sleep all affect how you feel




emotionally. Try to keep a steady sleep routine, even on weekends. Rest allows your brain to recover and manage stress better.

It also helps to be kind to yourself. Not every goal will be reached immediately and not every day will go as planned. Accepting this reduces pressure. Focus on what you can control and let go of what you cannot. Celebrate small achievements, even if they seem minor.

Limiting exposure to negative news and social media can protect your peace of mind. While it is good to stay informed, constant bad news can increase anxiety. Choose specific times to check updates and spend the rest of your time on activities that lift your mood.


Prioritising your mental health at the start of the year creates a strong foundation for the months ahead. When your mind is supported, you are better able to handle challenges, care for others and enjoy daily life.

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Message...

➤

Spotlight on South African Authors

“Welcome to Our Hillbrow” by Phaswane Mpe

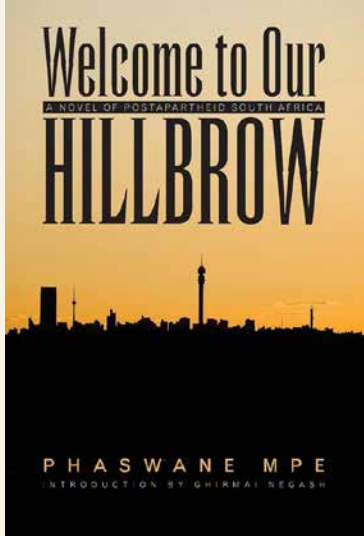
Welcome to Our Hillbrow is a literary novel set in the bustling inner-city neighbourhood of Hillbrow, Johannesburg. The story follows the lives of ordinary residents, highlighting the struggles and complexities of urban life in post-apartheid South Africa. Through the eyes of various characters, Phaswane Mpe explores themes of poverty, migration, HIV/AIDS, xenophobia, and social inequality. The novel paints a vivid picture of life in the inner city, showing both the challenges and the resilience of its people.

Why read it:

- **Insight into urban South Africa:** The novel provides a realistic and humanising portrayal of city life, far beyond tourist postcards.
- **Addresses important social issues:** Topics like HIV/AIDS, migration, and crime are explored thoughtfully, offering readers awareness and empathy.
- **Rich storytelling:** Mpe’s writing is lyrical, immersive, and reflective, making it a compelling read for anyone interested in South African society.
- **Cultural and historical context:** The book helps readers understand the impact of post-apartheid transitions on communities in Johannesburg.

Where to find it:

- **Local bookstores:** Many South African chains, such as Exclusive Books or Loot.co.za, stock this classic novel.
- **Online retailers:** Available on platforms like Takealot and Amazon (both paperback and Kindle editions).
- **Libraries:** Check your local public library or university library for a copy.



“Shark’s Egg” by Gcina Mhlophe

Shark’s Egg is a collection of South African folktales retold by celebrated storyteller Gcina Mhlophe. The book brings traditional stories to life, weaving lessons about courage, wisdom, kindness, and community. Each tale is filled with vibrant characters, from clever animals to brave humans, reflecting the rich cultural heritage of South Africa. Through these stories, readers explore moral lessons, local traditions, and the power of storytelling in passing knowledge from one generation to the next.

READING is dreaming

Why read it:

- **Preserves culture:** The book introduces young readers to South African folklore and traditional values.
- **Educational and entertaining:** Stories teach life lessons while keeping readers engaged with humour, suspense, and imagination.
- **Great for families:** Perfect for reading aloud to children or sharing in classrooms and community centres.
- **Accessible storytelling:** Written in a way that is easy to understand while still capturing the magic of oral storytelling.

Where to find it:

- **Local bookstores:** Available at chains like Exclusive Books or smaller independent bookshops.
- **Online retailers:** Purchase through Loot.co.za or Takealot, often in both paperback and digital formats.
- **Libraries:** Check public libraries or school libraries, where folktale collections are commonly available.



Image: www.gcinamhlophe.co.za

Your Next Career Move Starts Here



Looking for a new job can feel overwhelming, but updating your CV and preparing for interviews doesn’t have to be stressful. A clear, professional CV and a confident approach to interviews can make a big difference in landing the role you want.

Updating your CV

Start by reviewing your current CV. Remove outdated information and highlight recent achievements. Include your full name, contact details, and a professional email address. Clearly list your work experience, starting with the most recent role. For each job, include your title, employer, dates worked, and key responsibilities or achievements. Education, training, and

relevant skills should also be included, such as computer literacy, languages, or certificates. Keep your CV short, ideally one to two pages, and use simple, professional language. Tailor your CV for each job you apply for, focusing on the skills and experience most relevant to the role.

Preparing for the interview

Research the company before your interview. Understand their services, culture, and recent news. Prepare answers for common questions such as “Tell me about yourself” or “Why do you want this job?” Practice speaking clearly and confidently. Think of examples from your experience that show your skills and achievements.

Dress code and presentation

First impressions matter. Choose clean, neat, and professional clothing. For most workplaces, smart casual is safe; this could be a collared shirt and slacks or a simple blouse and skirt. Closed shoes are preferable, and avoid overly bright colours or heavy jewellery. Grooming is important too, hair and nails should be tidy. Finally, remember to arrive on time, bring copies of your CV, and be polite to everyone you meet. Being prepared, professional, and confident will help you stand out and increase your chances of success.

Quick CV and interview tips

- Keep your CV up to date and concise
- Highlight achievements, not just duties
- Tailor your CV to each job
- Research the company before the interview
- Practice answers to common questions
- Dress smartly and maintain good grooming
- Bring copies of your CV and any certificates
- Arrive early and be polite to everyone



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Hidden Gems in Johannesburg

Looking for something to do before heading home or over the weekend without spending much money. Johannesburg and Pretoria have plenty of hidden gems that commuters can enjoy for free or at very low cost. Think of this as your city gig guide for rest, learning and fresh air.

Green escapes

- **Zoo Lake, Johannesburg:** Perfect for an early morning walk or a relaxed afternoon. Bring a book, enjoy the open space or sit by the water. Free entry.
- **Emmarentia Dam, Johannesburg:** A favourite for joggers and families. Wide open lawns, fresh air and space to unwind after a long day. Free entry.
- **Burgers Park, Pretoria CBD:** A quiet spot in the heart of the city. Ideal for lunch breaks, short walks or sitting under the trees. Free entry.

Quiet culture stops

- **Johannesburg City Library:** A calm space away from the noise. Free access to books, newspapers and study areas. Great for learners, job seekers and readers of all ages.
- **National Library of South Africa, Pretoria:** A peaceful place to read, study or explore South African history. Open to the public and free to use.

Community vibes

- **Local community centres:** Check community halls in areas like Soweto, Alexandra, Mamelodi and Atteridgeville. Many offer free or low cost activities such as fitness classes, youth programmes and skills workshops.
- **Public parks with play areas:** Many neighbourhood parks host informal sports, children’s play and community

events. A simple way to connect with others and relax.

Culture on a budget

Museums and Heritage Sites: Some museums in Johannesburg and Pretoria offer free days or reduced entry fees. These are great for learning more about local history and culture without spending much.

These spaces offer more than entertainment.

They give commuters a chance to rest, learn and recharge. They are safe, welcoming and often just a short walk or taxi ride away. You do not need a big budget to enjoy the city.

Sometimes the best gigs are quiet, green and right around the corner. Johannesburg and Pretoria are full of hidden gems waiting to be explored.



If You Are Experiencing Abuse – You Are Not Alone

Abuse is not always easy to see. Sometimes the signs are small. Look out for:

- **Frequent injuries**
They may have bruises or cuts and give excuses that do not sound true.
- **Sudden changes in behaviour**
Someone who was talkative may become very quiet or withdrawn.
- **Fearful body language**
They may look scared, nervous, or flinch when someone raises their voice or moves suddenly.
- **Always being checked on or controlled**
Their partner or family member might call constantly, tell them who they can talk to, or decide where they can go.
- **Stopped seeing friends and family**
They may be isolated on purpose so they have no support.
- **No control over money**
They may not be allowed to work or touch money in the house, even for small things.
- **Talking about being “put in their place”**
They may say things like “It’s just how things are” or “I deserved it.”

This is a sign they may believe the abuse is normal.

How to help someone else:

- Check in gently: “Are you okay? I’m here if you need to talk.”
- Do not judge or blame.
- Offer support, not pressure.
- Share helpline numbers instead of trying to fix the situation alone.

What to do if you need help:

- Get to a safe place if you can.
- Tell someone you trust- a neighbour, friend, taxi driver, teacher or church leader.
- Do not stay silent. Abuse often gets worse over time.
- If you feel in danger right now, call the police immediately.

Important numbers to call

Police Emergency: For danger or crime in progress
Number: 10111

GBV Command Centre: Support for women & children, phone or WhatsApp help
Number: 0800 428 428 or WhatsApp: 083 765 7867

USSD Help (no airtime needed): Quick access to a social worker
Number: Dial 1207867#

Childline South Africa: Help for children facing abuse, bullying, fear or danger
Number: 116

Lifeline SA: Emotional support and counselling
Number: 0861 322 322

Remember

- Asking for help is brave.
- You do not need permission to get support.
- Someone will listen.
- Someone will help.

You deserve to live in peace and safety, at home, at school, and in your community.

Recipes to Update Your Lunchbox

New, delicious and healthy work/school friendly lunch options.

Chakalaka Chicken Wrap

Ingredients:

- Leftover grilled or rotisserie chicken, shredded
- 2 tablespoons chakalaka
- Wholewheat wrap
- Lettuce or baby spinach
- Plain yoghurt or light mayo

Method:

1. Mix chicken with chakalaka and a spoon of yoghurt.
2. Layer onto the wrap with greens.
3. Roll tightly and wrap in foil.

Healthy tip: Swap mayo for yoghurt to cut fat.



Tuna & Samp Salad

Ingredients:

- Cooked samp (leftover or pre-cooked)
- 1 tin light tuna in water
- Chopped cucumber and tomato
- Lemon juice
- Olive oil
- Black pepper

Method:

1. Mix samp, tuna and vegetables.
2. Drizzle with lemon juice and a little olive oil.
3. Season lightly.



Egg & Veg Sandwich

Ingredients:

- 3 boiled eggs
- 2 slices brown or wholewheat bread
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- Lettuce or baby spinach (optional)

Method:

1. Slice the eggs in half.
2. Lightly toast the bread if you like.
3. Spread mayonnaise on both slices of bread.
4. Place egg slices onto the bread.
5. Add lettuce or spinach if using.
6. Close the sandwich and wrap for work.



Peanut Butter Banana Oats (No-Cook)



Ingredients:

- Rolled oats
- Low-fat milk or water
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1 tablespoon peanut butter
- Cinnamon

Method:

1. Mix oats and liquid in a jar.
2. Add banana, peanut butter and cinnamon.
3. Refrigerate overnight.

Healthy tip: Natural peanut butter adds protein and healthy fats.



No-Bake Cornflake Crunchies (Kid Friendly)

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cornflakes
- 200g white or milk chocolate, melted
- Sprinkles (optional)

Method:

1. Mix melted chocolate with cornflakes until coated.
2. Scoop spoonfuls onto a lined tray.
3. Add sprinkles if using.
4. Chill until set.



SA Team Return Home From World Cross Country Championships

The South African team returned home in high spirits on 13 January 2026 after an exciting weekend at the World Athletics Cross Country Championships in Tallahassee, United States.

Adriaan Wildshutt, who achieved the best individual result in the 28-member squad, was satisfied with his performance after taking 13th place in the senior men's 10km race.

"I wanted to compete really hard for South Africa, and our team (in the senior men's contest) were able to place ninth, so that was great and hopefully we will be able to improve on that in the future," Wildshutt said.

"On a personal level I was happy with my performance. I wanted to be in the top 10 but it was my first World Cross Country Championships and it was a deep field. We ran hard from the start until the finish, and there's not much you can really do about that, but I'm still very happy about it."

Karabo More, who also made her debut at the global cross country championships, was equally pleased after running a superb second leg for the senior mixed relay quartet in the 4x2km contest. She joined Luan Munnik, Christopher Swart and Carina Viljoen as they took sixth place, achieving the best team result by the South African squad.

"It was my first World Cross Country Championships, so I expected to run the way I did, and I'm really proud of the team for putting in the effort and the teamwork. It was great," More said.

Read the full story at www.asambenitimes.co.za

Gueye Extra Time Stunner Hands Senegal TotalEnergies AFCON Title

Senegal 1-0 Morocco (AET),
Pape Gueye, 93'

Senegal were crowned champions of Africa for the second time in their history after edging hosts Morocco 1-0 after extra time in a gripping TotalEnergies Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) final in Rabat.

The decisive moment arrived just three minutes into extra time when Pape Gueye unleashed a stunning left-footed strike from the edge of the area, sending the Senegalese bench into raptures and silencing a packed stadium desperate for a long-awaited home triumph.

Morocco had come agonizingly close to settling the contest at the end of regulation time. Awarded a late penalty following a VAR review, the hosts were denied when Edward Mendy stopped Brahim Diaz's attempt forcing the final beyond the 90 minutes.

The match had been finely balanced from the opening whistle. Morocco were chasing a first continental crown in over five decades, while Senegal sought to reclaim the title they first lifted in 2021.

The Teranga Lions started the brighter side, controlling the tempo and creating the clearer chances in the first half.

Morocco goalkeeper Yassine Bounou was called into action early, first reacting sharply to keep out Gueye's back-post header from a corner before producing a brilliant one-on-one save to deny Iliman Ndiaye.

At the other end, the hosts' best opportunity of the half came five minutes before the break, when Nayef Aguerd narrowly failed to connect with Abdessamad Ezzalzouli's teasing cross that flashed across the face of goal.

The Atlas Lions emerged with renewed purpose after the interval. Ayoub El Kaabi was presented with a golden chance when Bilal El Khannouss



Image Credit: CAF

threaded a defence-splitting pass through the Senegal back line, but the forward could not keep his effort on target.

Morocco pressed relentlessly, yet couldn't find their cutting edge in the final third.

Senegal, dangerous on the counter, almost struck late in normal time. In the 89th minute, substitute Ibrahim Mbaye curled an effort towards the far corner, only for Bounou to produce another full-stretch save to keep the contest level.

With no breakthrough after 90 minutes, extra time beckoned, and Senegal needed little time to strike. A turnover in midfield saw Sadio Mané cleverly back-heel the ball into the path of Idrissa Gana Gueye, who released Pape Gueye.

Showing strength and composure, the midfielder drove to the edge of the box before firing an unstoppable shot beyond Bounou.

Morocco pushed desperately for an equaliser. Diaz nearly redeemed his earlier penalty miss with a close-range effort saved by Mendy, while Youssef En-Nesyri came inches away with a diving

header that drifted narrowly wide.

Senegal could even have doubled their lead late on, but Bounou again denied Pape Cherif Ndiaye from close range, with the substitute also failing to convert the rebound.

In the end, Senegal held firm, defending with resilience and maturity to see out a historic victory, sealing their second AFCON title and once again affirming their place among the continent's elite.

Pape Gueye – TotalEnergies Man of the Match

"I am very happy to win the final; it was a complicated match. After Morocco missed the penalty, we stayed focused, played our game, and showed Senegalese football. Then we scored a goal that allowed us to win the match. Scoring in a final is a moment of pride for me. I am very happy to score in the final, and most importantly, the Senegal national team now has a second star." - CAF Press Release

31 Jan 2026	
Chippa United	VS Durban City
31 Jan 15:30 - Buffalo City Stadium, East London, South Africa	
Marumo Gallants	VS AmaZulu FC
31 Jan 15:30 - Dr Molemela Stadium, Bloemfontein	
Orlando Pirates	VS Magesi FC
31 Jan 18:00 - Orlando Stadium, Soweto	
Polokwane City	VS Orbit College FC
31 Jan 18:00 - Old Peter Mokaba Stadium, Polokwane	
01 Feb 2026	
TS Galaxy	VS Sekhukhune United
01 Feb 15:30 - Mbombela Stadium, Nelspruit	
03 Feb 2026	
AmaZulu FC	VS Orlando Pirates
03 Feb 19:30 - Moses Mabhida Stadium, Durban	
13 Feb 2026	
Durban City	VS TS Galaxy
13 Feb 19:30 - Chatsworth Stadium, Chatsworth	
Magesi FC	VS Golden Arrows
13 Feb 19:30 - Seshego Stadium, Polokwane	
14 Feb 2026	
Polokwane City	VS Siwelele
14 Feb 15:30 - Old Peter Mokaba Stadium, Polokwane	
Chippa United	VS Richards Bay
14 Feb 20:00 - Buffalo City Stadium, East London, South Africa	
15 Feb 2026	
Orlando Pirates	VS Marumo Gallants
15 Feb 15:30 - Orlando Stadium, Soweto	
Sekhukhune United	VS Orbit College FC
15 Feb 17:30 - Peter Mokaba Stadium, Polokwane	



South African Premiership Matches



* Fixtures correct at time of print. Source: www.psl.co.za

18 Feb 2026	
Stellenbosch FC	VS Magesi FC
18 Feb 19:30 - Danie Craven Stadium, Stellenbosch	
Orlando Pirates	VS Mamelodi Sundowns
18 Feb 19:30 - Orlando Stadium, Soweto	
Siwelele	VS Kaizer Chiefs
18 Feb 19:30 - Free State Stadium, Bloemfontein	
24 Feb 2026	
AmaZulu FC	VS Mamelodi Sundowns
24 Feb 19:30 - King Goodwill Zwelithini Stadium, Durban	
Kaizer Chiefs	VS Stellenbosch FC
24 Feb 19:30 - FNB Stadium, Johannesburg	
27 Feb 2026	
Magesi FC	VS Polokwane City
27 Feb 19:30 - Seshego Stadium, Polokwane	
Stellenbosch FC	VS AmaZulu FC
27 Feb 19:30 - Danie Craven Stadium, Stellenbosch	
28 Feb 2026	
Kaizer Chiefs	VS Orlando Pirates
28 Feb 15:30 - FNB Stadium, Johannesburg	
Golden Arrows	VS Chippa United
28 Feb 17:30 - King Goodwill Zwelithini Stadium, Durban	
Siwelele	VS TS Galaxy
28 Feb 17:30 - Dr Molemela Stadium, Bloemfontein	
Orbit College FC	VS Richards Bay
28 Feb 20:00 - Olympia Park, Rustenburg	
01 Mar 2026	
Mamelodi Sundowns	VS Sekhukhune United
01 Mar 15:30 - Loftus Versfeld Stadium, Pretoria	