

**50**  
MOST MEMORABLE  
WOMEN

**FINANCIAL  
WELLNESS**  
*Navigating a new era*

**LEADING LGBTQIA  
+ NONPROFITS:**  
*What it actually takes  
to thrive*

# THANDEKA MNGOMEZULU

TOWARDS A QUEER ETHOS OF BUSINESS



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# Editor's Note



## Dear Feature readers,

**W**e have made it to October. In South Africa, we celebrate Pride in October. This is to commemorate October 13 1990, when the first Pride march was held in South Africa. This was also the first Pride march in our continent.

The significance of this day lies in its intent 32 years ago. This march not only served as a gay pride event, but also as an anti-apartheid march. The celebration of Pride by The Feature is in recognition of this effort by leaders like Simon Nikoli, Beverly Ditsie and justice Edwin Cameron, who, above the right to the expression of their personal identities, were also concerned with the liberation and the co-existence of a people.

In celebration of such vital work, we have put together a Feature that includes LGBTQIA+ leaders who build an ethos of care and co-existence. These leaders have a people first approach in their businesses and careers. This is not only inspiring, it is also necessary in today's 'back to business' climate.

This month, we had the privilege to unearth an ethos of care in business leadership that renders a "soft-life-at-work" for employees, with Thandeka Ndlovu-Mngomezulu. We also had the opportunity to discuss mindfulness and empathy in non-profit leadership with Mankwe Motimele. After this, we took a slight detour into money management and then headed back into LGBTQIA education and awareness, with a brief reading on Bivisibility.

We hope that this Feature goes some way in paying homage to those who come before, and celebrates, sufficiently, a life that is to come.



CELEBRATING

PRIDE!

MONTH





A portrait of Thandeka Ndlovu-Mngomezulu, a woman with short dark hair, wearing a white blazer over a white blouse with a large bow at the neck. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a solid blue color.

# Leading queerly:

Building an ethos of softness in the workplace

A simple google search should be able to provide sufficient information about the South African Facilities Management landscape, sadly, there is not much literature available on this segment, talk less of the shape of diversity within this environment. This is of course telling of the importance of the work of this Feature's cover star, Thandeka Ndlovu-Mngomezulu, founder of Total Serve Facilities Management and recognized recipient of the Standard Bank Top Women Entrepreneur Of The Year Award (2021) and Mail & Guardian Top 50 women in Business award (2021).

Our main concern for our conversation with Thandeka was LGBTQ leadership in Facilities Management, a historically CIS male dominated space in Africa. We were fascinated and very interested to find out how a queer woman navigates this terrain as an executive along a long list of CIS African males in the arena. In exploring this with Thandeka, we landed on a much more compelling conversation, that is; what it means to lead queerly; philosophically, and what are the ethics and the poetics that govern this in business.

When we speak of leading queerly, we are of course deriving this terminology from the theoretical offering by Jose Estabon Munoz in *Cruizing Utopia: The then and there of Queer Futurity* which constructs queerness not (simply) as about sexuality, but about an ethos of collective living, of care, and for the interests of our conversation, a celebration of diversity. An ethos of collective living and care is foundational to diversity because we cannot truly acknowledge diversity without acknowledging each other, how we co-exist with one another and how we care for each other. This was then the focus of our conversation, but more specifically, how we can create this ethos in business.

Thandeka took us through how this ethos is lived within her businesses “I am doing a lot of mindful leadership work within myself and my teams, and that can lead into different things because when you are leading with mindfulness, with empathy and kindness, then it’s easier for the people who work with you to be open. In my organisation, I start meetings with an icebreaker that asks how are you feeling today? How do you identify within yourself today – before we even start the work.”



This is definitively an uncommon practice as most businesses have a result first approach, instead of a people first approach. When asked how to navigate the fine line between care and profit, Thandeka revealed that “People are our assets and what’s inside people is what they feel, so leading with empathy is front of mind for me”. For Thandeka, people should be nurtured first because people are the drivers of business and it is through leading empathetically where we can discover how to make space for more people in business.

When probed about the systemic ways that this can be achieved, Thandeka extended that “there should be consciousness around policies of diversity and inclusion. For example, when we are looking at issues like parental leave, where most company policies dictate that men get five days paternal leave during the first three months of the birth of their child, while women can get up to four months leave, the question, *what about queer same sex parents?* rises. There is, for example, a reality of gay couples who are not being factored into these policies.” Beyond this, Thandeka also raised that companies need to improve on the health and wellness policies for their employees.

Thandeka’s method of leadership foregrounded a very specific ethos of care in leadership; one that is as mindful as it is innovative, and as grounded as it is forward thinking. The ethos of care that Thandeka has built into her method of leadership navigates a hopeful environment of “softness at work”. And while she is building this new ethos of work, an, arguably, queer ethos, she is steadfast in the reality of the current existing business climate in which she operates.





“I find that we as the African continent – we still have a long way to go. For us, there are other issues that come into play; which are culture and religion”. Thandeka reflects that she is in full awareness of these complexities when it comes to navigating queerness in an African society – or sitting with the reality thereof. And while she maintains that nothing extremely negative has happened to her because of her queerness within the continent, her awareness of our social climate has allowed her the opportunity to lead as a business-person, a woman and a queer person all at once, and also, as non-of the above.

Thandeka acknowledges that this is her privilege, and many other queer persons in Africa will not have the same opportunity simply because of a lack of a quality LGBTQIA+ education which she believes will bridge the gap between the society we live in and the one we are trying to create.

Thandeka explains that what is necessary for the continent is robust queer/lgbtqia+ education, which she believes should be lifted from the bottom because “children grow up with these ideas and become adults who enter the workplace with them” she says. To affect this, Thandeka also does significant work in education of diversity through Ink foundation, which she founded to focus on LGBTQ

education at a foundational level in order to drive more meaningful intent when it comes to education and awareness.

It is unsurprising that Thandeka has attained wide recognition for her involvement in LGBTQIA+ advancement and business leadership. The ethos of care that foregrounds her work is a necessity for all businesses that care for their people. That much of her focus is dedicated to diversity and inclusion is a big bonus for disadvantaged groups in corporate spaces.

We look forward to seeing more work and achievement by Thandeka Ndlovu-Mngomezulu.



A CALL FOR  
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*fifty*

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## Non-profit leadership: What it takes and how you can thrive.

I discovered my passion for creating impact during my undergraduate years when I started to volunteer for social impact organisations. I have learned a lot in my journey, but a grounding lesson learned is that it takes grit, integrity, and empathy to build a career in the nonprofit space, particularly when one hopes to lead in that environment.

I took up my first leadership role in a not-for-profit organisation in 2019. This was the ideal space for me because the mission of the organisation was to advance African LGBTQ+ womxn & non-binary entrepreneurs. This aligned with my purpose as a queer woman, community developer, and entrepreneur. It provided the perfect platform to work on my passions and contribute to making the world a better place.

I quickly learned that trying to “save the world” would not be as easy as I imagined, or even convenient. This, I think, is important for everyone to understand before embarking on a journey to serve in the non-profit sector. The non-profit sector, while enriching, is not as glamorous as we may hope for it to be. It is demanding, it can be taxing, and, at times will push you beyond your limits. But here is where I think exceptional leaders are made.

On my way to becoming one, I am bringing along the below a-grounding, yet parachuting lessons I have learned to date!



# 1 Inspiring volunteerism through mindfulness, empathy, and care

In my first leadership role in an LGBTQ+ advancement start-up, I served as a Chapters Manager. This meant that I helped the build of a business community of LGBTQ+ womxn & non-binary entrepreneurs. This was achieved by launching and managing several Chapters across South Africa. I also assisted in a pilot business program to help entrepreneurs raise capital, gain key business development skills, and scale their businesses. The following year I was promoted to Program Manager, managing the said business program, and reporting directly to organization directors.

In my role, I found that a key challenge of working in a non-profit is the volunteer resource dynamic. Volunteers are an essential resource for the running and outputs of non-profits. That said, while they are essential, their contribution is only voluntary (and should not be expected otherwise). This means that we often have to make room for the expectation of unreliability i.e. non-delivery of service or lack of quality assurance in our outputs, and build contingencies for these. This is important for building and maintaining trust which is foundational and imperative in our relationships with all our sponsors, partners, and stakeholders.

To build these contingencies, I have learned that much of that management can be achieved through mindfulness, empathy, and care. Many volunteers become volunteers for your cause, because like you, the cause is very close to their heart. They also value the contributions that they are making to the communities they are serving through your organization or project. So, when it comes to a volunteer's inability to deliver or see through a task, it is important to be mindful and create contingencies that are in respect of yours, theirs, and the organisation's / project's commitment to the cause you are in service to. This will go a long way for the development of your sustainability model.



## 2 Your network is your net worth

I am sure you must have heard this “cliché” everywhere by now, that’s because it is true. In my years in non-profit leadership I was often surrounded by a network of innovators and self-starters who in more than one way served as my mentors and career guides. These wonderful people have become my sounding boards through whom, and with whom, I have been able to springboard my career.

It is true that our reputations matter for the development of our careers – this is as true in the non-profit space as it is everywhere else – and while the desire to create change or make a positive impact for our societies is enough to go out there and start that non-profit, it is only enough for a starting point. If we want to continuously drive that change and make a bigger impact through our projects or organisation’s, it is important to nurture positive relationships that will result in positive reputations



# 3 Reputational Management

As indicated above, people want to know that they can trust the people they are working with, and good references go a long way in achieving that. It so becomes important to create as many positive relationships as you can. This will serve as a good control for reputational management.

This is what I have in my arsenal thus far. As I have repeated through-out this article, the non-profit space requires a lot of grit, but it does enrich your life and the lives of those you will impact through your work. It is worth your time and effort and I implore you to take up the challenge.

I hope this helps.



An aerial photograph of a boat moving across dark blue water, leaving a white wake. In the background, there is a building with a large, bright blue swimming pool and several palm trees. The overall scene is a tropical or coastal setting.

# Navigating a New Era of Financial Wellness

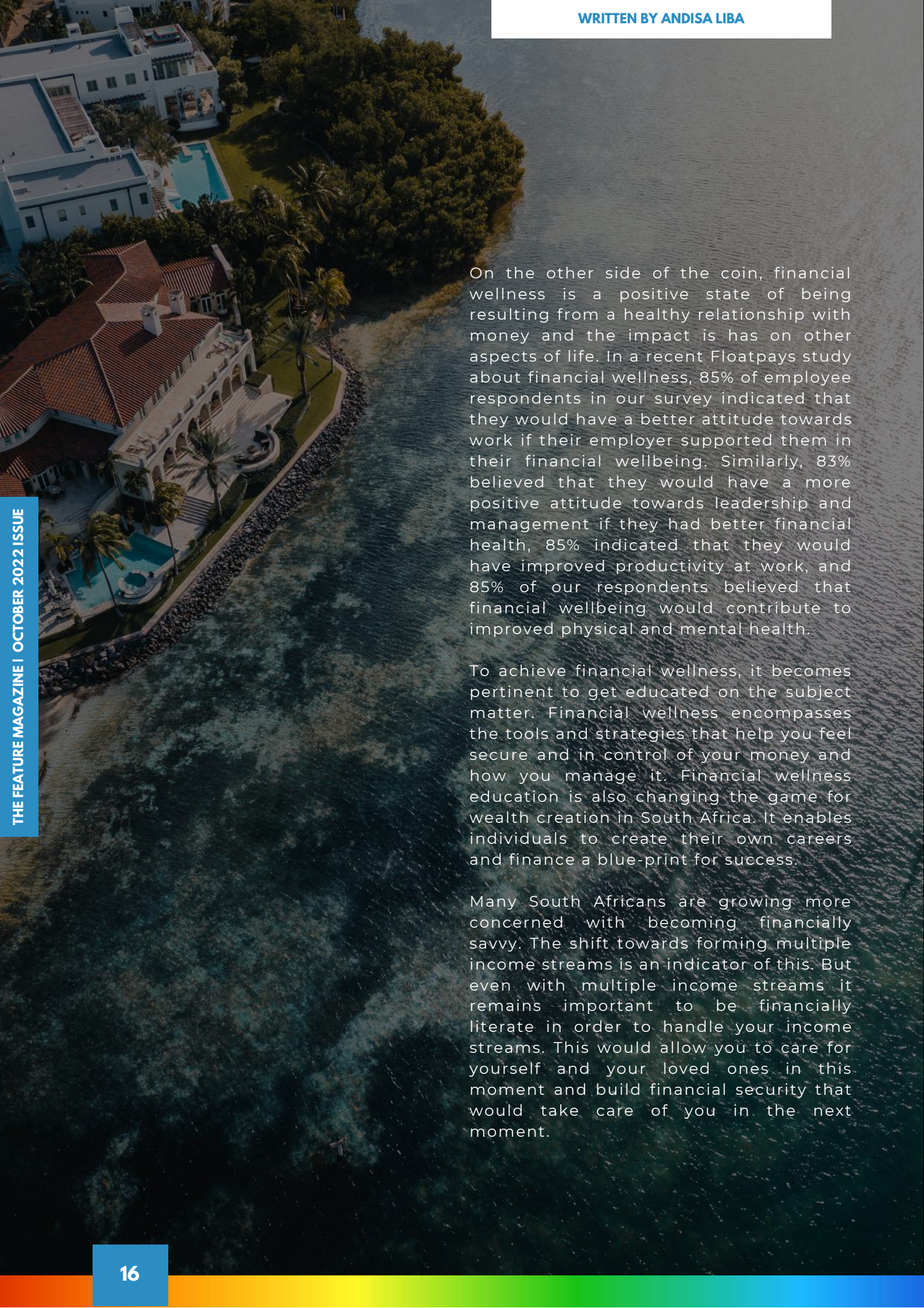
The perfect time to take account of personal financial wellbeing tends to be around the holiday season. This is a time when our spending usually increases and we're a little festive and jovial, looking forward to spending quality time with our loved ones, traveling in between and partying a little bit more than on the average other months. Be that as it may, the most common period when our state of financial wellness is actually crystalized, especially in South Africa, is in January or more commonly and aptly known as "Janu-worry". By then, it is already too late.

Financial wellness is a state of being in which you can fully meet your current and future financial obligations, while making choices that allow you to enjoy and improve your quality of life. The decisions you make today have an impact on your potential to live the life you desire.

Compared to all the other forms of wellness, financial wellness is arguably least discussed and most misunderstood. I often define financial wellness as "the ability to understand your emotions around money". Does payday make you feel anxious or empowered? Does having to deal with your creditors hike your stress levels? Does managing your monthly budget and expenditure leave you with a headache and sweaty palms? These emotions determine the relationship and financial trauma you have with money matters.

Individuals who struggle with financial wellness could easily be on a path to financial illness which is a very dangerous combination of low financial security and high financial anxiety. Studies have shown that financial stress is a major driver of poor mental health, and poor mental health, according to research by The World Economic Forum, is a great driver of income loss. i.e. Loss of earnings from depression is estimated at a total of R40 billion (or 2.2% of South Africa's gross domestic product).





On the other side of the coin, financial wellness is a positive state of being resulting from a healthy relationship with money and the impact it has on other aspects of life. In a recent Floatpays study about financial wellness, 85% of employee respondents in our survey indicated that they would have a better attitude towards work if their employer supported them in their financial wellbeing. Similarly, 83% believed that they would have a more positive attitude towards leadership and management if they had better financial health, 85% indicated that they would have improved productivity at work, and 85% of our respondents believed that financial wellbeing would contribute to improved physical and mental health.

To achieve financial wellness, it becomes pertinent to get educated on the subject matter. Financial wellness encompasses the tools and strategies that help you feel secure and in control of your money and how you manage it. Financial wellness education is also changing the game for wealth creation in South Africa. It enables individuals to create their own careers and finance a blue-print for success.

Many South Africans are growing more concerned with becoming financially savvy. The shift towards forming multiple income streams is an indicator of this. But even with multiple income streams it remains important to be financially literate in order to handle your income streams. This would allow you to care for yourself and your loved ones in this moment and build financial security that would take care of you in the next moment.



# Toward bivisibility



There has been a noted shift in LGBTQIA consciousness in South Africa. And while some of the LGBTQIA communities have had a measure of acceptance, there are still other communities within the LGBTQIA community who have not had opportunity to enjoy this privilege - even within the LGBTQIA community.

The bisexual community is one such group that have cried out at not receiving due acceptance or even recognition of their identity. Many bisexual persons feel excluded and that their identity or the experience of their identity is consistently ignored, pushed aside or erased - this is what the group refers to as Bi-Erasure.





# *The Solution: Bi-visibility and Inclusivity*

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Bi-visibility is the acceptance and validation that bisexuality exists and deserves to be respected within the LGBTQIA+ community and outside. Strides have been made with more women coming out of the closet and demanding to take space worldwide. Yet, within the POC community due to deeply ingrained biphobia, and heteronormativity, a lot of work still needs to be done.

The primary way that bi-erasure dissolves is through education on what sexuality entails for all gender identities among all races. It is only through education that we can dismantle harmful ideologies and practices.

While this might seem like a drop in the ocean, progressive change starts slowly. With more prevalence of African women-identifying people of all ages knowing they are seen and valid, it will (hopefully) cause a spill-over effect where more bisexual persons freely speak about their sexuality and thus creating more representation in media and other spaces.

As The Feature Magazine, we support and provide value to the diverse spectrum of sexuality that makes the world a place filled with love and joy. We support the LGBTQIA+ community for their work to fight for equal rights for everyone in South Africa.





# PROTECTING YOUR KINKY/CURLY CROWN

Your African hair is your crown. And while this is a golden and true statement, most of us grew up with a misunderstanding about the quality and beauty of our hair.

To many of us, African hair was something to hide. We knew it as coarse and nappy, not understanding that it was just coily and thick, and “defied gravity”. African hair is beautiful, but it’s even better when we understand how to treat it.

First and foremost, you need to understand that there are different types of hair textures; straight, curly, kinky, and wavy. For African women, the main hair types are curly and kinky and each requires a unique kind of treatment.



# CURLY HAIR

## 3A Hair

3A hair has a thick texture with defined curls. The main benefit of 3A hair is that it is usually shiny and has lots of body and movement. 3A hair is more prone to fizziness and dryness

## 3B Hair

3B is courser than 3A. 3B hair has looser curls yet is still defined with spirals that range from rings to corkscrews. 3B hair has a lot of volume. Like 3A, the hair is prone to fizziness and dryness.

## 3C Hair

3C hair has very tight curls that pack volume on the scalp. The main benefit of 3C hair is its versatile style ability. However, it does experience shrinkage.

# KINKY HAIR

## 4A Hair

Usually shown with a visible S-shape, these kinks are tighter than 3C. When fingers run through the hair, you will notice that it feels dense but delicate and fine. The main problem with this hair type is the tendency to experience dryness.

## 4B Hair

Although 4B curls are less defined than 4A, these curls have sharp angles. This hair texture is soft and feels fragile. The strands of hair range from fine to coarse in consistency. This main problem is its proneness to breakage.

## 4C Hair

4C hair is tightly coiled and dense with less of a visible kink in the hair, due to how tightly packed together the hair is. It packs a lot of volume while also experiencing shrinkage after the hair dries.





# Herbal Extracts

HERBAL EXTRACTS PRODUCTS TAKES CARE OF ALL KINDS OF AFRICAN HAIR. THE PRODUCTS CONSIST OF A SHAMPOO, A CONDITIONER, A MOISTURISING SHEA BUTTER AND AN ALL-PURPOSE TISSUE OIL.

ALL CREATED TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR BEAUTIFUL AFRICAN HAIR.







# Multi-Purpose Tissue Oil



✓ Although people think that tissue oil should only be used for their body. The African Extracts tissue oil can be used on any hair type. This tissue oil is a blend of rooibos and vitamin E with the addition of other herbal compounds. This tissue oil will repair and refresh damaged hair inside the follicle.

For the best use, section and massage into the hair an hour before shampooing.



# Ultra-Moisturizing Shea Butter



Our Ultra-Moisturizing Shea butter has powers that will leave your hairline feeling great. The product can ease a dry scalp and decrease the amount of dandruff that a scalp sheds. With the anti-inflammatory properties and high-fat content that Shea Butter already has, our product will leave your hair feeling full and moisturised.



Our Ultra-Moisturizing Shea butter also aids in keeping relaxed or dyed hair in good health. This makes it suitable for African hair which tends to lose moisture when processed with hair dyes, bleaches and relaxers.



Our product will help you keep the hair you have and add more volume. Shea butter has vital nutrients that penetrate the hair follicles and treat conditions, leading to healthier and stronger hair. All you need to do is section your hair and add a light coating of shea butter to your roots for better effects.





# Herbal Extracts Shampoo



✓ A good hair care routine starts with a good shampoo.

Designed for all African hair types, the Herbal Extracts Shampoo will leave you with soft hair and a visible sheen. This shampoo is robust with notes of rooibos and a mixture of herbal extracts that will leave your shower smelling like a bouquet. The jojoba and wheatgerm oil soften hair, while the seaweed extract leaves the hair shining. Finally, rooibos and tea tree oil soothe dry scalps.



# Herbal Extracts Conditioner



Conditioning your hair takes your hair care to the next level. A good conditioner makes your hair softer and easier to style. What makes this conditioner stand out is the fact that it leaves your hair refreshed without weighing it down with chemical build-up. The grapeseed and Abyssinian hair breathe new life into your hair.





**FOOD O'CLOCK:**  
HOMEMADE  
BLUEBERRY ICE-  
CREAM

*Kgopotso Boshomane*



# HOMEMADE BLUEBERRY ICE-CREAM

## INGREDIENTS

500ml of fresh cream  
 1/2 cup of condensed  
 milk  
 1 tsp of vanilla essence  
 1 cup of fresh  
 blueberries  
 1/2 cup of castor sugar  
 1/2 tsp of lemon juice

## DIRECTIONS

1. In a pan over medium heat, add blueberries, sugar and lemon juice. Leave it until the sugar dissolves
2. Leave the pan for couple of minutes till the blueberry mixture comes to boil
3. Reduce the heat and simmer the mixture for 5 min
4. Set it aside and let it cool down
5. Whip the fresh cream to a stiff peak
6. Add condensed milk and vanilla essence and fold gently
7. Add the blueberry syrup and fold gently
8. Transfer it to a freezer safe dish and cover it with cling wrap
9. Freeze for overnight



