

# The Feature.za

AUGUST 2023

MAGAZINE

**CAREER**  
GRIEF

**QUPCAKE GIRL**  
THOBILE  
MBANGENI

**GETTING  
THROUGH  
STRUGGLE**

**FEATURING**  
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**PROTECT YOUR  
CROWN**  
NOMPUMELELO  
MASONDO

**THE BIG  
EMPLOYMENT  
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**HETTY THE  
ENTREPRENEUR**



# MEET THE CREATIVES



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# The Feature.za

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**CAREER GRIEF**



*Dear Feature readers,*  
EDITOR'S  
NOTE



Welcome to the latest edition of The Feature Magazine. This month, we wanted to shake things up a bit and do something out of the ordinary. August is a month dedicated to celebrating the incredible journeys that women have embarked on to shape the world we live in today. We decided to merge this celebration with the theme of career, exploring the modern woman's work life.

Women have always strived to be recognized and appreciated for their achievements in their professional lives. However, there is still an underlying issue surrounding careers that many women feel uncomfortable discussing. In this issue, we aim to confront these challenges head-on. We will delve into the complexities of career grief and the importance of taking breaks between careers. Additionally, we will explore how the younger generation perceives employment, ensuring their voices are heard.

For our interviews this month, we have chosen to feature small businesses that are actively working to change the narrative. From the world of pastries to the realm of technology, these inspiring women are making waves in their respective industries. This month is all about celebrating women, regardless of the paths they have chosen and where they currently find themselves in life. Who knows, this issue might just ignite a spark within you, inspiring you to strive for more in your own life.

Let's not forget the incredible women who came before us, fighting tirelessly for us to occupy spaces we were once told we didn't deserve. So, why not honor them by embracing your own power?

With love,

*The Feature Magazine*

# Hetty the Entrepreneur

## HETTY BOACHIE - YIADOM



Hetty's upbringing has undeniably played a pivotal role in shaping her into the entrepreneur and individual she is today. The values of hard work, determination, and self-belief instilled by her supportive family and enterprising background have laid the foundation for her journey. Learning about the power of entrepreneurship through her grandmother's example and being exposed to different cultures and experiences through her parents' academic and travel pursuits have undoubtedly contributed to her diverse perspective and open-mindedness.

Her recognition of the importance of guidance and mentorship, evident through the mentors she mentioned like Ian Fuhr and Vusi Thembekwayo, led her to appreciate the impact mentorship can have on aspiring entrepreneurs. This realization inspired her to channel her experiences and insights into business mentorship and consultancy, a path where she can help others overcome challenges and succeed.

Her advice to those entering the business space is a reflection of her own journey. Believing in oneself, embracing failure, seeking mentorship, continuous learning, and unwavering passion are key elements that have driven her success and can undoubtedly inspire others to achieve their entrepreneurial dreams.



## TELL US ABOUT YOUR UPBRINGING AND HOW DID THAT SHAPE YOU?

My upbringing played a crucial role in shaping who I am today as an entrepreneur. I was raised in a supportive and enterprising family, where hard work and determination were instilled in me from a young age. My parents taught me the value of perseverance and self-belief, which laid the foundation for my entrepreneurial journey. My grandmother was the original Hetty the entrepreneur as she sold Amagwinya (fat cakes) and through the proceeds of those put my mother and her 7 siblings through school. I learnt from there the power of entrepreneurship.

I was raised in a household with both parents, who were strict academics that instilled discipline and a love for travel. My mum is South African, my dad is Ghanaian and together we have travelled the world and lived in many countries.

## WHAT PROMPTED THE IDEA THAT BUSINESS MENTORSHIP AND CONSULTANCY ARE THE WAY FORWARD FOR YOU?



Throughout my entrepreneurial journey, I faced various challenges and obstacles. I realised that there is immense value in having the right guidance and mentorship. Names such as Ian Fuhr and Vusi Thembekwayo are those I am proud to call my mentors. This understanding led me to appreciate the importance of mentorship in the business world. I saw the potential to make a significant impact by helping other entrepreneurs navigate their challenges, and that's when I decided to venture into business mentorship and consultancy. The joy of seeing others succeed through my guidance is incredibly fulfilling, and it became clear to me that this was the way forward for me.

*Hetty the Entrepreneur*



## WHAT INSPIRED THE IDEA BEHIND P&H BOUTIQUE?

The idea behind P&H Boutique, was born out of a shared passion between my husband and I for African print clothing and dipping our toes into the entrepreneurial world. We noticed that there was a demand for authentic and stylish African print outfits in a convenient and quality service environment, but many people faced difficulties in accessing them. So, we decided to take our passion for African fashion and transform it into an online retail business that could reach a broader audience. The demand became so high we had to create physical stores.

## WHAT WAS IT LIKE BEING HONOURED WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO RUN A TED TALK?

Being given the opportunity to run a TED Talk was an absolute honour and a dream come true. It was a remarkable platform to share my experiences, insights, and passion for entrepreneurship with a global audience. The TED Talk allowed me to inspire and connect with countless aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners. It was a humbling experience, and the positive feedback and engagement I received from the audience reaffirmed my dedication to helping others succeed.

## IN YOUR MIND, HOW DOES A BUSINESS ENSURE IT STANDS THE TEST OF TIME?

To ensure a business stands the test of time, it must continuously adapt and innovate. Embracing change, staying ahead of market trends, and being open to new ideas are vital. Additionally, maintaining a customer-centric approach and consistently delivering value are essential for long-term success. Building strong relationships with customers and fostering a positive company culture that empowers employees to thrive are equally crucial. Ultimately, a successful business is one that remains agile, customer-focused, and committed to growth.

## WHAT KEEPS YOU GROUNDED IN DIFFICULT TIMES?

*I draw strength from my purpose and passion for what I do. I remind myself of the impact I can make on the lives of others through mentorship and our monetisation agency. Additionally, I practice mindfulness and self-care, which helps me maintain balance and clarity in difficult moments. Having a growth mindset and viewing challenges as opportunities for learning and improvement keeps me grounded and focused on the bigger picture.*

## TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR WORK IN MENTORSHIP?

*In my mentorship work, I strive to provide aspiring entrepreneurs and business owners with practical guidance, actionable strategies, and emotional support. Those that require more 1 on 1 attention we help through our monetisation agency where we focus on building a personal and business brand that is geared up to monetise.*

## WHERE DO YOU SEE YOUR BRAND AND BUSINESS EVOLVING IN THE FUTURE?

*I envision my brand and business expanding globally. I want to reach even more entrepreneurs across different industries and empower them to succeed in the digital era. I aim to establish partnerships with like-minded organisations to create a larger impact and foster a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem.*

## WHAT WORDS OF WISDOM DO YOU HAVE FOR THOSE ENTERING THE BUSINESS SPACE?

*For those entering the business space, my advice is to believe in yourself and your vision wholeheartedly. Embrace failure as an opportunity to learn and grow. Surround yourself with a supportive network of mentors and fellow entrepreneurs who can uplift and guide you. Stay committed to lifelong learning and constantly seek ways to improve your skills and knowledge. Remember that success may not come overnight, but with perseverance, determination, and a passion for what you do, you can achieve your entrepreneurial dreams.*





# In Case You missed it

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## Unveiling the Resilience of Desiree Diane Prins

Meet Desiree Diane Prins, a remarkable woman who personifies resilience and determination. Pursuing a Masters degree in the Philosophy of Technology at the University of Free State, Desiree's journey is an inspiring narrative of turning adversity into achievement.

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## **Transformer**

**NTSAKO ZACA**

In a world where standards of beauty have often been dictated by Eurocentric ideals, there's a rising movement that proudly celebrates the unique beauty of African afros. Ntsako Zaca, affectionately known as Mini Zaca, stands at the forefront of this empowering wave. At just 21 years old, she's already crafting a legacy that encourages black women to embrace their natural hair and radiate confidence through every strand.

[READ MORE](#)



**TOP 10**

Most Inspiring  
Entrepreneur

**My Hair, My Crown:**  
Celebrating the Majesty of  
African Afros



THE ART OF  
*Creating a  
Self-Care Routine*

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THE ART OF  
*Creating a  
Self-Care Routine*

Assess Your Needs

Identify Self-Care Activities

Schedule Regular  
Self-Care Time

Create a Self-Care  
Ritual

Practice Self-Compassion

CATCH UP ON

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# THE BIG EMPLOYMENT BREAK

Miriam Dube

5 years ago, a friend told me that she was feeling tired and exhausted from all the years of running after the ultimate career. It has now been almost 20 years since she started working in corporate straight out of school and have never truly taken a career break, apart from taking leave during December holidays, or one day here and there when she needs to attend to something. She subsequently took a very long one year leave in the form of a sabbatical which her employer actually approved. Upon her return from sabbatical, she worked the company mandatory period back, and resigned to go pursue other avenues.

In my conversation with her, I wanted to understand what was exhausting her as she has not exactly been a person that was doing the same job, at the same company for years, but she has moved around and up the ladder quite a bit. In fact, she has had a very progressive career over the years, making her the envy of many of her peers and friends. It turned out, my assessment of what would make a person tired in corporate was not how she assessed her fatigue.

She explained to me that she is driven by a couple of things which she mentioned, and at some point, in her life, she needed to take stock of where she was and if continuing was the right option for her. I was truly enlightened by her rational and this got me to also think a little more deliberately about what that would mean for me.

Taking a one-year break from corporate life had a significant positive impact on my life and well-being. During that sabbatical, I was able to clear my mind, find new energy, and focus on personal projects and self-development. I managed to accomplish more than I could have imagined in just one year, and it seems to have brought about a positive shift in my perspective on life.

Taking a break like this can be highly beneficial for some individuals, as it allows them to recharge, reflect, and explore new opportunities or interests. It also provides an opportunity to spend quality time with loved ones and to pursue personal goals that may have been sidelined while juggling a demanding career.

However, it's crucial to acknowledge that not everyone may have the same circumstances or financial stability to take such a long break. As I pointed out, taking a sabbatical requires careful planning and financial readiness to sustain oneself during the break.

Additionally, considering the current unemployment rate, it may not be advisable for everyone to take a year-long break from their careers. Those who are considering a sabbatical should carefully assess their personal situation, including financial stability, industry trends, and re-employment possibilities before making such a decision.

Taking shorter breaks or finding ways to manage stress and maintain work-life balance while still being employed may be more suitable for some individuals. Every person's situation is unique, so it's essential to tailor decisions about career breaks to individual circumstances and goals.

The key takeaway from my experience is the importance of self-care, mental wellness, and periodically reassessing your career and life goals. It's essential to find a balance between professional ambitions and personal well-being to ensure long-term fulfilment and success.

# GETTING THROUGH THE STRUGGLE

Olwethu Mokonenyane

The youth demographic holds a significant percentage of the population in South Africa and around the world. In South Africa, the youth make up 35.7 percent of the population, with 57.7 million individuals. Despite being a large demographic, the youth often face challenges and struggles, including unemployment and lack of opportunities. This leads to brain drain as educated youth seek better prospects in other countries.

However, it is important to recognize that the youth are not just victims of these struggles; they also possess the power to fight against them. Born after the end of apartheid, the youth have access to equal rights and have continued the fight for social change. The Soweto Uprising in 1976, where youth protested against discriminatory education, is a prime example of their determination. Although lives were lost, the uprising shed light on the cruelties of the apartheid government.

Today's youth have learned from their predecessors and continue to fight for change. The Rhodes Must Fall movement at the University of Cape Town in 2015 highlighted the need to address racial history and decolonize the education system. The Fees Must Fall protests in 2016 sparked national debates about the cost and accessibility of education, addressing the remnants of inequality from apartheid.



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Moreover, the youth are using social media as a platform to address mental health and disabilities. They are breaking the silence surrounding these topics and showcasing the triumphs of individuals who have overcome mental illness or physical disabilities. This includes individuals like Justina Miles, a 20-year-old American Sign Language interpreter who showcased her talent during Rihanna's Super Bowl performance, challenging the notion that differently-abled individuals are limited in their abilities.

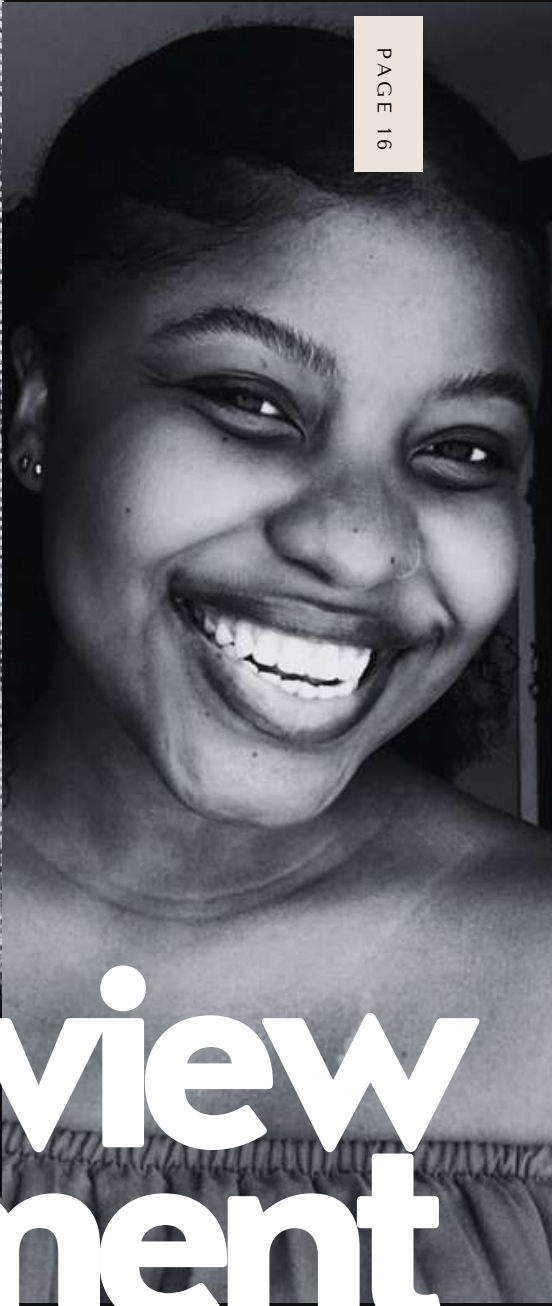
The youth of South Africa have the power to change the landscape of the country and challenge the idea that they are solely defined by struggle. Despite facing adversity, they have the strength and determination to overcome obstacles and make a positive impact on society.



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# Interview segment

Thobile 'Qupcake Girl' Mbangeni  
Nompumelelo Masondo  
Mwali Hlongwane

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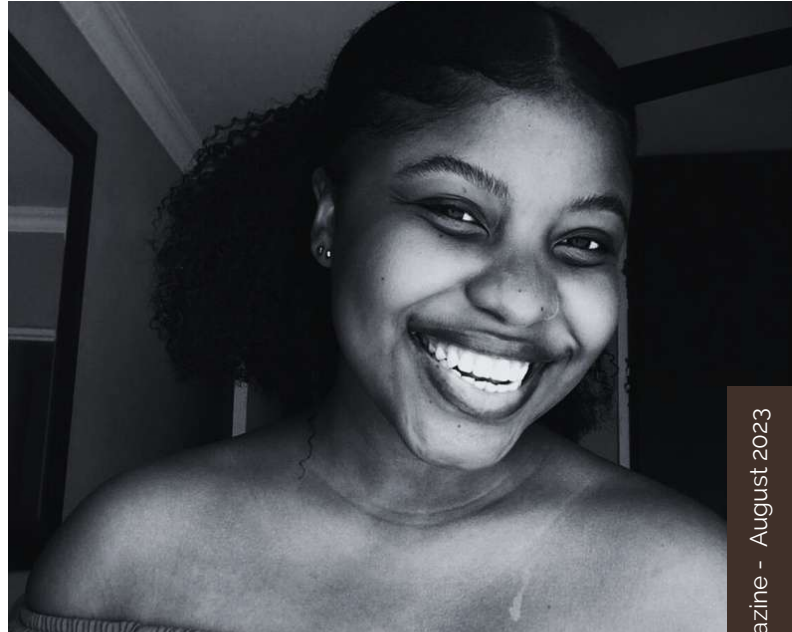


# NOMPUMELELO MASONDO

Olwethu Mokonyane

Nompumelelo Masondo's journey with her natural hair is a powerful example of how African women are reclaiming their cultural identity and beauty standards. From her youth, she faced societal pressure to conform to Eurocentric beauty norms, but she chose to embrace her natural hair, seeing it as a crown to be celebrated. Through her brand, Protect Your Crown, she aims to bring a positive and empowering image of natural hair into the corporate space.

Her decision to start the brand was both beautiful and challenging, as she had to overcome self-doubt and societal expectations. However, the positive responses from her audience and the recognition of her skill in crafting hairstyles reinforced her belief that natural hair should be celebrated and taken seriously.



Nompumelelo's reach may not be global yet, but her presence on social media platforms, particularly YouTube, has allowed her to connect with a broader audience. Her handmade, organic hair products set Protect Your Crown apart, and she envisions her business expanding to reach a global audience in the future.

Her message to women is clear: Embrace and explore your natural hair. By doing so, you can grow and nurture not only your hair but also your sense of self-confidence and cultural identity. Nompumelelo's journey is an inspiration to many, demonstrating the power of embracing one's authentic self and celebrating the beauty of African hair in its natural state





# MBALI HLONGWANE

Mbali Hlongwane is an inspiring figure who has not only succeeded in the technology sector but has also taken the initiative to uplift and empower other women through her organization, Pink Codrs Africa. Her journey from a small township to becoming a system engineer is a testament to how passion and determination can lead to success in the tech industry.

Pink Codrs Africa stands out because of its focus on providing tailor-designed programs that equip women with in-demand tech skills, preparing them to thrive in the rapidly evolving Fourth Industrial Revolution. The organization's expansion plans into other African countries, along with its involvement in projects within the football industry, demonstrate a commitment to making a tangible and positive impact on the lives of women across the continent.

One of the key challenges Mbali addresses is imposter syndrome, which affects many women in the tech industry. By fostering collaboration and promoting inclusivity, she aims to create a more equitable environment for women pursuing tech careers, enabling them to overcome obstacles and excel in their fields.

For her organisation, Mbali has a long-term goal she seeks to attain in the next five years. "Looking ahead to the next five years, I am filled with enthusiasm for the work we have planned. We are embarking on an expansion of our efforts into Kenya, engaging in exciting discussions with Morocco, and exploring opportunities in other African countries.

Additionally, I am thrilled about the projects involving the development and innovation within the football industry, particularly the work I have undertaken with Kaizer Chiefs.

Mbali's long-term goal of empowering and impacting the lives of over 400,000 women across Africa reflects her dedication to creating opportunities and supporting women's growth. Her message is clear: knowledge and the ability to use it effectively are what truly matter, and one's background should not limit their potential or aspirations.

As the world continues to evolve in the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Mbali Hlongwane's efforts and achievements serve as an inspiration for women in the tech sector and beyond, demonstrating the power of passion, determination, and collaboration in shaping a brighter future for all.

# THOBILE 'QUPCAKE GIRL' MBANGENI

Olwethu Mokonyane



During the Covid-19 pandemic, the food and beverage industry experienced a knock that resulted in many establishments closing their doors without proper prospect of their future. Thankfully, the industry not only managed to survive the stay-at-home orders but found manners that allowed them to evolve into a form that is not only stronger, but also showcases their talents in a wide variety of ways. In the vein of ingenuity, home establishments soon grew as a lack of employment only bred more creativity.

Thobile Mbangeni, 29 years old, is a testament to the creativity and strength of human experience. Her status as a first-born girl-child instilled in her a need for self-sufficient and independent. The seed that began her love of pastry was planted in her childhood. Thobile Mbangeni's journey as a self-taught pastry chef and entrepreneur is a story of passion, perseverance, and creativity. Growing up spending time in the kitchen, she developed a love for baking from an early age, which eventually led her to start selling baked goods in high school and later in varsity. Her business, Qupcake Girl, was born out of this enterprising spirit, and she has since built a reputation for creating custom-made cakes filled with love and dedication.

Despite not having formal training, Thobile's self-taught approach has instilled a strong work ethic that sets her apart in the industry. She believes in the power of personalized and artisanal baking, offering a unique sensory experience to her customers, unlike generic offerings found in chain stores.

Thobile's vision for the future is to make Qupcake Girl a household name, particularly for celebration cakes. While she doesn't have a specific five-year plan, she remains focused on inspiring others to pursue their passion for baking. Through her journey, she has already inspired other aspiring bakers to start their own businesses.

As a small business owner, Thobile acknowledges the challenges but encourages others to be patient with themselves and to keep trying, learning from mistakes along the way. Her story showcases the potential of turning a childhood passion into a successful entrepreneurial venture and serves as a reminder that with determination and perseverance, dreams can become reality.

For more information on Qupcake Girl:





# CAREER GRIEF

Olwethu Mokonyane



The phenomenon of career grief has long been ingrained in the urban work culture, where individuals often define themselves solely by their weekday occupations. For those who lack a healthy work-life balance, the loss of employment can be particularly devastating, as it leaves them questioning their very existence. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated this issue, with many people experiencing the symptoms of career grief as businesses shut down and jobs disappeared.

Career grief, though seemingly contradictory, is a valid concept. It refers to the grieving process that occurs when one loses their job due to various circumstances, such as the closure of a family-owned business or retrenchment. In a society where work is seen as the primary source of engagement and purpose, the absence of employment can leave individuals mourning the loss of what once defined them. Similar to traditional grief, career grief follows a pattern of denial, bargaining, anger, depression, and acceptance. However, it is a complex experience that often involves cycling through these stages repeatedly until the individual can process their emotions and move forward.

Negative emotions, such as sadness and cognitive decline, are common during career grief, making even simple daily tasks challenging. Additionally, individuals may engage in self-reflection, questioning if they could have done something differently to prevent their job loss. This self-blame can be detrimental to their mental health.

Career grief can also manifest when individuals feel stagnant in their career progression. They may feel overlooked for promotions, despite their dedication and passion for the organization. These feelings are not rooted in jealousy but rather in valid emotions that should be acknowledged for the well-being of the employee. Furthermore, career grief can arise from working under ineffective leaders who fail to inspire passion and hinder employees' performance. Recognizing these dynamics is crucial, as it impacts both the organization's success and the employees' motivation.

Another scenario where career grief emerges is when recent graduates struggle to find employment while witnessing their peers thrive in their careers. This discrepancy can lead to feelings of stagnation and frustration. It is essential to remember that everyone's journey is unique, and building a successful life takes time.

While career grief may seem insurmountable, there are solutions to navigate through it. Acknowledging and allowing oneself to grieve is a necessary step in processing emotions. It may be challenging, but it is crucial for mental well-being. Career grief should not deter individuals from seeking new employment opportunities or pursuing personal growth. It is essential to seek organizations that foster growth and honor commitments. For those currently unemployed, exploring self-employment or starting small ventures can provide a sense of empowerment and personal development. Additionally, individuals should recognize their own contributions and assert their value within the workplace hierarchy.

In conclusion, career grief is a real and complex experience that affects individuals when they lose their jobs or feel stagnant in their careers. It is crucial to acknowledge and process these emotions to move forward. By seeking new opportunities, pursuing personal growth, and recognizing their own worth, individuals can overcome career grief and find fulfillment in their professional lives.

