

Metropolitan invites South Africans to join together by sharing their losses from 2020, and start 2021 stronger

Issued by [Metropolitan](#)

15 Dec 2020

As 2021 approaches, the world is planning for the year ahead with a high degree of uncertainty and skepticism. The events of this year have ushered in changes that none of us could have predicted. Many people's lives have been disrupted by the pandemic; with varying degrees of loss, from loved ones to income and time. But with a clear-minded outlook, the support of fellow South Africans and guidance from experts, there is a way to enter the new year stronger.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has served as a wake-up call for people across the world, many of whom have had their livelihoods undermined," says Nontokozo Madonsela, Group Chief Marketing Officer at Momentum Metropolitan. "Loss is universal, but however inevitable it may be, there are lessons to be learnt from it. The challenges people faced this year, are real and we all need to acknowledge them. We need to find peace in the collective knowledge that we are not alone in what we are feeling. While the new year certainly does not promise to be an easier road, once we have dealt with 2020 there are steps that people can put in place now to be in a stronger position going into 2021."

In recognition of this, Metropolitan has created a platform for the public to share, connect and learn from one another's experiences of loss in 2020. The 'Mzansi Class of 2021: We Start 2021 Stronger' is a virtual sharing and empowering series that will run on the Metropolitan Facebook page for a three-week period, where South Africans can reflect upon the losses they faced. South Africans can join a tribe led by media personality Somizi Mhlongo, actress Rami Chuene and hit maker DJ Tira who will touch losses they experienced and lessons learnt from those losses. With the guidance from experts, the tribe will be empowered with the tools they need to learn from loss and start the year on a stronger footing.

The following topics will be covered in the series:

- **Loss of a loved one** | Allowing the grieving process to unfold, learning from the loss experienced and making big or small changes that will transform your life
- **Loss of income** | Money lessons from the year
- **Loss of well-being** | The psychology of resilience – how trying times can better position us to deal with tough situations in future

The sessions will provide participants with an opportunity for individual reflection on what they have lost, and what this loss means.

The next step is to connect through conversations with others who have suffered the same loss. When speaking to someone who has experienced loss in their life, we commonly use the phrase: "I can't imagine what you're going through." This pillar of the journey will connect you with someone who knows exactly what you are going through – because they have experienced similar loss. Madonsela says: "At the end of the day, many of us are facing very similar challenges, and have experienced similar losses. By coming together through these necessary conversations, we can relate to and learn from one another, and find comfort in our shared experience."

The final step leverages the power of the collective. Having reflected on and shared our loss with others and understanding that our loss doesn't define us, this final step is about learning from the past and being equipped with tools that help people understand the need to have plans in place to build a stronger future and to mitigate against the devastation of loss.



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