



Kuthetha Nathi

www.kuthethanathi.com

4-WEEK+ INTERNSHIP CURRICULUM

A Guide to Your Journey as a Volunteer Intern

Kuthetha Nathi

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The South African Context

Mental health care in South Africa has undergone significant transformation over the past several decades. Under apartheid, access to training and services was highly unequal, leaving the majority of the population without adequate support. Since the democratic transition in 1994, substantial efforts have been made to expand services, including the diversification of training, and the improvement of access to care in underserved communities.

Despite this progress, the demand for mental health services continues to far exceed available resources. South Africa's mental health workforce includes social workers, occupational therapists, psychologists (across several specialties including clinical, counselling, industrial, research, neuropsychology, and educational), psychometrists, psychotechnicians, registered counsellors, and psychiatrists. These professionals play a vital role in addressing widespread conditions such as trauma, addiction, depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder. However, access to care remains uneven, particularly in rural and under-resourced communities. High costs, persistent stigma, and a shortage of practitioners contribute to what is widely known as the mental health treatment gap. In the public sector alone, there is approximately one psychologist for every 80,000 people.

As a result, many individuals with common mental health conditions receive little or no support, with consequences for families, communities, and the broader health system. Within this context, non-profit organisations (NPOs) like Kuthetha Nathi / Talk to Us play a critical role in bridging the gap. By providing accessible services, raising awareness, reducing stigma, and delivering community-based interventions-through the established process of task-sharing-NPOs help ensure that more people can access the care and support necessary for psychological well-being.



We look forward to welcoming you to Kuthetha Nathi / Talk to Us for your internship programme. At Kuthetha Nathi, we hope to provide an enriching and immersive experience within South Africa's mental health field. You'll have the opportunity to work alongside trained professionals, such as psychologists and registered counsellors, take part in engaging workshops, and develop valuable new skills. As part of your journey, you'll gain insight into how an NPO operates, contribute to meaningful outreach initiatives, and connect with communities in real-world settings. This experience is designed not only to grow your practical abilities but also to deepen your understanding of South Africa's rich and diverse cultural landscape.



Who we are

Kuthetha Nathi / Talk to Us is a registered non-profit organisation (NPO) with the Department of Social Development. We are constituted with three board members. Through the *task-sharing model*, we provide accessible mental health support to the public at low-cost. Our organisation focuses on the top quality of service we provide, by ensuring that our counsellors are highly trained and receive regular weekly supervision.

Kuthetha Nathi / Talk to Us is also involved in outreach initiatives (such as school outreach programmes), workshops, and community engagement. Through these initiatives, we aim to reduce mental health stigma and encourage help-seeking behaviour, particularly in underserved and vulnerable communities.

Vision Statement

At Kuthetha Nathi / Talk to Us, we envisage a network of sustainable hubs of quality mental health care, accessible to everyone, regardless of socioeconomic circumstances. Society is collaborative - we help one another for the common good.

Mission Statement

At Kuthetha Nathi / Talk to Us, we are committed to building a compassionate and connected society where quality mental health care is accessible to all. Through a growing network of sustainable support hubs, we provide national structures for low-cost counselling by supervised community counsellors. We are committed to developing a respected training framework that equips and nurtures community counsellors, guiding their efforts toward impactful community outreach. Through compassion, capacity building, and connection, we strengthen a network of care that reaches those most in need.

OUR APPROACH

Whilst interns are not directly involved in training nor counselling, it is essential that they understand the organisations' two main approaches to community counselling:

Egan's Skilled Helper Model

Egan's Skilled Helper Model, developed by Gerard Egan, is a structured, three-stage approach used in counselling to help individuals better understand and manage their problems. The model focuses on collaboration between the helper and the client, guiding the client toward meaningful change.

- In Stage 1 (Exploration), the helper supports the client to tell their story and identify key issues.
- In Stage 2 (Understanding), the focus shifts to setting goals and envisaging a preferred future.
- In Stage 3 (Action), the client develops and implements strategies to achieve those goals. Overall, the model emphasises empathy, active listening, and working with individuals to take responsibility for improving their situation.

The Rogerian (Person-Centred) Approach

The Rogerian approach, also known as person-centred therapy, was developed eponymously by Carl Rogers. It is based on the belief that individuals have an inherent ability to grow, heal, and achieve their full potential when provided with the right supportive environment.

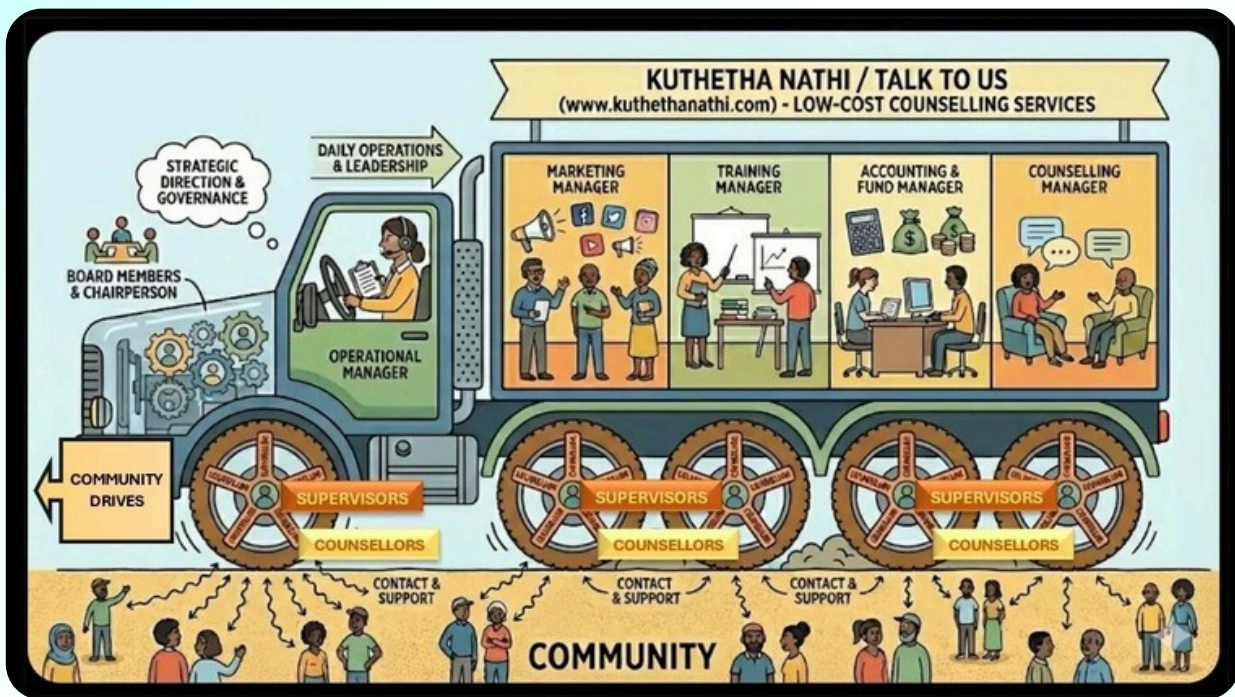
This approach emphasises three core conditions: empathy (understanding the client's feelings), unconditional positive regard (accepting the client without judgement), and congruence (being genuine and authentic as a helper). Rather than directing or advising, the therapist creates a safe, non-judgmental space where clients can explore their thoughts and emotions freely, helping them gain self-awareness to make their own decisions for personal growth.



THE KUTHETHA NATHI TRUCK MODEL

The truck model describes the organogram of our organisation. The engine represents our chairperson and board members. The operational manager sits in the driver's seat with her team in the back of the truck doing all the organising. The wheels of our truck represent where the main work actually happens - on the ground! The hubs of the wheels represent our important supervisors - registered professionals with the Health Professions Society of South Africa (HPCSA) who supervise our community counsellors.

There are approximately four to five counsellors for every one supervisor. These are represented by the spokes of the wheel. Each counsellor may see between one and five clients at any one time. This means that one supervisor may reach a maximum of 25 clients at any one time. The community is where the counsellors hits the ground, represented by the tyres - these are the various communities in which the hubs serve small communities around the country. **Note: Interns report to the counselling manager.**



WORKING HOURS

Kuthetha Nathi operates from Monday to Friday from 9am-5pm. However, each volunteer works according to their own schedule that might extend beyond official office hours. Volunteer counsellors and interns are expected to be available for any additional hours as negotiated.



INTERN CODE OF CONDUCT

Volunteer Counsellor Code of Conduct

Interns agree to conduct themselves ethically, professionally, and from a client-centred orientation in accordance with the policies and Value Statement of Kuthetha Nathi / Talk to Us.

Supervision and Training

Interns must attend weekly supervision. Absences must be communicated in advance. Failure to comply may result in suspension or termination of the internship. All supervision is conducted under the guidance of a mental health professional registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA). All discussion within supervision is to remain confidential.

Intern Limits and Ethics

Interns must maintain clear professional limits and establish a non-judgemental, respectful attitude. Personal, cultural, political, or religious beliefs may not be imposed on the public nor on clients. Self-disclosure should be appropriate and culturally sensitive. Confidentiality must be maintained at all times in all contexts, with understanding of the limits of confidentiality (confidentiality may be broken when there is a risk of self-harm / there is reason to believe that harm will occur to others or animals / all information may be taken for supervisory advice.

Belief Systems

Interns provide their services from a client-centred, not a faith-based framework. An intern should avoid volunteering if they cannot remain non-judgemental or when a power imbalance may compromise the an impartial relationship (for example dual relationships, supervision structures, etc.). Faith-based referrals may occur only with client consent and supervisory approval.

Professional Conduct

Interns must communicate availability clearly, provide advance notice of absences, ensure the safety of individuals they have interacted with during leave, keep accurate records, meet administrative requirements, and respect supervisory authority.

Limits of Role and Competence

Interns may only conduct home visits when approved. They may not provide transport, financial or other means of assistance (for example, food or clothing) to members of the public or clients. Interns may not self-allocate tasks or clients, or work beyond scheduled structures or sessions. Children, adolescents, high-risk clients, and those requiring specialised psychiatric care must be referred appropriately. Risk of harm to self or others must be reported immediately to the counselling manager *and* supervisor.

Length and Termination of Contract

The length of contract is determined in advance of the initiation of the internship. Either party may terminate early by giving sufficient notice. All client responsibilities must be concluded appropriately and with accountability, including referral or closure, in consultation with members of the public, and with supervision.

Organisational Commitment

Interns are expected to support the organisation's vision and mission, stay informed with latest mental health developments, participate in development activities, and withdraw responsibly if alignment is no longer possible.

INTERN CONTRACT


During the induction week, all interns receive relevant information about their calendar in the internship programme and are asked to sign an internship contract to ensure that all the standards of the organisation are upheld.

COST/CONTRIBUTION

The cost for the internship is USD 400 for four weeks. For every additional week, a cost of USD 20 is added.

Please note that these amounts are adjusted by 6% on 1 January annually.

KUTHETHA NATHI BROCHURE



**Kuthetha Nathi /
Talk To Us**

**NEED SOMEONE TO TALK TO?
STRUGGLING WITH LIFE'S CHALLENGES?**

OUR LOW-COST COUNSELLING SERVICES ARE
HERE TO SUPPORT YOU EVERY STEP OF THE
WAY

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE
WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU**

**WE OFFER TRAINING TO
COUNSELLORS TWICE A YEAR.**

Our trained counsellors receive weekly supervision and ongoing professional development from HPCSA-registered mental health professionals, including psychologists and registered counsellors.

**LOW-COST COUNSELLING
SERVICES FOR EVERYONE**

WHY CHOOSE US?

- Low-Cost Counselling Services: Quality support does not have to be expensive. We offer counselling sessions at prices that fit your budget.
- Our trained and compassionate counsellors are here to listen and help you along life's sometimes difficult journey.
- Confidential: Your privacy is our priority. We provide a secure and confidential space for you to share your thoughts and feelings.
- Referral Network: We have several partners to help you access the support you need.


HOW CAN WE HELP?

- Personal and emotional struggles
- Family and relationship issues
- Stress and anxiety
- Grief and loss

FLEXIBLE PAYMENT OPTIONS


We understand financial constraints, that is why we offer various options to make our services accessible to everyone.


**LOW-COST
COUNSELLING SERVICES**
Accessible to you




VISIT US


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OUR INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Kuthetha Nathi / Talk to Us offers an several opportunities and activities during the internship:

- 1. PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH ACTIVITIES AT SEA POINT HIGH SCHOOL**
- 2. DELIVERING A TALK OR A WORKSHOP**
- 3. COMMUNITY OUTREACH INITIATIVES**
- 4. ETHICAL RESEARCH FOR KUTHETHA NATHI**
- 5. NETWORKING WITH DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS**
- 6. GROUP SUPERVISION WITH A REGISTERED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL**
- 7. COMMUNITY PSYCHOEDUCATION**
- 8. NPO ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS**
- 9. MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY ROADSHOW CAMPAIGN**



1. PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH ACTIVITIES AT SEA POINT HIGH SCHOOL

Kuthetha Nathi's main office is situated within Sea Point High School's grounds. The office is located at **5 Norfolk Road, Sea Point, Cape Town**. Established in 1884, Sea Point High School is one of the oldest schools in the area and has developed a strong tradition of academic excellence. The school is co-educational, catering to learners between Grades 8 to 12, and serves a diverse urban community. It focuses on providing a supportive and well-rounded education, combining strong academics with extracurricular activities such as sports, cultural programmes, and leadership development.

However, the learners face challenges that are consistent with the South African landscape, including family instability, chronic poverty, food insecurity, exposure to community violence, and limited access to stable caregiving, all of which can undermine concentration, emotional regulation, and regular school attendance. These difficulties are often compounded by limited educational materials, overburdened educators, and inadequate psychosocial support—alongside broader developmental stressors such as peer pressure, substance exposure, and the ongoing impact of inequality, which collectively impede optimal learning and developmental outcomes.

Kuthetha Nathi aims to equip learners with the skills, values, and discipline needed for success beyond school, promoting personal growth, responsibility, and respect in a dynamic learning environment. Kuthetha Nathi works closely with the Sea Point High School. There are different initiatives that have been created in regards to the needs of the school, including career guidance, group counselling workshops (limited to interns only in a psychoeducation capacity), test readiness, group counselling (limited to interns only in a psychoeducation capacity), individual counselling (not applicable to short-term interns), and feeding schemes.



Sea Point High School

2. DELIVERING A TALK OR A WORKSHOP

Kuthetha Nathi also offers an opportunity for interns to deliver a talk or to run a workshop on a topic that they are familiar with, or with which they have expertise in. This may be marketed to schools, the general public, other health professionals, or to our community counsellors during the internship.

Delivering a talk or running a psychoeducation workshop is more than just sharing information. It's about creating a space where people feel safe, engaged, and empowered to learn and apply what they've discovered.

Here are some practical insights to help you run an effective and meaningful session:

1. Be Clear on Your Purpose

Start with a focused topic. Be clear on what you want the participants to understand by the time the talk or the workshop is over. Keep your content simple to avoid overwhelming the South African audience.

2. Prepare to Understand the Audience

A key component of being an intern in the South African environment is familiarising yourself with the diversity of our culture. You will want to ask yourself who the specific audience is that you are addressing (students, parents, community members, community counsellors, mental health professionals, business managers etc.). You will pitch your talk at the appropriate level. Remember that different groups of participants will expect different levels of English and different tones of delivery. Ask yourself if your aim is awareness, skill-building, or behavioural change, or a combination of such. Ask yourself how much prior knowledge the participants might have? Remember to use metaphors and relatable examples, or ask the participants to provide examples from their own lives for you to expand on. It may help you to enquire what the needs are from the specific community (location, socioeconomic position, access to resources, and education level) at which you deliver your talk and/or workshop.

3. Keep It Interactive

Ask lots of questions and keep the dialogue flowing. Sometimes role-plays or demonstrations keep the energy up. You may include small activities and worksheets / workbooks.

4. Use Simple, Accessible Language

Do not speak in high English. This is immediately off-putting. Rather use real-life examples. Use visual aids, such as PowerPoint, *but do not be overly reliant on these*. The goal is on understanding, not impressing.

5. Create a safe and respectful space

In the beginning, establish the ground rules for the talk and / or the workshop. These must include basic rules such as turning off one's cell phone, maintaining confidentiality, and ensuring respectful communication. Be mindful of sensitive topics (race, unequal distribution of wealth, transport difficulties, colonial hegemony). Allow participants to share, but never force a participant to share.

6. Be culturally sensitive

In a context such as South Africa, there are different beliefs about the aetiology and maintenance of mental health. Although we advocate a psychological paradigm, you may encounter individuals with different belief systems and ideologies. It is important to acknowledge these and take heed of specific community values and norms. Additionally, pay attention to language nuances as, for many, English is not their native language, and there is a large potential for concepts to be lost in translation.

7. Manage Time Well

Structure your talk / workshop clearly. Invite expectations from the participants to make sure that your workshop will fulfil their needs. Ensure that you have a clear introduction with objectives and expectations. Break down your core content into manageable sections and build in activities, discussions, and enough time for questions. Remember to allow time to distribute an evaluation form for the participants to complete to provide feedback about the talk / workshop. Usually interns who run workshops forget that questions can take up to one hour or more of the session time, and then they rush to complete their material!

8. Although you have planned your talk / workshop, stay flexible.

Your workshop may need to be adjusted as you deliver it. Some factors that could unintentionally affect your talk or workshop include:

- Participant engagement
- Questions or emotional responses
- Activity durations

Remember: Sometimes the most valuable moments emerge from unplanned questions, debates, and discussions

9. Respect emotional responses and respond in a thoughtful manner.

Topics in psychoeducation can be emotional. Be prepared to:

Acknowledge and respect feelings without trying to 'fix' a person

Discuss feelings without moralising

Offer brief grounding techniques if needed (ask your supervisor for tips)

Know when to refer participants for further support

10. End with concise summaries and practical takeaways

Make sure participants leave with something useful. This may simply be worksheets, or a keepsake (a Kuthetha Nathi keyring, for instance)

Provide a list of resources or support options

Provide further information and other learning pathways, such as further credentialing

Provide your professional contact details or Kuthetha Nathi's details should someone like to approach you after the workshop for clarification or for further information / networking



3. COMMUNITY OUTREACH INITIATIVES

South Africa is widely regarded as one of the most unequal societies in the world, with exceptionally high levels of income disparity as reflected in its Gini coefficient—a measure of income inequality ranging from 0 (perfect equality) to 1 (perfect inequality)—driven by entrenched structural inequality, high unemployment, and persistent disparities in access to healthcare, economic opportunity, and education.

Community outreach initiatives play a vital role in South Africa by helping to address social inequalities and uplift disadvantaged communities. These programmes provide essential support such as education, healthcare, food security, and skills development, especially in areas where access to resources is limited. By encouraging collaboration between individuals, organisations, and local leaders, outreach initiatives can promote unity and shared responsibility. We engage with grassroots communities where opportunities for growth and social cohesion might emerge, crucial to the long-term development of the mental health of the country.

Kuthetha Nathi continuously partners with an array of organisations with similar values to ours, allowing our volunteers to actively work within different community settings.

Some of our peers and partners:

(see the rest on our website)

You have Purpose (<https://youhavepurpose.co.za/>)

You Have Purpose is a registered mental health and suicide-prevention NPO delivering early-intervention, psycho-educational, and community-based programmes that support individuals, learners, and communities to choose life.

The South African Anxiety and Depression Group (SADAG) (<https://www.sadag.org/>)

SADAG is South Africa's premier mental health non-profit organisation, dedicated to providing free, accessible support, resources, and education to individuals and communities nationwide. For over 30 years, *SADAG* has served as a literal lifeline for millions of South Africans, helping those struggling with Mental Health challenges, emotional distress, and crisis situations.

Humanitas (<https://www.humanitas.co.za/>)

Humanitas believes in empowering individuals to unlock their full potential, achieve personal and professional growth, and overcome life's challenges. With a dedicated team of experienced lecturers, and counselling professionals, *Humanitas* offer a wide range of training programmes and counselling sessions, tailored to meet an individual's unique needs and aspirations.

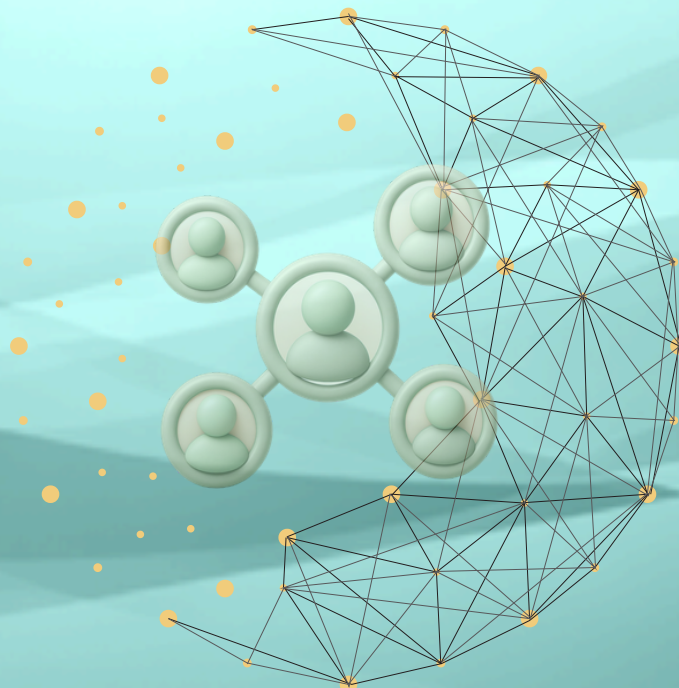


4. ETHICAL RESEARCH FOR KUTHETHA NATHI

Interns at Kuthetha Nathi may participate in applied research activities that help inform community mental health interventions and evaluate programme impact. This may include accompanying a team member into the community to conduct semi-structured qualitative interviews with community members or stakeholders in order to better understand local mental health needs and service gaps. Interns may assist in writing formal proposals, and then conducting brief community needs assessments based on these insights, as well as designing and distributing quantitative surveys (for example through Google Forms) to collect structured data. They may also contribute to gathering outcome data from existing programmes, analysing programme effectiveness, and assisting with the preparation of evaluation reports. Through this process, interns gain practical experience in community-based research, data collection, and impact evaluation within a real-world mental health non-profit context.

5. NETWORKING WITH DIFFERENT STAKEHOLDERS

Kuthetha Nathi is continuously organising networking events to help expand the reach and impact of the organisation. Interns are invited to represent Kuthetha Nathi at these networking events.



6. GROUP SUPERVISION WITH A REGISTERED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL

Supervision is a cornerstone of ethical and effective practice in task-shared mental health care. Supervision provides a structured space for interns to learn how real-life counselling works, to reflect on their participation in the organisation, to receive guidance in a multi-disciplinary setting, and to ensure that they are acting in the best interest of the public and community at all times. Through supervision, interns may enhance their knowledge of counselling skills. Supervision ensures that high standards of ethical oversight are maintained, and that complex interpersonal interactions may be navigated with greater confidence.

Supervision also plays a critical role in preventing intern burnout by offering team support and promoting self-awareness.

Ultimately, supervision helps safeguard both the intern and the organisation, reinforcing accountability, competence, and continuous growth within the mental health field.

Supervision is a critical component of our operational structure at Kuthetha Nathi. Supervision occurs weekly and is mandatory for all volunteer interns.

Group supervision is facilitated by experienced, registered mental health professionals who provide structured support to community counsellors and interns within small supervision hubs of approximately 4–5 counsellors, with multiple hubs operating nationally. These group sessions function as a collaborative learning space where counsellors refine their clinical skills and interns actively engage through questions, reflection, and shared learning.

In preparation, interns may meet with an assigned counsellor to confidentially review the counsellor's current client and collaboratively develop a preliminary case formulation. The intern considers presenting concerns, contributing factors, and potential therapeutic approaches. This process is *explicitly non-clinical for interns in terms of direct client intervention*, but serves as a guided opportunity to build clinical reasoning, reflective capacity, and formulation skills, culminating in structured case discussion during supervision under expert oversight.

7. COMMUNITY PSYCHOEDUCATION

Community psychoeducation workshops are structured sessions intended to provide individuals or groups with information about mental health, emotional well-being, and coping strategies.

These workshops aim to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and upskill participants by helping them to better understand and manage common mental problems. By combining educational content with interactive discussions and activities, psychoeducation workshops create a supportive environment where people learn, share experiences, and build resilience. Psychoeducation commonly occurs in schools, workplaces, and public settings to promote prevention, early intervention, and overall mental wellness.

It is mandatory for interns at Kuthetha Nathi to attend all psychoeducation workshops during the duration of their internship. These workshops are organised to ensure that interns receive ongoing training of the highest standard. The workshops are most-often presented by qualified mental healthcare professionals such as clinical psychologists and registered counsellors.

Workshops that we expect to cover in 2026-2027:

- Neurodivergence
- Sexuality (intimate part of relationships)
 - LGBTQI+
 - Racial relations
 - HIV Counselling
- Trauma/Gender-based violence (GBV)
 - Ethical Dilemmas
- Multiculturalism in South Africa



8. NPO ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

Interns also have the opportunity to become involved in the administration and day-to-day operations of Kuthetha Nathi. In this role, you will assist with tasks that support the efficient functioning of the organisation. Through this involvement, interns may gain insight into how a mental health non-profit organisation is managed and structured in a low- to middle-income country. The intern may develop a deeper understanding of the operational realities of delivering mental health services in South Africa.

Tasks may include:

- Networking and emailing
 - Organising of events
- The onboarding of new clients
 - Appointment system
 - Marketing
- Developing new projects (project management)
- Maintaining stakeholder relationships
 - Editing the newsletter
 - Proposal writing
 - Funding applications

9. MENTAL HEALTH ADVOCACY ROADSHOW CAMPAIGN

Mental health advocacy at Kuthetha Nathi involves taking mental health awareness and psychoeducation on the road. These campaigns involve structured rural outreach to underserved communities, aiming to close gaps in mental health awareness and access—such as schools, community organisations, and local gathering spaces. The aim is to raise awareness on a specific topic or agenda to provide accessible information about mental health, reduce stigma, and refer available support services.

It is also important to establish new Kuthetha Nathi hubs in various communities, where qualified mental health professionals are willing to volunteer to sustain supervision groups. Interns are integral in identifying appropriate supervisors; researching and implementing psychoeducational materials; assisting with the preparation of presentations; supporting the organisation and logistics of outreach visits; and participating in the delivery of workshops alongside the team. Through *in-vivo* experience, interns help expand the NPO's network whilst gaining valuable insight into community-based mental health advocacy within the South African context.

At Kuthetha Nathi, an internship is more than training—it is a transformative journey into the heart of community mental health. You will gain hands-on experience in administration, psychoeducation, client formulation, cultural diversity, and ethical practice, all under the guidance of experienced registered mental health professionals.

We pride ourselves on offering an internship of excellence—one designed to help you grow both personally and professionally while making a meaningful contribution to the field of mental health.

We look forward to welcoming you.



Connect With Us

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