

**Bridgette Jones**, 28, From Bridgetown, Athlone, Cape Town is a flight attendant, studying Management online through the German International University of Applied Sciences. Her goal is to gain global experience academically and professionally so she can create and collaborate with anyone, regardless of where they are in the world.

Entering Miss South Africa 2025 was, she says, her the next logical step in living a life she loves and winning the title would help her achieve her goal of creating a compassionate footprint.

She says: "Beauty pageants provide context and a space to examine where you are. They can be pivotal in helping achieve your dreams, providing a valuable platform for finding your voice and making a lasting impact in this world.

"The world needs women who are compassionate, have empathy and a desire to leave the world better than she found it, no matter where she finds herself," Bridgette says.

As South Africa is a diverse country embracing people from different cultures, backgrounds and ethnicities, it is of critical importance that Miss South Africa reflects. "Inclusion makes every South African feel represented and valued."

Bridgette comes from a line of strong, powerful women who, regardless of the challenges they faced, were blessed with resilience and who believed in lifelong learning. "They gave me the foundation to face things without fear, understanding that I can do anything I set my mind to. They inspire me." She has one younger brother.

Believing that charity begins at home, she says she supports her family who believe in paying it forward. She volunteers her time to community initiatives, helping get children off the street. "Every interaction holds space for impact; every exchange changes the world and dictates the outcome. That is powerful," she says.

She would like to do more to help eliminate suffering brought about through suppression saying: "When people are happier, it allows for healing, collaboration and generosity."

Bridgette acknowledges that she is privileged because of her job that takes her around the world. "I have first-hand experience of this – South Africans are the kindest, most generous in spirit and humble people. We also know how to dance and have fun."

A difficult life lesson she had to learn is that success isn't about large amounts of money – although she admits that money makes for an easier life. "Success to me is defined in the relationship we have with ourselves and others; achieving your dreams and goals; being happy and a silent participant in others growth and success."

She believes that uncertainty about the future, including limited career opportunities, financial instability and mental health issues, are some of the biggest challenges facing young people today, challenges that need to be addressed.

And so her message to girls and young women is this: "Your path is yours – stop wasting time trying to follow what society says you should be, or how you should get there. You don't have to have it all figured out right now, but stay true to who you are, keep showing up and never stop believing that you are worthy."

Bridgette says she would use the Miss South Africa platform to create safe spaces for sport and recreation, an area that encourages build together instead of tearing down. Using sport as a change agent, she says, helps build bridges.

If she could launch one national initiative as Miss South Africa, the Top 10 finalist said it would focus on supporting young people to overcome challenges and chase their dreams. "I'd create programs that offer mentorship, guidance and opportunities, because I believe every young person deserves a chance to reach their full potential.

"I would use my voice to inspire South Africans to believe in their collective strength, highlighting how sport unites us. I've seen how playing and watching sport brings people together, builds resilience and sparks pride."

#### FACT FILE: Bridgette

1. She's shy! Her mother's remedy for shyness was to put her under the spotlight to face her biggest fear. "I adore my mother."
2. She's a wonderful sister to an amazing little brother "who I love with my whole heart".
3. She loves South Africa. "No matter where I am, I support and defend where I come from.
4. She plays hockey.
5. She's disappointed in how much time she wasted trying to make her path look like other people's. "I needed to, and did, create my own path."
6. She likes that she is agile, able to adapt and change as needed.
7. If she could, she would change allowing negative thoughts to consume her, creating unnecessary doubt.
8. As her role model, she names her mother "who's shown me what it means to be strong, kind and to never give up, no matter the challenges. She's the reason I believe in myself every single day."
9. She would lunch with singing icon George Michael. "His music comes straight from the heart... he has a way of making life's moments make sense. I'd love his perspective on creativity, passion and how he stayed true to himself.
10. In her spare time she spends quality time with family, stays active with hockey and rollerblading and socialising with friends..

### SHORT-FIRE QUESTIONS

1. Reading: Daily devotions and the African Study Bible
2. Listening to: George Michael, Kabza De Small, Maverick City.
3. Favourite TV shows: Love is Blind, Friends, Masterchef.
4. Favourite meal: Chop stew with dombolo buns.
5. Guilty pleasure: Having an unlimited amount of koeksisters with my brother.
6. Idea of perfect happiness: Being surrounded by my family, bonding over good food, laughter.
7. Greatest fear: Living with regret; not doing things out of fear.
8. Greatest extravagance: Buying a Kimono and walking in it in the streets of Japan.
9. Happiest: The day my brother was born I witnessed an answered prayer.
10. Talent most wanted: Being multilingual.
11. Most treasured possession: My grandmother's gold cross necklace.
12. Most valued quality in friends: That they show up; knowing I can count on them.

**Motto: No one gets left behind.**

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