

WINTER 2021

\$8.95 U.S./CANADA

# THE FLYFFE

MAGAZINE



POSITIVE MEDIA  
LIGHTS OF THE ROUNDTABLE

# THE LYFE STAFF

## Letter from the Editor

To The Lyfe Magazine family,

2020 was a challenge for most of us. We faced racial challenges, a pandemic, and a Presidential election that we will remember for decades. Many of us have lost loved ones in this trying year. Now that 2020 is over and 2021 is upon us, let us all focus on coming together as one people. Let's place love at the highest level.

1 Corinthians 13:13 says, "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." After enduring a year like no other most of us have ever experienced, it is time to follow it with a year of love for all humankind.

Let us pray for the end of racism, the end of the pandemic, and for our new leaders as they guide us into a new era for this country.

Be Blessed,

*Gerald C. Anderson, Sr.*

**MAGAZINE**  
WINTER 2021

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# THE LYFE MAGAZINE



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# Who We Are



On November 14, 2015, Righteous Productions closed a deal with Madhouse Design, Inc. to purchase the rights to The Lyfe Magazine.

The Lyfe Magazine is the voice and soul of men and women. It started as a magazine that celebrated Florida's unique style, beauty, culture, inspiration and achievements. Righteous Productions extended the reach of the magazine to cover Washington, D.C., Maryland, Virginia, Texas, West Virginia, and California.

The Lyfe Magazine affirms its identity and shows its readers how to live life and have fun within the bounds of Christianity. Our editorial content, promotion, and brand extensions communicate the appeal of a luxury lifestyle with an authoritative voice and sophisticated design. Our editorial content highlights the best in Christian living, finance, home décor, automotive, technology, fashion, jewelry, fitness, health and wellness, beauty, travel, food, sports, entertainment, and arts and culture.

The Lyfe Magazine affords luxury purveyors the broadest access to a distinctive group of male and female consumers. The Lyfe Magazine is a multi-media venture which provides marketers with traditional and alternative ways to reach our audience at home, work, and play.

In 2017, The Lyfe Magazine took over sole responsibility for ownership and management of The Lyfe Magazine and on January 1, 2017 we released the first issue.

We publish the Lyfe Magazine four times per year (Winter, Spring, Summer and Fall issues). The Lyfe Magazine's target audience expects to reach 10,000 men and women through subscriptions, newsstand sales and direct mail. We provide controlled and targeted distribution in residential buildings, restaurants, lounges, galleries, salons, spas, health clubs, retail stores, such as Walmart, Safeway, Publix and Walgreen's stores. The magazine also will have a special distribution at major lifestyle and cultural events targeting our affluent consumers and at annual signature events.

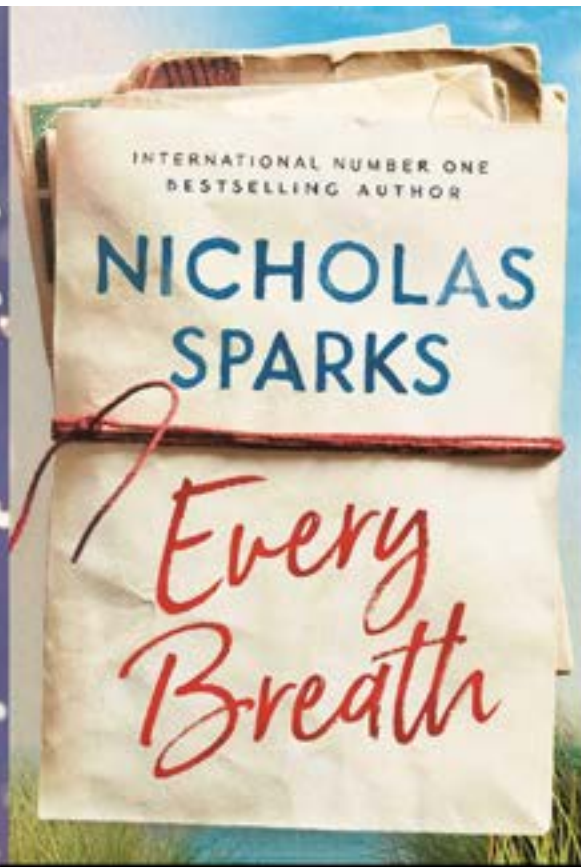
The Lyfe Magazine expects to go beyond traditional mass media to provide our marketing partners with 360-degree turnkey opportunities to engage its audience and increase sales. We will provide advertisers with direct access to high-profile events, including fashion shows, ride & drive experiences, film and music festivals and charitable events. The Lyfe Magazine will continue to work with advertisers to develop custom programs and promotions suited to their brand and product initiatives.

## Social Media

Facebook - @MyLyfeMag

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# WHAT'S INSIDE



# THE LYFE



## Amazon Reviews for Leah Grace Bedtime Adventures



**CBHUBB**

Sweet Dreams Princess

What a sweet bedtime story every princess will love. Looking forward to seeing more from these authors and following Leah Grace on more adventures.

**Amazon Customer**

A Wonderful Bedtime story!

Beautifully written and illustrated ! What a wonderful Children's bedtime story...I would highly recommend this to any parent or grandparent looking for that special bedtime adventure with their little ones !

**Amazon Customer**

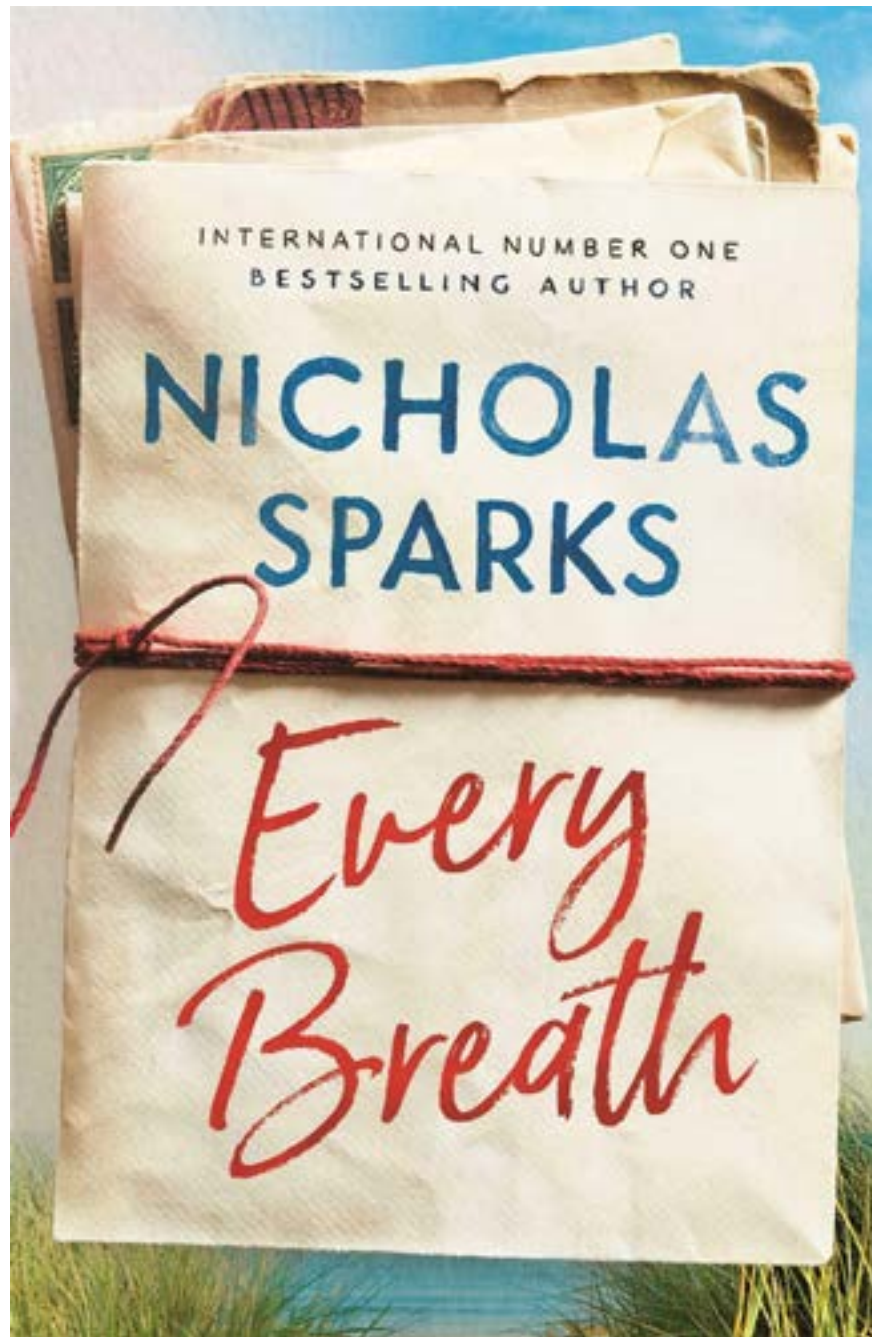
Spirited and Fun

This was truly a fun book to read with kiddos! Leah Grace is so spirited, imaginative and excited about her adventures. I highly recommend to others and we are looking forward to more adventures with Leah Grace!





# THE LYFE MAGAZINE



# Just a Thought Book Review

By Beryl Brackett

[www.babproductions.us](http://www.babproductions.us)



#1 New York Times best-selling author Nicholas Sparks' novel, *Every Breath*, has lured his readers into taking a stroll on the beach and discover an unexpected encounter that will lead two worlds to collide and wipeout the one thing that brings them together.... LOVE.

Hope Anderson was desperate to find love and raise a family. Something she had always dreamed of. At this point in her life, she realizes that she is thirty-six years old and not getting any younger. All of her best friends are married or getting ready to embark on the dream she has always wanted. Her boyfriend of six years is not eager to give up hanging with his friends. As

**“The author captures every heartbeat, intimate conversation, emotion, and the essence of what it feels like to fall in love with your soul mate.”**

Hope pushes the conversation towards a more permanent relationship with her boyfriend, an orthopedic surgeon, she soon realizes that his choice to go to Las Vegas with his friends instead of accompanying her to her best friend's wedding could be a sign of what is to come.

Tru Walls has never been outside of Africa. He was born and raised in Zimbabwe. However, he receives a package in the mail with a plane ticket to North Carolina, to visit a man that he never met before. The man claims to be Tru's father. Reluctantly accepting the invitation and boarding

the plane, Tru gathers the courage and travels to a place he has never been. He had questions surrounding the death of his mother. Maybe this man who claims to be his father can finally answer the questions that have been burning in his heart for so long.

Sparks tells a story of a man and woman meeting accidentally as they both stroll along the beach, watching the waves crash against the sand while contemplating their next move in life. When Tru first saw Hope, he thought she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. When their eyes locked, the attraction was mutual. It seems there was more to it than meets the eye.

Hope struggled with her feelings about her boyfriend and the man she just met, Tru. Did she want to live a life of uncertainty? Does she want to be with a man that makes her feel beautiful, loved and wanted? This story has all the twists and turns of a real-life love story. The story line explores past hurts, disappointments, and insecurities.

In this pulsating and romantic novel, the author captures every heartbeat, intimate conversation, emotion, and the essence of what it feels like to fall in love with your soul mate. He also captures the downside of what it is like when the forces of life happen and swings you in the opposite direction of what your heart wants.

Hope and Tru come from two different worlds. However, love is an international language. Can love transcend time, space, regret, and broken relationships? At the end of the novel, *Every Breath*, you will be smiling and reflecting on your first love, and the love you still have today.

# Lahla's Music Review

## April Sampé

By Lahla-Hadiya

Imagine being called ugly most of your life, not fully able to embrace what the word really means. After sitting in this U.G.L.Y truth, you finally come to the realization that, changing your perspective, unveils the truth of...Understanding God Loves You. This is the exact thing this amazing songstress/songwriter, April Sampé portrayed with her lyrical masterpiece, U.G.L.Y. Understand God Loves You. This self-help book in music form is very advantageous during the life season we're in. With the pandemic and other things going on in society, people seem to have lost sight of who they are and, what they were created for. This album is a genius and bold move. It takes you back to the basics of our Creator and His purpose in creating us, exposing the light we were intended to shine on the world.

I must admit when I first heard the title to this CD, I was caught off guard. It took me back to a time in my life where I felt ugly, insignificant and unworthy. I connected to this album in a soul searching, gut wrenching way. Each song from the first track to the last, tapped the depth of several

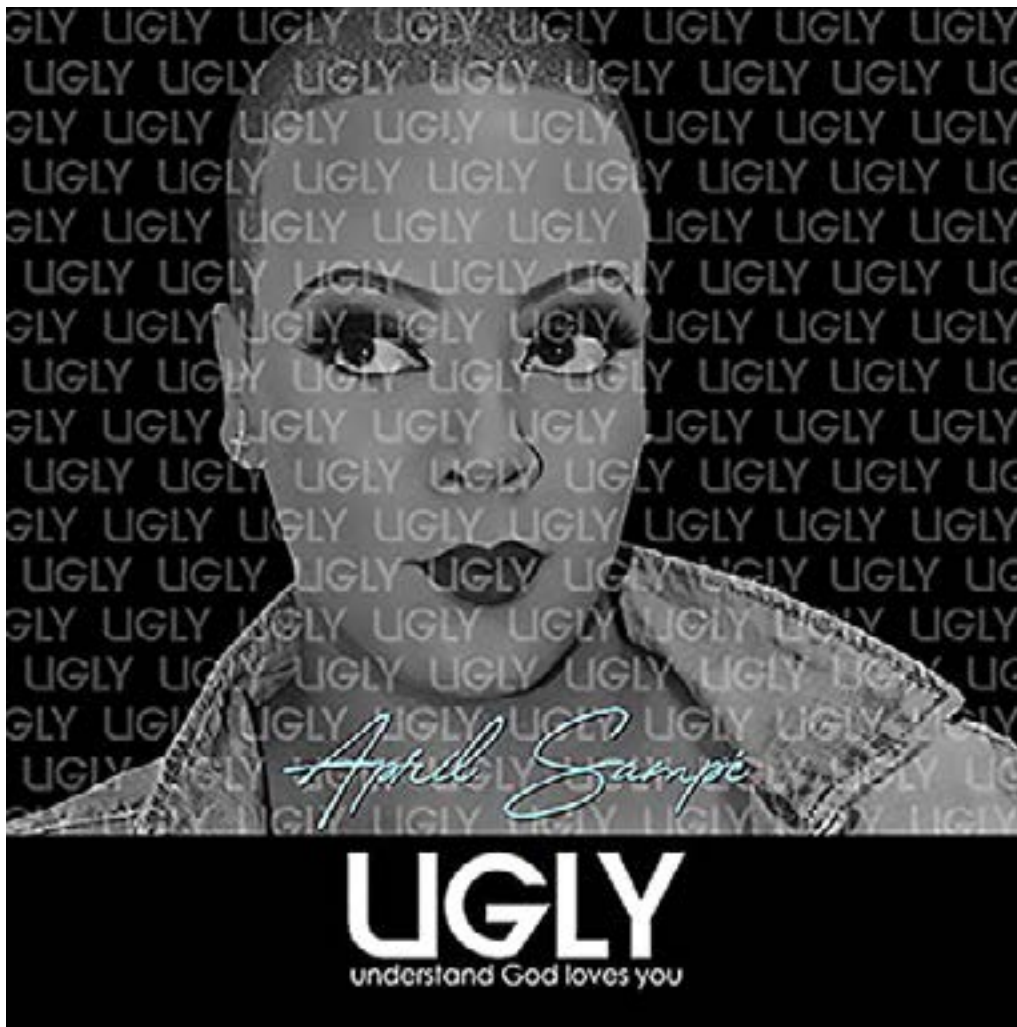
different emotions and experiences at one time or another. This social conscious, bold Black Queen, exposed my vulnerabilities and the naked truth of my inner perception of self. The way she carefully yet freely orchestrated her story in this musical jour-

ney was ingenious. 'Understand God Loves You' is so powerful and unique. The way she allowed this statement to unfold in each track was thought provoking to say the least. This musical, lyrical journey starts out with an intro giving personal accounts of the artist's experiences with being called ugly. She is very transparent in how this word made her feel. It progresses into how she allowed it to catapult her into this bold, beautiful depiction of walking in her truth, understanding her true self and creating her own description of a word once despised.

The first track, "Therapy", creeps into your earlike a chant...literally! As the chorus growls "...give me some therapy...I need therapy...", giving one the sense of yearning to be set free from the chains of depression, sex, drugs, insignificance and self pity. This song is the war cry for the defeated, where reality meets superficial in a power struggle. After listening to it five times, back-to-back, I realized it's the antidote to the thoughts of failure and defeat. This song is my favorite on the entire album. It's raw, genuine and packed with real feelings. The unfiltered, exasperated cry at the very end of the song almost took me out.

As the musical journey continues, this album shifts gears with a "Manthem" for our Black kings. With all the struggles of being Black and male, this song caters not only to recognizing the struggles of our kings, but the celebration of what struggles they have endured daily. This was a breath of fresh air to hear. It is definitely a break from the normalcy of male bashing. This song gives the very essence of royalty back to our Black kings. Brothers, if you were looking for a motivator, a power boost... this one's for you!





April always has a way of incorporating her natural taste for island gully in at least one song. The opening of “Party” reminds me of the 90’s, at the go-go. I was compelled to jump up and randomly exclaim, “...there’s no more stressing...get this party started tonight...”, but in the middle of the day! You can’t listen to this track without slow grinding with a two-step. It actually transitions perfectly into the next song. Though the title, “Mask Off”, gives a scary depiction of people not wanting to wear masks during a season where wearing a mask has become a way of life; it actually encompasses the figurative removal of masks. It’s more like the call for one to shed fake skin and embody their true selves. Keeping it real is the lesson taught. We hear you Queen! No time for fake ones.

As we groove on this head bobbing, foot tapping, masterpiece; this vocal goddess steps into U.G.L.Y. like a real Queen. She fully embraces the flaws within her that make up the per-

fection of God’s work. Her Queen-ism is revealed at its absolutely gorgeous! We reach the climax of this musical journey with “Daily affirmations”. This is my second favorite song on the album. “I am Queen...I am Ugly...” I found myself singing along to this cut while looking in the mirror at my reflection. Empowerment of the Black woman, even leaving spillage of confidence for the Black culture as a whole. Honestly, I didn’t know how I was going to feel by the end of the album. All I know is it left me exhausted yet empowered with emotion. Each song took me on a personal emotional rollercoaster. I listened to the entire album more than fifteen times in one day, and the more I listen, different strengths were heightened in me. If the goal was to rattle emotions and transform mindsets, putting in gear the desire to walk in greatness; it succeeded. I’m entranced with the rigidity of this album. It gave me straight, no chaser at its best. April Sampedro...Queen... because of your U.G.L.Y., beauty shines bright! Well done, Sis!



Photo by Carlos Velez. Makeup by Ali Lee Pageant Artistry

# MRS. FLORIDA AMERICAN 2020

# KATRINA SPAGNOLETTI

BY GERALDC. ANDERSON, SR.

I had occasion to meet with Katrina Spagnoletti, a 56-year-old Ruskin, Florida resident. What is unique about this wonderful, high-spirited woman is at that age she competed against women 30 years younger than her and won the title of Mrs. Florida American 2020. After talking to her about her life and career, her resilience amazed me. Regardless of what she encountered, she stayed on the path to become a strong Black woman.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Tell us where you are from originally.

**Katrina:** I'm originally from Virginia. I was born in Washington, D.C. at Howard University Hospital, previously known as Freedmen's Hospital. When I was seven, my mother uprooted us to Loudoun County, Virginia. After some time there, she moved us to Sterling Park, Virginia. Living in Sterling Park was interesting for me.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What made it interesting?

**Katrina:** The neighborhood we moved into was primarily a white neighborhood. My parents were an interracial couple and there were no other interracial couples there. Because of this, I didn't really understand my identity as a Black woman.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Explain that for us please.

**Katrina:** People tell you your identity, but I didn't understand fully because there was no one around to teach me. I wasn't exposed to many people in my culture that could help me understand my identity as a Black woman.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** You didn't understand as a child your identity as a Black woman; how do you understand now as an adult?

**Katrina:** I was born in D.C., but I didn't live there long. Ranging from age seven through graduation is the most informative time you have. But when I started going to clubs in D.C. and hung around my friends, it was eye opening to me. I remember saying, "this is so cool". I would visit Howard University and thought, this is amazing. The experience was exciting.

**"Everybody has a right to their expression and what they feel."**

Where I grew up was conservative, but when I visited Howard University, I learned a lot of my Black culture. At that point, I learned to embrace who I am. A lot of the students at Howard University were definitely into the Black culture, so I learned so much. I learned how colorful and energetic Black people are. It was so much fun, and I felt at home.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Give us your thoughts on 2020 and the racism that we have witnessed.



# “If you have a message to get out, pageantry is the way to get your voice heard.”

discovered last year at 55 years old that it wasn't a dream; it was true. That's when I also learned that one of my uncles was a pedophile. When I was told that, it triggered something in me and I realized the dream was real.

Every time I saw him, it was like we had a secret. I didn't remember the secret, but we would look at each other and it felt like we had a secret. I never understood why I felt that, but each time I saw him I dreaded it.

Then later my mother got married to my stepfather. He began to sexually abuse me as a teenager. It started when I was around 13 years old and lasted until age 16. Being abused set the tone for my life, and lead to all the mistakes I made and all the chaos that was in my life. It affected my relationships; it affected me as a person, and I thought everything I was dealing with, all the chaos, was normal. I had no clue what healthy was, and it was all because of the abuse.

I remembered my teenage abuse by mistake. I went to therapy for a relationship. I wanted to understand how to fix my relationship and we went to couple's therapy. The counselor wanted to see us together, but they also want to see you separately. In order to have a healthy relationship we each had to be healthy so they saw individually first.

**Katrina:** As someone coming from the 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s, I protested. When I was in my early 20s, there was a year that the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) actually marched down Pennsylvania Avenue. I've always been big on fighting racism, so I went to protest. I learned something interesting that day.

The KKK marched down Pennsylvania Avenue and there was a Black cop in front of me. I said to him, "How do you protect these people? How do you do that?" He looked at me and said, "Everybody has a right to their expression and what they feel." That hit me so hard that day because it's true. I'm not saying it was right or wrong. I'm saying everyone has that right.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Let's switch gears a bit and talk about your book, "What My Mother Never Knew".

**Katrina:** Okay, the book is about me healing from childhood sexual abuse. At five, one of my uncles abused me. For years I thought it was a dream. I

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Why do you enjoy being Mrs. Florida American?

**Katrina:** Honestly, it's because people are really interested in hearing what you have to say. I never



understood that before, but if you have a message to get out, pageantry is the way to get your voice heard.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Tell us about your platform, Voices.

**Katrina:** Everybody has a voice. Everybody has a story. No one is going to know unless you use your voice. My middle son was my hardheaded one. I would say to him, "Zack, if you don't tell me what's wrong, I can't help you". That goes for everyone. If you don't use your voice, you cannot get help. I didn't use my voice as a kid. If I had, maybe things would have been different.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What was the hardest part of competing in the Mrs. Florida American pageant?

**Katrina:** Honestly, the hardest part of competing in the pageant was placing value on myself. To me it was a very stressful thing, especially with social media and the ability to see our competition. Your mind goes crazy because your competition might post a picture that is phenomenal or they're at the Mayor's house for example, and you're sitting there asking yourself, "How am I going to compete with that person?"

To be honest, as a Black woman, society does not tell us we're beautiful. Miss Universe said, "Women like me." When she said that, it hit me. They conditioned her that women who look like her are not considered beautiful. Society


teaches us that beauty is blonde hair and blue eyes. It's better today but it was commonplace in the 60s when I was growing up.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What's the next step for Katrina Spagnoletti?

**Katrina:** The next step is preparing for Nationals on the week of January 21st in Las Vegas. There will be 50 women, one from each state, in the competition. I will compete for the title of Mrs. American, and if I win that title, I go to Sri Lanka and compete for Mrs. World.

It is a pretty big deal. I knew this was a great pageant system to be in. It's the number one pageant system for married women, but I didn't understand how important this is to have a big





**“WHAT MY MOTHER NEVER KNEW”**  
IS A SELF-HELP BOOK DESIGNED TO HELP  
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TRAUMA: ALBEIT SEXUAL, MENTAL, OR PHYSICAL  
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platform. I love having Florida as my stage, but I want it to be bigger. I want to be the face of this organization. It's incredible how people just want to have you come on their show or interview you. I'm learning so much about how to reach out to the media. I'm learning so much about how to promote myself, understanding how to get out there.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Okay. So, let me ask you this: if you spoke to a group of young women getting ready to step out into the world, let's say the senior class of 2021, what would you say for them?

**Katrina:** One thing I would say is definitely live your life. I will tell them things that I've always told my children. One is to be happy with what you do because you'll be successful. Don't get caught up in what society wants you to do or thinks you're going to do. Don't put that pressure on yourself. I mean, right now we're living in a world where there's too much stress, don't put that extra pressure on yourself. Live your life.



## Mrs. Florida American 2020

### Social Media Links

**Facebook: Mrs. Florida American 2020**

**Instagram: @mrs\_florida\_american2020 &  
@younewfaceoffitness**

— MRS. —  
*Florida*  
*American*  
— 2020 —



PHOTO BY CARLOS VELEZ  
MAKEUP BY ALI LEE PAGEANT ARTISTRY

Watch me as I capture the world in Las Vegas, Nevada  
the week of March 19, 2021!



*Still I Rise!*



# POSITIVE MEDIA LIGHTS OF THE ROUNDTABLE

By Gerald C. Anderson, Sr.

2020 opened our eyes to many things in this world. The exposure of negative vibes around the United States could be witnessed on any given day. However, positive actions occurred this year too. My involvement with the show Morning Tea w/Mommy allowed me to be introduced to Darius A. Stanton, a man helping to bring the light to the good this world has to offer.

Darius' show, Lights of the Roundtable, rose from his former show, Peace in the Morning. Debuting in 2021 Darius, along with his co-hosts Darlene Johnson, Marcus Johnson and Kendrick "DJ

5 Starr" Tilghman, Lights of the Roundtable is expected to make an impact in the Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia area. You can read more about Darius, Darlene, Marcus, and DJ 5 Starr below.

The Lights of the Roundtable is a combination of common sense, intellectualism, tips on business, finance, and mental health, all brought together in a package they delightfully call "Positive Media".

Positive Media is just a theme meaning exactly what it sounds like. Lights of the Roundtable's plan involves providing its viewers media coverage and information that places the spotlight on positivity.

The co-hosts met each other over 20 years ago and have diverse backgrounds which merge to form a powerful, high energy, solution-oriented team of collaborators. Lights of the Roundtable is motivated to help people learn how to engage in self-development and build positive communities. Their plan includes reaching out to people in corporations, small businesses, colleges, and universities to become healthier and happier.

## **Meet Lights of the Roundtable:**

### **Darius A. Stanton**

Darius A. Stanton has over 25 years' experience as a national public speaker, television broadcaster and executive leader in the private and government sectors. As CEO of The Stanton Group Inc., a management and human development firm, he has spoken to groups in such places as the US Naval Academy, Harlem, NY, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, Detroit, Michigan and to college and high school students as well as juveniles in detention.







## Questions for Darius A. Stanton



**The Lyfe Magazine:** What is the most important issue facing this country?

**Darius:** The biggest choice this country is facing is should we continue down the path we are on or

change. For over 400 years we have focused on prospering at the expense of someone else's freedom, justice, and equality. We need to change. We need to become a nation focused on the assets, the strengths, and the greatness of individuals and groups.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Most sports continue to play through the pandemic. Do you think this is a good idea?

**Darius:** Several sports were played outdoors. The indoor sports with many precautions and no spectators is a safe approach. I will also say it was historic and very impactful to see the National Basketball Association, most without their families, conducting the playoffs and NBA championship in a bubble at Disney. However the most important history lesson of the NBA season was the messaging they used on their platforms to promote positive connotations and themes of social justice. On their uniforms, in place of their names on the backs of their jerseys, they chose messages such as education, reform, etc.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Do you think it is a good idea to send kids back to in person school?

**Darius:** Children, if possible, should get homeschooled for the rest of the year. Give parents the resources and money to stay home and learn, bond, and build healthier families for one solid

year. It's not like America's system is working currently. It's better than most nations but not when you consider the abundance of resources we have. America is still behind many countries in our overall education compared to the rest of the world.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** With 2021 upon us, what three things would you like to see the Black community in Maryland achieve this year?

**Darius:** 1) A solid mental health strategy that treats individual and family trauma to address the root causes of crime and violence. 2) A plan to start shifting education curriculum state wide that reflect the rich contributions made by Africans and African Americans. 3) Provide economic stimulus packages to build Black business and increase home ownership opportunities.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Who inspired you the most in your life?

**Darius:** My family inspired me the most.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What was the most surprising story of 2020?

**Darius:** That 70 million people of all genders and races voted for Donald Trump and the other 80 million people were surprised that 70 million voted for what appeared to be a very divisive President in his first term of office. Donald Trump was the pimple of America's toxicity in the body of a nation that thrives in the misfortune of others. Democracy may be the best form of government, but our Government does not practice a true form of the ideals of liberty and justice for all that make up democracy.

## Darlene Brown

Darlene Brown, CEO of Divine Empowerment, is an author, certified personal development and business leadership coach, poet, inspirational speaker, and certified training facilitator with over 25 years of professional experience in business, with emphasis on technology.



She holds a B.S. in Information Systems, and is an advocate for life-long learning. Darlene received a Leadership Certificate in 2013 from the Leadership Institute at Prince George's Community College. She is also certified through the Institute for Professional Excellence in Coaching (iPEC) and her coaching curriculum provides successful methodologies on harnessing and implementing your personal power thru healing and transformation. Darlene is certified in the Yale Curriculum 'Coping with Work and Family Stress: A Workplace Preventive Intervention'; Stephen Covey's 'Seven Habits of Highly Effective People' and Tracom Social Styles, an Emotional Intelligence and Behavioral Leadership training module.

## Questions for Darlene Brown

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What do you believe is the most important issue facing this country?

**Darlene:** The most important item facing this country is the policy surrounding the judicial and 'policing issue'. The laws in the judicial system regarding police must be changed in order to allow citizens to believe the police are trustworthy and are working to protect and not murder black and brown people. The police system must be rewritten to require significant training which would prevent the untimely death of men and women, specifically in non-violent traffic stops.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Recently the FDA approved a vaccine for COVID-19 after the White House gave them less than ten hours to do so. What is your opinion on this vaccine, and will you and your family take the vaccine?

**Darlene:** No, I will not be taking the vaccine and no, I would not allow my family to take the vaccine. I have no faith in the medical system, and I have no faith in the U.S. Government system with regard to the laws surrounding vaccinations. The time with which this vaccine has been created and made available is highly suspicious because it doesn't, in my opinion, provide sufficient time to ensure the outcome.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What was the most disappointing story of 2020?

**Darlene:** The most disappointing story of 2020 for me was the Breanna Taylor story.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What advice would you give to the college graduation class of 2021?

**Darlene:** Believe in your dreams, work hard, stay focused, develop your skills, write out the strategy to create the life you desire. Learn about investments in stock, read books and associate



with people who are smarter and wiser than you are. Always make time for learning and giving back. You have the ability to create products and services that will bestow blessings into the lives of others!

## **Marcus Johnson**

Marcus Johnson is an independent Billboard-ranked and internationally acclaimed Jazz keyboardist. He's also the owner of FLO Wine, Author, Consultant/Lawyer, Professor and Chase's Dad! All from an HBCU graduate and member of Alpha Phi Alpha.



Marcus' latest release is the Flo ChillHop Series, a mix of Jazz, Hip-Hop, and Chillout vibes. In 2019, he released a CD titled "BALLADS...In My Voice", showcasing his soulful interpretations of some of his favorite ballads from different parts of his life and favorite artists who wrote and recorded them.

## **Questions for Marcus Johnson**

**The Lyfe Magazine:** How have the election results impacted the country?

**Marcus:** Politicians have to work for their vote now more than ever, except where there is little opposition in predominantly Republican or Democratic districts, to fulfil their promises to people. Trump didn't build a wall or reform prisons, but he did get 70 million votes, the 2nd largest in American Presidential elections.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What was the most disappointing story of 2020?

**Marcus:** The most disappointing story to me was when I learned a bill passed in Washington, DC, that could allow children as young as 11 years old to get recommended vaccinations without permission from their parents or legal guardians. The "Minor Consent for Vaccinations Amendment Act" bill passed in the DC Council by a 12-to-1 vote.

## **Kendrick R. Tilghman AKA "DJ 5 Starr"**

Kendrick R. Tilghman is a Baltimore entrepreneur, DJ, educator, outreach specialist, and top Science Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (S.T.E.A.M.) advocate. The vision of his company, 5 Starr Enterprise, is to become the premier resource for S.T.E.A.M. workforce diversity in the United States. His company educates and empowers communities to play more active roles in S.T.E.A.M. related curriculum and fields. He believes this foundation will create greater opportunities in advanced education training and contribute to a more diverse workforce.



## For more information on The Lights of the Rountable visit

[TheLightsoftheRoundtable.com](http://TheLightsoftheRoundtable.com)

### Question for DJ 5 Starr

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Recently the FDA approved a vaccine for COVID-19 after the White House gave them less than ten hours to do so. What is your opinion on this vaccine, and will you and your family take the vaccine?

**DJ 5 Starr:** The United States in December 2020 still has nurses being asked to take home their PPE gear, but we can distribute a drug in less than nine months that's purported to be a safe vaccine? Ken Frazier, CEO of Merck said, "When you're putting these vaccines into healthy people, you have to do everything possible to ensure that these vaccines are both safe and effective." (Fast Money: Halftime Report.)

No, I will not be taking this vaccine. We should focus on shifting behavior in the short term and remove the items from the shelves of grocery markets that cause diabetes, heart disease, liver and kidney problems, just to name a few.

As you can see this team of professionals is destined to hit the mark of a higher calling in 2021. Lights of the Roundtable is a show filled with information that you will not want to miss.



# The Lyfe Magazine's Spotlight

*Featuring*

**TRU BATTLE FITNESS, LLC™**

*Adrienne Battle*

By Gerald C. Anderson, Sr.

According to the 2018 State of Women-Owned Businesses Report, African American women own more than 2 million businesses, making them the leading female minority group of



Photo by LeRon Risks Greater Vision Photography

business owners. Statistically, women of color are 4.5 times more likely to start a business than other demographics. ([https://ventureneer.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-state-of-women-owned-businesses-report\\_FINAL.pdf](https://ventureneer.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-state-of-women-owned-businesses-report_FINAL.pdf)) One of those 2 million impressed me with the start of her new business, Tru Battle Fitness.

Adrienne Battle was born to the parents of Michael and Sheila Battle. She loved sports growing up, playing softball in middle school and basketball™™ and volleyball at Thomas Stone High School in Waldorf, Maryland.

After graduating high school, she attended college for a short while. Life threw her a curve and she stepped out into the real world, securing full time employment. After working and attending Prince George's Community College, she returned to Thomas Stone High School as their Assistant Girls Basketball Coach for both the varsity and junior varsity teams.



Photo by LeRon Risks Greater Vision Photography

**“Adrienne is passionate towards her profession. She genuinely cares about her clients and their well being.”**

**- Janice Benjamin**

Adrienne said, “I helped my girls with conditioning and weightlifting and would meet with them during the summer to train.” She didn’t know at the time but that experience would set her on the path to her “tru” calling.

Adrienne’s initial training clientele included herself, family and friends along with members of the basketball team. After months of hard work, everyone saw results and Adrienne realized she was on to something special. At the time, Adrienne worked both a full time and part time job but the motivation to lose weight and work for herself continued to call out to her.

Adrienne went on a weight loss mission. She posted her journey online and realized people were watching. She started her personal journey at 189 pounds. After hard work and dedication, she lost 40 pounds and gained clients.

Seeing her results and motivated to do more, she decided to turn away from the day-to-day grind of a 9 to 5 job. Adrienne moved to the next phase of her growth. In the summer of 2018 she created Tru Battle Fitness, LLC with her friends and family as clients. It was a leap of faith that, over time, would prove to be worthwhile.

Adrienne said, “I posted my journey starting at 189





pounds. I underwent a huge transformation, losing 40 plus pounds. The response was amazing, and more people signed up. Before I realized it, I had enough clients to leave my part time job then my full time job.”

Adrienne fell in love with not only having her own schedule, but she is able to do something she thoroughly and wholeheartedly enjoys daily. More importantly she loves watching her client’s progress and grow their confidence in themselves. She takes pride in inspiring and helping them to see what they can do as long as they put their trust in God and believe in themselves. Her creative workout routines keep her clients motivated and pressing toward their personal weight loss goal.

Like many other businesses, Tru Battle Fitness, LLC suffered a negative impact during the pandemic. However, Adrienne adjusted and currently provides online training to her clients as well as outside training, ensuring her clients are six feet apart. She also created her own line of healthy, 100 percent fruit juice drinks. Adrienne takes orders online and her customers meet her at a pop up location to pick up their order. This amazing business strategy has proven to be very success for Tru Battle Fitness. She has even “popped up” as far away as Goldsboro, North Carolina. In the near future, Tru Battle Fitness will be shipping juice drinks to clients in the DC, Maryland and Virginia area. You can place orders here: <https://tru-battle-fitness-llc.myshopify.com/>.

Tru Battle Fitness is known for its family brand. Adrienne hails from a family of athletes. She has six brothers and sisters (Kimberly, Michael, Quiana, Stephen, Devin, and Jordan) who have been her biggest supporters and helpers since day one. “I couldn’t have done half of the things I’ve accomplished without them or our amazing, praying Grandmother, Cecilia Blount. We hope and pray to continue to expand and continue to build for our next generation.”

I talked to Adrienne about training men. I specifically asked her if there was a difference in training men versus women. She stated, “Training men is



similar to training women. Men tend to be stronger and have more power so when I train them they can do exercises and workouts using more weights as well as performing more reps and sets.”

Adrienne agreed that marketing to men needs to be different. Even using the same exercise package, the wording needs to be different when targeting men. For example, when marketing to men a package should say, “Use this workout program to build a stronger and more ripped body.” However, the same package to women would say, “Use this workout program to shape a tight and toned body.”

When talking about her career goals, Adrienne said, “My career goal is to continue helping women and men commit to change their lives for the better. And I look forward to continuing my education in the fitness and health field.”

I asked Adrienne what advice would she give someone who is starting a fitness routine? She answered, “Start with a realistic plan and make smaller, attainable goals. For example, start with two pounds a week and a long range goal of 50 pounds. It’s important to make a meal plan and



stick to it. Most of all be dedicated, consistent, and

**“I started at 224 pounds and after lots of hard work, discipline and encouragement from Adrienne I was able to lose 50 lbs! I feel like Adrienne took my weight loss journey personal because she put her heart and soul in my training!”**  
**- Nicole Duckett**

patient. Our bodies take time to change.”

Being a young Black female, it’s inspiring to see what Adrienne is doing in Charles County, Maryland. I asked her what advice she would give another Black female who may be considering a business. She replied, “Keep the faith. It’s hard work if you come from 9 to 5 because as an entrepreneur, you’ll work longer hours. Surround yourself with like-minded people and people who believe in you. Take advice from others but believe in yourself.”

“I’ve been able to help women lose up to as much as 60 lbs. I have gained a lot of experience and knowledge in all areas. Whether it be to gain muscle, confidence, create meal plans/nutrition plans I’ve been able to help clients reach goals in a short amount of time. I have helped over 100 women since 2018. I pray the number continues to increase.”

If you are interested in becoming a client of this amazing trainer please contact her at one of the below social media sites:

Website: [www.trubattlefitness.com](http://www.trubattlefitness.com)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Tru-Battle-Fitness-115543349324349>

Instagram: [www.instagram.com/trubattlefitness](http://www.instagram.com/trubattlefitness)



Photo by LeRon Risks Greater Vision Photography



# NaTasha McKenzie

The Birth of a new

## Queen

by

Renata M. Smith



Queens, New York birthed a talented, educated and wonderful woman. NaTasha McKenzie's parents' roots come from Jamaica, W.I. She moved to Brandon, Florida continued her education and steadily grew in her life to become the awesome singer, songwriter, actress, playwright, director and movie producer she is today.

I first met NaTasha when we both were casted in the play, "Diaries of a Vanity Vixen". I remember thinking, "She has a warm spirit." She played the role of my mother in the play. NaTasha is very professional and a talented singer.

I wanted to bring out a little bit of what NaTasha is about, as well as provide her an opportunity to open up to our readers. I was able to catch up with NaTasha during the filming of her latest project, "The Assumption". I was casted in this fantastic film as well.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Give us a little bit of your professional background.

**NaTasha:** I have a Master of Arts in Education, a Bachelor of Arts in Communications from the

University of South Florida. I recently started my new business, NMM Productions, A.K.A. NEVER MUTE YOUR MAGIC.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What lead you to create NMM Productions?

**NaTasha:** I often spend most of my time encouraging others to go after their dreams and to live in their purpose. My desire is to motivate others to believe in themselves and not to allow fear to hold them and their dreams hostage. In the process of pushing others, God gave me the vision to develop a platform to bring the dreams of others to reality.

NMM Productions was created to spark and support creatives who are too shy or lack the platform to elevate their talents. NMM Productions was created as a safe space, especially for women of color who contribute so much yet received nothing in return. The goal of NMM Productions is to give sound and vision to the phenomenal, untold stories of the creatives in our community. In short, NEVER MUTE YOUR MAGIC.

As a woman of color, an artist, a creative, and a mother, I want to pour light into the world and set an example for all the young eyes watching.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What are you currently working on?

**NaTasha:** My film, "The Assumption", is set to be released in 2021. It is about a young woman battling her demons of overthinking and assuming the worst within her relationships.

The cast is extremely talented, and they bring a force so strong that it really brings the story to life. It was an absolute pleasure having them on the project. I can't wait for everyone to see their magic.

Scorpio with Scorpio Vision is the amazing videographer and director on this film.

### **The Assumption Cast**

Terrance Hunter – Rufus Baker Jr.,  
Shonda Hunter – Loulou Gaillard,  
Christina Jones – Tamara BooGotti,  
Dominique Brown- Trenika Hardeman,  
Anita Robinson- Jovan Hayes,  
Devyn Scott- Renata M Smith,



Justin Harmon- Shawn Francis  
Paula Williams- Syreeda Battle,  
Hazel Davis- Toni Chaunty,  
LaMiyah Thompson- Kayla Reshae

**The Lyfe Magazine:** How did you get started in the movie industry?

**NaTasha:** I missed the feeling of reading a new book & watching a new film that wasn't a remake. I wanted something fresh especially when I know there are new stories bottled up in people that need to be told. Every single day that we live and go through things is another story. Unfortunately, too many people are scared to share or have been made a mockery because they did open up. You know some of the greatest history makers were laughed at, received a "no" or two, but thank God they didn't quit.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** How has the pandemic affected your creative side?





Photo by Xavier Coolkid

**NaTasha:** It forced me to use the gifts that God has given me instead of hiding them. You know the saying “if you don’t use it, you will lose it”? I feel that God used this pandemic to recharge and resurrect my creativity. He gave me time (lockdown/quarantine and furloughed) to use my gifts accordingly. I didn’t want to be like the servant in the Bible in Matthew 25:14-29; he buried his gifts instead of multiplying it and he lost it all. Using my gifts isn’t just a blessing for me but for others as well; do you know how many job opportunities can come from a producer creating a single project? Do you know how many people can be blessed from a story brought to life? The pandemic opened my eyes to see that. It also helped me to use the time to own my creative truth: Don’t talk about wanting something fresh if I’m not contributing? Don’t open my mouth and complain. “I saw that already, leave the classics alone”, if I’m hiding my gifts and purposefully muting myself. We all have fears, some of them block our purpose and the blessings that can come from there.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** Who inspired you to become you?

**NaTasha:** My daughter McKenzie is my inspiration. Even when I doubt my abilities, she believes in me and she challenges me to keep going. She will ask me “Do you have something new for me to read?” I watch her write stories and act out her work with her friends and her baby dolls. My sister Mitsy, as children growing up and even still as women, she always reminds me of the gifts that God has put into my life. No matter where she is, she will tell others to look out for me. My mother Venoria reminds me of the prophecy that was laid on my life and she constantly prays for me to walk in the light no matter how dark the path might be. Other women before me on this journey of creativity in entertainment also inspire me. To see the paths that they’ve created and doors they’ve opened is a daily dose of inspiration to keep going.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What are some of your significant accomplishments?

**NaTasha:** Being able to truly walk in my purpose. To honestly be able to be used by God is an accomplishment beyond any word that I can give. It's an accomplishment to be given a gift to write, create and encourage others to walk in their purpose. I created a production company that will open opportunities for people to live. Do you know what it means to be alive and to live?

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What are your career goals?

**NaTasha:** One, for God to always use me to bless others with the stories He gives me. I'd rather someone say "Your story saved my life" over winning an award. That will always be more important.

Two, to be an inspiration to my daughter, McKenzie. I want her to always be proud of me and to always go after what her heart desires.

Three, for me to continue to encourage others to NEVER MUTE YOUR MAGIC. No matter how hard it is, if you are alive you still have a purpose that needs fulfilling.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What's in the future for NaTasha McKenzie and NMM Productions?

**NaTasha:** Of course, more films. I would like for people to keep their eyes open for plays, web series and whatever else God says I need to gear toward. I have two projects that will start casting in 2021. Both are short films. The first is called "Together". It is a Romance and the other is called "Signed Out". It's a Suspense/Drama.

**The Lyfe Magazine:** What additional comments would you like to share with our readers?

**NaTasha:** When you have doubt, have lost hope, are ready to quit and no longer believe in yourself, that is when you need to work more and believe harder.

Follow NaTasha on her social media to be sure you catch her film, "The Assumption".

### Social Media

Website: <https://nmmproductions/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NMM-Productions-100957415012441>

Instagram: [https://www.instagram.com/nmm\\_productions/](https://www.instagram.com/nmm_productions/)



Photo by Xavier Coolkid

# 5

# Steps to Healing & Wholeness

By Shawn-Ta Wilson



IMAGE BY ANA\_J FROM PIXABAY





That? Oh, I'm over that! We say this often in reference to situations in life which have caused us pain or disappointment. Each time we've made the statement, one of three things is the reality:

- We have convinced ourselves we're over it
- We know we're not but we don't want to admit it
- We actually did the work necessary to heal from it

'It' can be a variety of things: divorce, betrayal of a friend, being looked over for a promotion, church hurt, the actions of a wayward child, etc. In all of these scenarios a level of hurt occurs. When we don't properly process the hurt, we cannot achieve healing. The improper method which is used too often is to suppress what we feel. Without healing, we will not be whole. Operating out of brokenness will lead to more hurt. Generally, however, the hurt is then inflicted by us at that point. Have you heard the saying, "You'll bleed on people who never cut you"? That's what can happen when we don't make healing

a priority. The age-old saying is, "hurt people, hurt people" and it is very true.

"Oh, that? I'm over the fact I didn't get the promotion." It will be their behavior, not their words, which will tell the reality.

When a person has not healed from the hurt and disappointment of being passed over for a promotion, they likely won't give their all to the job as they did before. When they take time to heal after the let down, they will continue to volunteer for projects and extra assignments, going above and beyond.

"Oh, her? I'm over her and have a new lady now." Again, his actions will be the telling sign as to whether or not he has actually healed from the unfaithfulness of his ex.

The partner who was cheated on may grill their 'next' because of their 'ex' if they did not successfully heal from the hurt. Where are you going? Who will you be with? You're late; I thought you said you

would be home in two hours; it's been three. However, the one who takes time to process the hurt and has achieved healing from the infidelity will not have trust issues in their next relationship because of their ex.

Do you see how the residue of hurt can remain without true healing?

How do we process hurt in order to heal and be made whole again? Here are five steps to assist:

**1. Acknowledge your personal truth.** John 8:32 reminds us that the truth will make us free. Admit how you feel about the situation. Pretending is lying, even when you're only trying to deceive yourself. Set yourself free and come clean about how you feel.

**2. Refuse to wallow in the situation.** Luke 17:14 states that as the lepers went, they were healed. A conscientious decision along with action is required to achieve healing. Forgiveness is a key component to moving forward. (Reference Matt 6:14)

**3. Realize it is part of your story not the end of your story.** Romans 8:28 tells us that all things work together for our good. We may not understand why it happened or see how any good can come from it, yet we must trust that it has its proper place in our life's story.

**4. Remain positive and optimistic.** Scripture says God will not withhold any good thing from us when we walk uprightly (Psalm 84:11). Stay on the high road. Do not allow disappointment to dampen your character.

**5. Remember, God's ways are higher than our own (Isaiah 55:9).** He knows how to get us where we need to be...without our help.

Let's apply these steps to the case scenarios mentioned earlier:

Acknowledge the frustration and angry at getting passed over for a promotion. Do not let it sour your attitude and prevent you from performing at your best. Thank God for working everything, even the disappointment, together for your good. Watch and

wait for the next opportunity. Remember that His timing reigns supreme.

As for infidelity, the steps above can be applied in this manner:

Take time to realize the depth of your hurt (disrespect, anger, jealousy, etc.). Once you've identified them, be mindful to not stay stuck in them. Remain alert in situations the feelings may arise. Don't ignore them but address them. John 10:10 says the enemy comes to kill, steal, and destroy. When the feelings arise realize it may be the enemy coming for your joy, peace, and happiness. Realize that if it the person was meant for you, they would still be with you. Refuse to get in your own way and block the blessing the right person is meant to be in your life. Remember that God has a good plan for you and thank Him for it in advance!

Your healing process may not include receiving an apology from the other party. Frankly, you may never receive an apology. Your healing cannot be dependent upon one. The 5 Steps to Healing & Wholeness are within your control. An apology from someone who has hurt you is not. It is likely you will have to forgive in the absence of an apology. Forgiving is easier to do when you focus on the fact it frees you even more than the person you extend forgiveness to.

One thing to be very mindful of while healing is not to lash out in a moment of temporary pain when hurt. It can cause permanent damage in relationships and situations which only compounds the issue at hand.

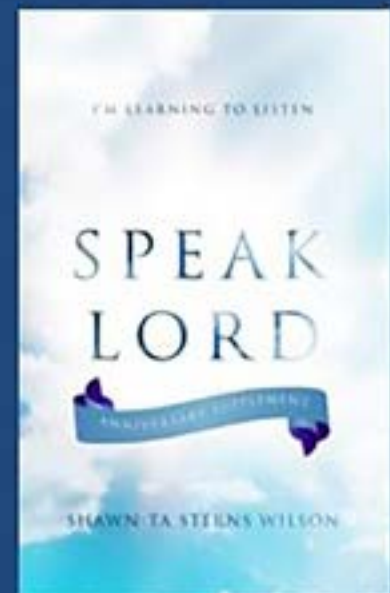
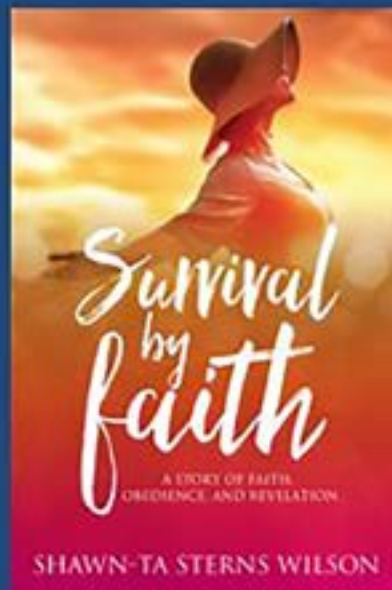
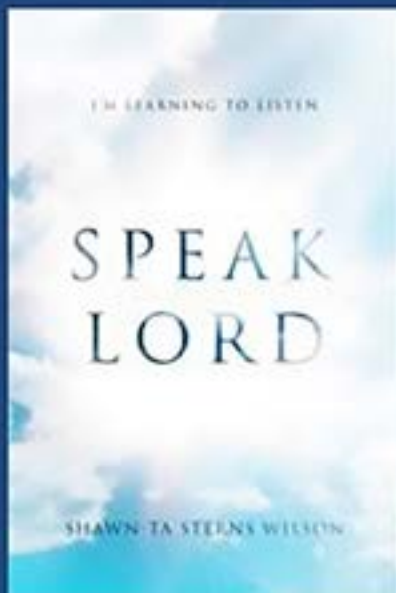
Although what hurt you may have occurred in the blink of an eye, the healing process is not instantaneous. Be prepared for the long haul and remain patient with yourself. You may have to revisit the 5 Steps to Healing & Wholeness frequently over an extended duration of time before your healing process is complete. You'll know you are "over it" when the thought of 'it' and talking about 'it' no longer incite negative feelings and emotions.

Here's to a healthy and whole YOU in 2021!



*Author*  
*Shawn-Ta Sterns Wilson*

As her faith journey continues, Shawn-Ta has now published two books and a supplement to the second book. Each is designed to help readers strengthen their relationship with Christ by showing how present and active He is in our every day lives.



All are  
available on  
Amazon

IG: [shawnta\\_the\\_writer](#) FB: Shawn-Ta Sterns Wilson / Author Email: [survivalbyfaith@gmail.com](mailto:survivalbyfaith@gmail.com)

# Should You Date an Older Man?

By L.D. Peterson

With Valentine's Day quickly approaching, many single women are wondering, "Where's my prince," or the phrase most commonly used today, "Where's my king?" Well ladies, some of us have limited our options by being closed-minded on the men we'll date. One category of men that should get a second look is older men. For the purpose of this article an older man is defined as being 10 or more years senior to his partner. Some of you may be saying, "I'm not sure I want to be with someone my father's/uncle's age," while other may be saying, "I'm a woman of a certain age. What am I going to do with an older man?" To both groups, that's easy to answer-love him and bask in your happiness!

If you research the pros and cons of dating older men, you'll pretty much get the same answers from a number of articles, opinions, and personal stories.

## PROS

**Maturity** -They've probably had a few serious relationships, so they're familiar with women and aren't necessarily into playing games. They typically know what they want and are pretty straightforward with telling you.

**Stability/Security** - Generally speaking, older men are better at investing, earning money, spending wisely, and saving for the future, which shows a level of stability that makes a woman feel secure.

**Experience/Wisdom** - An older man has (hopefully) gained wisdom from all the mistakes he's made or observed others make; meaning he can offer you good advice and guidance.

## CONS

**Controlling**-They're acutely aware of the age difference and may feel threatened by your younger male friends. This sometimes leads to them trying to control you.

**Condescending** -Some older men think they know everything. These men are condescending and act more like your father than your man.

**Less Exciting** - They've already gone through their partying stage and may often prefer quiet nights in, as opposed to living it up all night. Depending on the woman, this may not be a negative at all and is exactly what she wants in her partner.

IMAGE BY CLKER-FREE-VECTOR-IMAGES PIXABAY





IMAGE BY TRÉVOY KELLY FROM PIXABAY

At this point, maybe you're thinking a more seasoned man might be the way to go. Here are some other things to think about.

**1. What do you have in common?** Do you both enjoy some of the same activities? A decade or more age difference means different experiences and different stages in life. You'll have to meet somewhere in the middle, or the most common occurrence is that the younger woman will have to meet the man where he is.

**2. Do you want children?** If you're child-bearing age, it's possible you'll be living your life as a single mother. Depending on the man's age and health, he may not have the energy to chase a toddler or young children around.

**3. Do you have a high libido?** If you have a high drive, again, depending on the man's age and health, he may not be able to keep up with you. Sure, he rocked your world the first time, but he may not be able to be as consistent as you'd like.

**4. Are you willing to be a caregiver?** While there's a chance that anything can happen where one spouse will need to take care of the other, you are increasing your chances of having to be a caregiver if you marry a man significantly older than yourself. A 20-year age difference works extremely well in the beginning, but when you're 60 and he's 80, it can be a challenge.

An older gentleman may not be right for every woman. However, if you're open to it, that silver fox may be just rig



# The Lady Plays FOOTBALL!

By Shawn-Ta Wilson

Some will read the title and think it is a contradiction. Others may read it and think an error has been made. Neither is the case. Carmen-Chante Craighead plays two forms of football: flag and tackle. The Virginia Vixens (flag) and the Richmond Black Widows (tackle) are both teams in all-female leagues. When The Lyfe Magazine interviewed Carmen, she said she considers herself a football player on the field and a lady off the field.

Growing up, her two brothers played the game. Her father coached and played at the semi-pro level. Although you might say football is in her blood, Carmen's true interest in playing football began with her sons. Carmen is a single mother of three very active boys, ages 15, 13, and 6. Most children, but boys in particular, need an outlet for their energy. Carmen initially chose baseball and then Karate for her sons. After two years of Karate, the boys moved into football. Carmen has always been actively involved in her sons' activities. She was the Team

Mom for five years. That exposure led to her interest in playing the game herself.

Flag football is a year-round sport. Having an outlet year-round appealed to Carmen. As much as the schedule of flag football appealed to her, playing tackle football was an even more exciting thought! When the opportunity was presented, she went for it without hesitation! Tackle football provides an outlet to release her own pinned-up energy. Speaking quite frankly, Carmen stated that it also allows her to get out some aggression.

Now 33, Carmen spoke openly about her childhood. Describing it as less than ideal, her parents separated when she was four years old, reuniting when she was about twelve. During those years she was raised in a single father household. As the oldest of four children, Carmen felt she was placed in the position to help raise her siblings. In her words, "I had to grow up fast."



Photo credit to Douglas Charland-DC Divas

Carmen's home life created anger issues for her. As a result, she remembers being in anger management counseling as young as kindergarten. Through the years Carmen knew she needed something to help her release frustration. Football has provided that and more. Even as a devoted mother, Carmen knew she could not be a mom only. She needed a life of her own. However, having lived a relatively sheltered life, she wasn't sure how to create a life outside of



Photo credit: Kyle McMillan -WVM Productions

motherhood. Then, along came football! It has given her the chance to be around other women her age; it has opened her up to networking opportunities; and has helped her foster relationships outside of her self-created bubble, as she refers to her personal life.

Regardless of how challenging her early years were, Carmen knew she did not want to make excuses for not doing well in life. "It's a choice to be broken. Life makes you or breaks you. I chose to let life make me better and not break me." By all accounts, she is a focused young lady. What about Carmen the football player though? Is she any good? After speaking with her and learning more about her play on the field, the answer is a resounded YES!

With the Richmond Black Widows, she plays offensive and defensive positions; Fullback and Linebacker respectively. Next season, she believes she will be slotted as a Tight End. Dropping from 230 lbs to 180 in a year is the catalyst for the change in position.

In one particular game, Carmen not only played both sides of the ball but special teams as well. Her longest, successful field goal as a Kicker was 45 yards. She is certainly a well-rounded football player.

Curious about her best game, Carmen pinpointed the 2019 game against the New York Knockout. She played Nose Guard in that game and was

credited with six sacks, most of them for loss of yards.

I asked Carmen what she would say to those who feel football is a man's sport. "I would say they are closed-minded. Regardless of the sport, woman can enjoy it the same as a man. No comparison is needed."

In 2019, Carmen was named 3rd Team All American as Defensive Tackle and Defensive Lineman of the Year. Part of the dedication required to achieve recognition such as this involves personal training. Carmen said, "I train to not get hurt; technique is everything."

Carmen decided to sit out and not play one year. She thought she would have a full year off from football. However, she was asked to coach the defensive line of the nine and ten year old Mighty Mites. That taste of coaching, mixed with the opportunity she had to be on the sidelines with high school football teams in her area (as their photographer), has been the springboard for her next goal. Within the next five years, Carmen would like to see where her coaching career may take her; whether it be pursuing the ranks with the little leagues or partaking in building young girls flag/tackle league within her area.

The lady plays football and football is helping her live life to the fullest. If you are interested in learning more about women's flag and tackle football leagues Carmen plays with, please visit:

Flag: <https://cwfl.leagueapps.com>

Tackle: [www.wfa-profootball.com](http://www.wfa-profootball.com)



# What's Your Relationship With Food?

By April Sampè

As a woman from Maryland raised by Louisiana-grown parents, I have a desire for only the best tasting food with the most distinct flavors. I remember at five years of age my father would drop me off at the babysitter and I would cry. At that age you would think tantrums were the cause but no, it was my babysitter. She failed to properly season her food. I remember watching her cook a meal for her family; baked chicken, mashed potatoes with gravy, and green beans. Not bad right? Wrong! I walked up to her as she was cooking and asked, "Where is the salt and why don't you put the stuff that my Mama puts in her food?" She laughed, but I was serious.

During the Summer and Winter breaks of my childhood, I would spend time in Louisiana with my family. To say that food was the thing that brought my family together is an understatement. I would walk into each family member's home only to be greeted by an aroma that was like a kiss of blessings on my nose, and I loved it. I would eat until I was full, wait an hour and eat more. I would do this in every home that I would visit so, needless to say, I was an overweight child



Photo by Bulbfish from Pexels



and young adult. I really didn't care about my size at the time because with every bite of yummy goodness I felt absolutely loved. This posed a real problem as I was equating good flavors to love and that should not be the case. I should have focused on how each item on my plate was negatively impacting my body.

In April 2017 I was diagnosed with fibroids which grow when you have a hormonal imbalance. I began doing research on how many ways your hormones can be damaged by what you ingest. And oddly enough, I found research on the animals that we eat getting injected and fed an abundance of hormones. What does that mean for us? Well, it means we are ingesting those hormones too and it is affecting our bodies. I read more books and watched more videos and I made a decision to stop eating meat, but only for a month. My relationship with food was far too important to ruin it with the lack of good tasting food. During that entire month, I felt better, I slept better, and I walked better. Oh, did I fail to mention that I had knee pain for years due to inflammation? This was life changing, but was I getting the warm and fuzzies when I would eat the hormone deprived meatless meals? The answer was yes! I knew how to throw down in the kitchen so I was not hurting for flavors and you can eat as many vegetables as you want as long as you keep the salt, oil, and sugar content at a minimum. This was great! I moved my experiment from one month to a year and here I am, three years later, forty pounds lighter, with clearer skin, and might I add, with no more chronic pain. I have changed my relationship with food and started really loving the person that I have become.

What's your relationship with food? After reading my short story, do you think there may be room in your diet to make improvements for your overall health? If so, I would encourage you to consult with a physician for guidance first. Eating to live healthier is much better than living to eat.



**“I walked up to her as she was cooking and asked, ‘Where is the salt and why don’t you put the stuff that my Mama puts in her food?’”**

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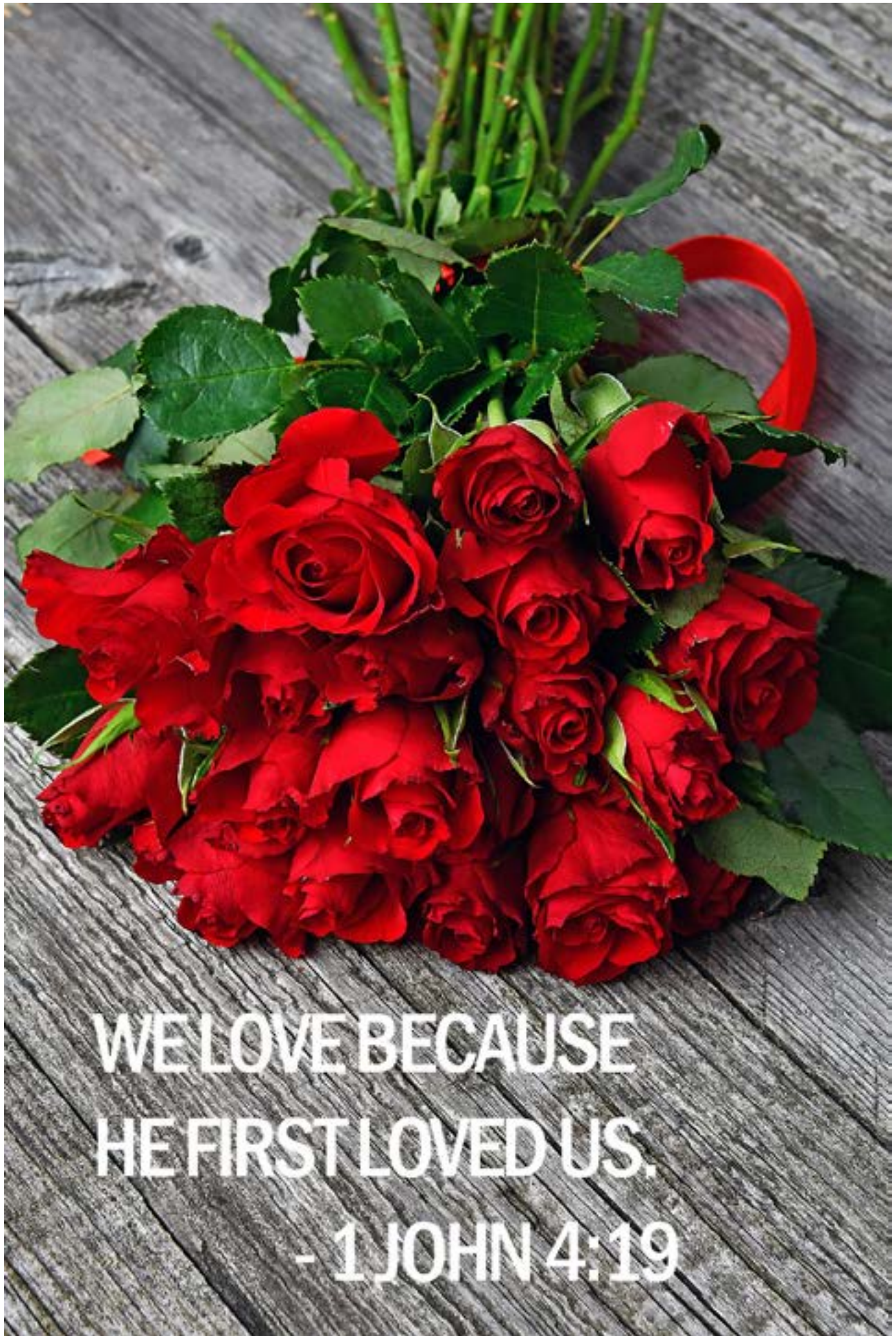
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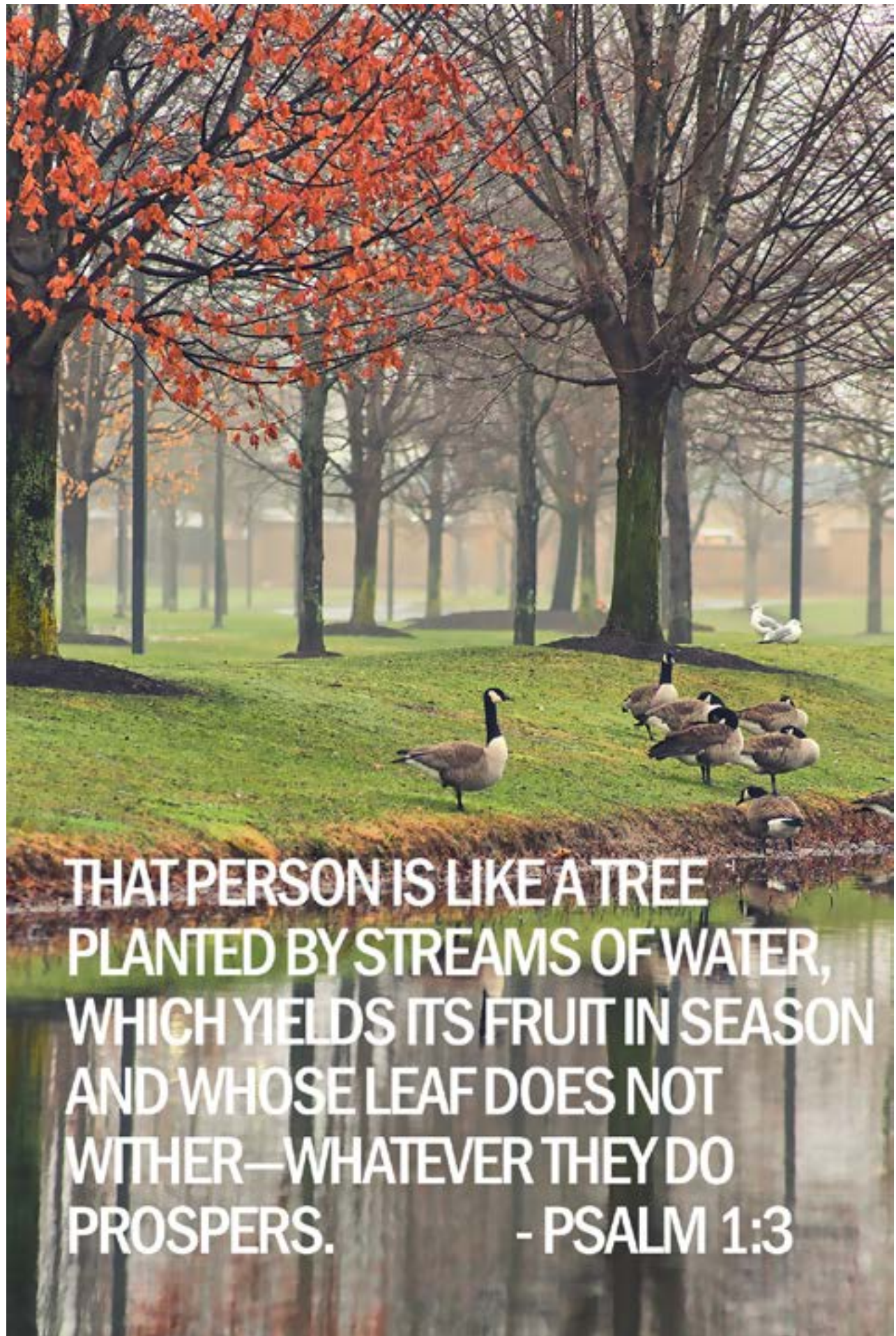
2021

I CONSIDER  
THAT OUR  
PRESENT  
SUFFERINGS ARE  
NOT WORTH  
COMPARING  
WITH THE  
GLORY THAT  
WILL BE  
REVEALED IN  
US.

ROMANS 8:18



WE LOVE BECAUSE  
HE FIRST LOVED US.  
- 1 JOHN 4:19



**THAT PERSON IS LIKE A TREE  
PLANTED BY STREAMS OF WATER,  
WHICH YIELDS ITS FRUIT IN SEASON  
AND WHOSE LEAF DOES NOT  
WITHER—WHATEVER THEY DO  
PROSPERS. - PSALM 1:3**





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**IT'S TIME FOR A  
CHANGE!**