***Let’s Talk: About Healing!***

By: Almetrice Shavers September 11, 2023

Hello Let’s Talk family, so this topic I want to discuss today is so necessary in our journey through life. I know it is a hard pill to swallow and people tend to avoid it. Healing is hard, but can be so powerful. Healing can look different for each person and that is the beauty in it. With it, people focus so much on the destination but it is more of a journey. It takes time to heal and should not be a rushed process. Healing is looking and understanding patterns you have become accustomed to. It is reflecting on the past and present, so you can have a more fulfilling future. It is having those uncomfortable conversations, thoughts and feelings from possible childhood trauma. It can be from that abusive relationship in college. It can be from allowing others to disrespect you constantly and not understanding your worth. I can’t speak for anyone else but for myself. It seems as if I have been on my healing journey since my mid 20’s but I have kicked it in gear more now in my 30’s. In my 20’s, I was recognizing trauma and other negative patterns, but I wasn’t ready to actually deal with it. Since I turned 30, a light bulb has come on and with each year I’m finding out more about myself. I am choosing now to deal with all of the ugliness, give myself grace and heal to move forward. It was August 2020, a few days after I turned 30 years old. I sat at my kitchen table and I just cried. I was in such a dark place. I called out to God and asked him to fully come into my life because I needed Him so desperately. I told God I wanted to be healed and I was tired of doing life my way, because it simply was not working and I was exhausted mentally, emotionally, spiritually and physically. I made the choice to heal. Like I said earlier, healing is necessary but definitely a choice. That was a pivotal time in my life, my daughter’s father and I mutually ended our relationship. Then at the end of 2020 my daughter and I moved back home to Texarkana and moved in with my parents. It was one of the hardest things I had to do but I needed my village more than ever.

I’ll never forget that day I basically rededicated my life back to God in August 2020 at my kitchen table. I was listening to Withholding Nothing by William McDowell and just crying big crocodile tears. I had heard this song a thousand times, but this particular day it truly ministered to my heart. It’s a part in the song when they say, “All I want is You, oh Jesus”. I just cried harder because in that moment that was the only person I could depend on. In that moment it was just me and God, I could feel Him holding me as I came to Him completely vulnerable. I know everyone has their way of healing, but I truly believe in order to completely heal, you have to come before God. He made each of us and knows our every thought, actions etc. Since he made us, he is the only one to heal us. In my opinion, healing and salvation go hand in hand. I’m not trying to be all spiritual for some people, but I know and witness what God can truly do.

I’ve done therapy different times in my life, but I have been in therapy for a little over 2 years now. It truly is life changing. I have always been an advocate for therapy, mental health is serious and should not be ignored. I know older generations and even some people my age that don’t believe in it. That’s okay and people are entitled to their opinions, but as for me I won’t continue to live in my brokeness. I will also teach my daughter how important it is to take care of her mental health. I went to graduate school for clinical mental health and it forever changed my life and how I looked at the world. Studying counseling allowed me to have so much compassion and grace for others. As a teenager it seemed all my friends would call me with their problems and even when I got in college. I can laugh about it now, my parents used to say why does everyone call you and you are just a baby yourself. I hadn’t gone through any real obstacles. They were just setting me up for graduate school. Even though I was a kid and didn’t have any life experiences, me always listening to others allowed me to learn how to do active listening. I was learning counseling techniques, just didn’t know it at the time. All a part of God’s plan.

In my healing journey, I am unlearning negative patterns and thoughts. It is a mindset shift and having to rewire my brain. I am learning how to talk positively towards myself. For so many years, I have talked harsh to myself and even belittled myself. We can be the biggest critics to ourselves and sometimes our worst enemy. I don’t talk harshly to others but will beat myself down. I gave others more respect than I did to myself. I never realized it, but I was abusing myself. Healing takes a lot of grace as well. Along with forgiveness to yourself and to the one that hurt you. It takes true strength to forgive and of course it is a choice. I had to learn to forgive those who hurt me, so I could release the pain. In me doing that, it came with so much freedom and peace. The old saying is, you don’t know my story, so you don’t understand my praise. I can definitely attest to that saying. Looking at me people wouldn’t even believe the things I have been through in my life. That’s what the peace of God can do for you. I was molested at 4 years old by a family member, my biological father left when I was 1 years old and I was in an emotionally and mentally abusive relationship in college. I had really low self-esteem and I didn’t like myself. I compared myself to others my whole life. I never thought I was pretty and at times smart enough. I had abandonment issues, was a major people pleaser, didn’t speak up for myself, had anger issues, never felt heard or seen by anyone. So you see, I had so much going on for a long time and it just overflowed over time. Therapy has allowed me to deal with all of these issues. In therapy, the therapist isn’t there to tell you how to deal with your issues. They are present to help you help yourself. The first step in healing is acknowledging there is an issue. The biggest downfall is being in denial about your issues. A few pastors I have heard say this, God can’t heal what you won’t reveal. Like I said in the beginning of this blog, healing is a choice. My daughter deserves a healed mother, my husband deserves a healed wife, my family and friends deserve a healed Almetrice, but most importantly God deserves a healed daughter.

My focus is on the journey and not the destination. I want to pay attention to everything as I go through this. Part of my healing is what I listen to, what I watch and things I say. Here are a few things that contribute to my healing:

* Listening to worship music daily- gives me a sense of gratitude
* Doing various journal prompts- allows me to go deep within and write down my thoughts
* Listening to podcasts that deal with self-growth- allowing positive people to speak their truth and testimonies. Just learning from others.
* Reading christian and self-help books- allowing me the knowledge to retain and use in my everyday life
* Reading my bible daily- everything we go through is already in the bible and learning scriptures to understand the various promises from God and how to fight against the enemy.
* Engaging in self-care habits- the things i listed above are all a part of my self-care plus other things.
* Spending time with my daughter, family and friends- being surrounded by love and support always makes me feel I can face anything.
* Spending time alone- i’m learning to embrace being in solitude to draw closer to God and myself.

Make a choice today to heal the inner child, adolescent and teenager in you, so the adult version of you can be more fulfilled. I know it will be so worth it in the end. A task I was putting off doing but I will work on and even post on the blog site. I will be writing letters to myself from my age now but to the little girl, adolescent, teenage and even young adult version of myself. Like I always say, you deserve God’s peace, love and joy. I love you family and I'll see you in the next post!