

Woman To Woman

THE CONFIDENT WOMAN



America Quinn
THE GIFT OF PAINTING

Jacqueline Kennedy-Coleman
THE SPIRIT OF REJECTION

Dr. Mark & Angela Haynes
A LOVE LIKE THIS

AND MUCH MORE . . .



Joann Brown FOUNDER/CEO
WOMAN TO WOMAN
THE CONFIDENT WOMAN

The journey to launching *Woman To Woman The Confident Woman* was fueled by a deep passion to inspire, uplift, and empower women from all walks of life. I envisioned a space where women could access meaningful knowledge, feel genuinely encouraged, and rediscover their inner strength.

Through every page of the magazine, my goal is to connect with you personally offering fresh perspectives that spark confidence and help you rise above life's challenges. As you turn each page, my hope is that you feel uplifted, empowered, and more assured of the strength already within you.

The vision didn't stop with the magazine. *Woman To Woman The Confident Woman, Inc.*, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, was founded to go even deeper into the heart of our communities. Our mission is clear: to rebuild confidence and empower women who have experienced homelessness, domestic violence, addiction, abuse, or life-altering hardships.

At the core of everything we do is a simple yet powerful belief that we can change lives, one woman at a time. Our vision is to make a lasting impact by helping women rediscover their confidence, reclaim their purpose, and step boldly into their future.

While we may not have a large team, we carry a large vision, big hearts, and an unwavering commitment to the communities we serve. Every order, every supporter, and every woman we reach truly matters to us, and none of it is ever taken for granted.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Together, we are stronger, more powerful, and truly confident.

– Joann,
Woman To Woman The Confident Woman Founder



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*You are powerful,
beautiful, brilliant and
brave.*



ARE YOU READY TO SHOWCASE your journey, inspire others or elevate your brand?

We're offering an exclusive chance for you to grace the cover of Woman To Woman The Confident Woman Magazine with a stunning two-page spread, FREE!

Imagine showcasing your story or business in both print and digital editions, celebrating confidence, strength, and empowerment. WTW The Confident Woman Magazine is more than just a feature; it's an opportunity to connect with a vibrant community of confident, like-minded women

Call us today at 480-529-1329 or email us at wtwtheconfidentwoman@gmail.com to learn more about this exciting opportunity and secure your spot.

DON'T MISS OUT!



When Healing Means Looking at the Whole Picture

A personal journey through chronic illness, integrative medicine, and reclaiming quality of life

A Breaking Point

In 2015, my happy little world quickly began to shrink. Doctor appointments and tests replaced climbing corporate ladders, social plans, and meals—when I could tolerate them—became calculated risks.

After a brief illness and a nine-day hospital stay, I was diagnosed with moderate gastroparesis related to Dysautonomia. Layered on top of years of digestive disorders, migraines, nervous system dysfunction, and mitochondrial issues—plus anemia, metal toxicity, malnutrition, and chronic reflux—my body felt like it was constantly in crisis. Chronic stress and chaos.

At one point, I was prescribed more than ten pharmaceutical medications by five different specialists. It was overwhelming. Instead of improving, I only grew weaker. The side effects were often worse than the symptoms themselves, and flare-ups became my new normal.

I was exhausted, losing weight, and slowly disappearing into a cycle of tests, prescriptions, and unanswered questions.

Choosing a Different Path

At my lowest point, an unexpected conversation my husband had changed everything. A passerby casually mentioned a naturopathic and functional medicine doctor who had “changed their life.” Ultimate intervention!? I am not sure—but desperate for another option, my husband and I decided to try a different path.

In late 2016, I began working with **Dr. Andria Orłowski, NMD**, a Phoenix-based naturopathic physician with advanced training in both naturopathic and Chinese medicine.

Her approach blends ancient healing wisdom with modern diagnostic tools, focusing on identifying and addressing the root causes of dysfunction rather than treating symptoms in isolation. She truly looks at you like a whole person. From our first visit, the experience felt different—collaborative, comprehensive, and deeply individualized. She looked at my health as an interconnected system: body, mind, and spirit.

Instead of more meds and tests, she offered treatments, answers, and options. Instead of rushing through each appointment, we moved slowly and intentionally, addressing one dysfunction at a time with the goal of healing from the inside out.

For the first time, I felt truly seen and heard in my care. It felt like, finally, someone was willing to look at everything all together—someone who actually cares about healing and wholeness, not just writing me a prescription and sending me on my way.

Redefining What Healing Looks Like

Through a personalized combination of functional medicine, IV therapies, acupuncture, trigger point injections, craniosacral therapy, herbal medicine, and lifestyle support, my body began to respond. Over time, I was able to safely reduce many of the medications I once depended on.

I am not cured—and I don't expect to be—but my symptoms are better managed, my flare-ups are less severe, and my quality of life has improved in ways I once thought impossible. That alone feels like a victory.

I share my story not as a promise of outcomes, but as an invitation—to explore your options, to advocate for whole-body care, and to remember that healing doesn't always mean perfection.

Sometimes, it means balance, resilience, and the ability to live fully again—and giving yourself permission to seek care that honors the whole of who you are ■

About the Author



Josie Wyckoff, LMT. ASE. ASN. AAT. BBM.

Life and Wellness Enthusiast | Author, *Brighter Mantras* | Holistic Healing | Chronic Illness Management | Supplements | Business Professional gone rogue
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Provider Spotlight



Dr. Andria Orlowski, NMD

Naturopathic & Functional Medicine Physician

Dr. Orlowski embraces the philosophy of naturopathic medicine by addressing the root causes of illness and supporting the body's innate ability to heal. She combines conventional and alternative therapies to create personalized, whole-body treatment plans for her patients.

Education & Experience

- Doctorate in Naturopathic Medicine, Southwest College of Naturopathic Medicine
- Master's Degree in Traditional Chinese Medicine
- Former practitioner at A.R.E. Medical Clinic and Southwest Naturopathic Medical Center
- Former instructor in nutrition, environmental medicine, herbal medicine, acupuncture, and naturopathic medicine at institutions including Arizona State University and the Southwest Institute of Healing Arts

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STRONG WOMEN ARE BUILT

Strong women are not born ready. We they built between falls and new beginnings. Between tears and courage. Between what hurt and what taught.

Being strong isn't about feeling nothing. It is about feeling everyting and still moving forward.

Strong women know they don't need to prove anything to any one. They simply are what they have become.

Whole. Intense. True.



Prizefighter

Philippians 3:14

14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

We men are prizefighters. It is in our DNA to be goal achievers. We want to be winners, and we acknowledge others who are winners. This is why we get excited when our favorite teams win championships. We feel validated when we obtain things like that dream car or that house. We feel accepted at our jobs when we get that raise or that promotion. And we feel elated when we find that special someone to share our lives with. Yes, men are prizefighters.

But I want anyone who is reading this to understand that we as men are far beyond the things that we obtain or the accomplishments we achieve. There is the inner man that exists. This is the man who can be hidden from the outside world to be protected from hurt or criticism. This is the man who goes to work and does the repairs around the household and pays the bills. But the inner man deals with worries, confusions, and the pressures of life. And when this man feels that he is not seen as more than his accomplishments, then it is this man who suffers and cries in silence.

He does this when he has no safe place to show and express emotions,

primarily because of the false narrative of what society has deemed as how a man should present himself. This image says a man is to be non-emotional, always strong, and never waver. And as a result of this perceived image, men internalize their feelings until they come out in negative ways. It results in bad health and bad choices, such as high blood pressure, strokes, prostate issues, and heart attacks. There is a chance of abusive behavior, abuse of drugs, and alcohol. And if he can't find an outlet for his feelings, he may even find it with someone outside of his household. Anything to cope with the stresses of life.

A man's prize is where he lays his head every night. His home should be his safe place, and his heart should feel safe with his spouse or significant other. When the struggles of life become heavy, he wants to be seen as more than the guy who goes to work and pays the bills. He wants to be valued as more than a paycheck or a walking ATM. He wants to be at the family reunion in his old age and not be remembered at the dinner table.

His prize is that he lives a life that is full of love, that he is cherished, appreciated, and honored as a man and the head and covering of his home and family.

It has never been easy to walk in the shoes of manhood. The weight of expectation can be heavy on

His prize is that his thoughts and feelings are considered and not ignored or dismissed. Having the safe space to be open and honest, and transparent without ridicule or judgment is what most men desire. These are the things that men strive for. To live an abundant life and not just for the material things that can be obtained. Those things can disappear in a minute or over time. The ultimate goal that we fight for is to have the best life



Michael Thompson



*Don't be afraid of being
different. be afraid
of being the same
as everyone else.*

Behind Closed Doors He Was Someone Else

In public, he acted like he loved me.

He reaches for my hand. He says the right things and speaks about me in a way that makes people believe I am loved. Sometimes I believed it too, at least for a moment.

But when we are home behind closed doors everything changed. The man who looked at me with love and admiration in front of others when home, he was distant, irritated, and sometimes cold. I learned that I was living with a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Loving Him Felt Like Living Two Lives

I never knew who he would be Dr. Jekyll or Mr. Hyde. The one who made me feel special in public, or the one who tried to make me feel small at home behind closed doors. I thought about conversations we had, trying to figure out what I had said or done wrong for him to disrespect me. There were times he would be kind just long enough for me to believe that the loving version of him was real.

The Loneliness of Not Being Believed

The hardest part wasn't even how he treated me. It was how alone I felt carrying the secret of how I was being treated. Everyone else saw what he wanted them to see.

Someone once told me that they want God to bless them with a marriage like ours, I smiled and said be careful what you ask for. How was I supposed to tell that person what she saw was not real?

How I Started to Disappear

Over time, I changed. I became quieter. More careful. I watched my words, my tone, my reactions.

I learned what might trigger him and tried to avoid it. Instead, I began to shrink and felt uneasy in my own home.

The Moment I Couldn't Ignore

There wasn't any dramatic breaking point. No explosion. Just a quiet realization that settled in my mind: this wasn't what love was supposed to feel like. Real love doesn't require an audience. It doesn't disappear behind closed doors. It doesn't leave you feeling unseen, unheard, or emotionally unsafe.

Choosing Myself Was the Hardest Part

I tried to convince myself that pain was part of marriage, which didn't last long. So slowly, I began choosing myself. I began trusting my own experience. I began to believe in me again that I mattered, even if no one else saw it. And in doing that, I started to come back to myself, it took a long time, but I did.

What I Know Now

Love should be consistent and kindness should not vanish behind closed doors. When someone truly loves you, they will not make you feel invisible once the applause stops. If you recognize yourself in these words, please hear this: you are not imagining it. You are not ungrateful. You are not asking for too much. You are asking for love, that is real, even when no one is watching.

And you deserve nothing less.

(Story told in bits and pieces)

signs a man loves you unconditionally even if he never says the words

1. HE ACCEPTS YOU FULLY — EVEN THE MESSY PARTS

Unconditional love means no performance, no filters, no need to be the “perfect version” of yourself. He’s seen your bad moods, your insecurities, your 11 p.m. snack cravings, your overthinking spirals — and he still chooses you, without hesitation. He doesn’t flinch when you’re at your lowest. He doesn’t make you feel guilty for being human. This kind of love isn’t glamorous — it’s grounded. It’s the kind that holds your hand when you’re not your most lovable self. If he still looks at you with the same warmth when you’re tired, irritable, or vulnerable — that’s unconditional. That’s real.

2. HE’S PATIENT WITH YOUR GROWTH — AND DOESN’T TRY TO CHANGE YOU

A man who loves you unconditionally doesn’t mold you into his idea of the “perfect partner.” He supports your evolution, even when it challenges him. He understands that real love isn’t about control — it’s about growth. He doesn’t get defensive when you set boundaries. He doesn’t feel threatened by your ambitions. He celebrates your wins and holds space for your doubts. Sometimes, love looks like quiet patience — giving you the room to become who you are, without rushing the process. That’s the kind of love that doesn’t fade with time; it deepens with it.

3 WHY HE MIGHT STRUGGLE TO SAY THE WORDS

Many men grow up without emotional role models. They’re taught to protect, provide, or achieve — but not necessarily to *express*. So even when they feel love deeply, it might come out through actions rather than words. He might not say, “I love you” every day. But he’ll remember to charge your phone before bed. He’ll fix that thing you’ve been putting off. He’ll listen to your rants and stand quietly beside you when life feels heavy. That’s how some men say it — through reliability, through presence, through devotion that doesn’t need decoration.

4. HE PAYS ATTENTION TO THE SMALL THINGS THAT MATTER TO YOU

He notices how you take your coffee, the way you like your pillow arranged, or that little pause you take before you start talking about something serious. When a man loves you unconditionally, he doesn’t just hear you — he *remembers* you. He pays attention not because he’s trying to impress you, but because he genuinely cares about your inner world. It’s in the small, almost invisible moments — texting you to check if you got home safe, remembering that your favorite vegan snack is the salted caramel one, or adjusting his schedule to make your life easier.

5. SOME MEN SAY, “I LOVE YOU” WITHOUT EVER SAYING IT.

They show it through action, presence, and consistency — through the way they make space for you in their world. For some, love isn’t expressed in grand gestures or cinematic romance; it’s in the quiet things they do when no one’s watching. When you look past words and into behavior, you start to notice a different language — one written in patience, loyalty, and care.



Joann's Birthday Celebration 2025

@ THE DOUBLE TREE HOTEL IN PHOENIX, AZ





The Gift of Painting

America Quinn



I was forty nine years old and I never knew I could paint. So, I definitely would never consider myself to be an artist of any kind. But little did I know that there was an artist deep inside of me that had not emerged. It would take a culmination of events to bring it forth.

I had gone through a divorce, my family was shattered. My son and I were homeless, and we had just found an apartment after living with someone for a year and a half. In addition to that I was dealing with the physical limitations of Multiple Sclerosis. All while attending church and serving in global missions. My life was full and I was totally exhausted.

At this time of my life, I had been serving my family, my church, the community, and so many others globally. I had lost myself in my service to others and my cup was empty with nothing else to give.

One day while attempting to work through some difficult issues with my son he suggested that we use painting as a form of art therapy. He was given a paint set by his godmother who introduced him to a painting as a form of therapy to help him. I was reluctant because I didn't think I could do it. My son reassured me that it could help. So, in attempt to get a closer relationship with my son we planned a painting date.

We went to the dollar store and got some pre drawn canvases of mushrooms. He got the big one and I got the small one. A few days later we gathered all of our painting supplies, put a movie on and we sat down to spend time together. As we painted and talked it was very therapeutic. We revealed our paintings to each other laughed and relished the moment we shared.

I was surprised that I really enjoyed it. So much so I began looking up other painting ideas we could do together. Well, life got busy and my son and I had fewer opportunities to paint together. However, something was awakened in me I began thinking of painting all the time and searching for pictures on social media that interested me. Then I would attempt to imitate them and too much of my surprise I realized this was something I could do. I would wake up early in the mornings, stay up late at night just painting.

One of my first paintings was a farmhouse that I saw on social media that I painted and gave it my own personality. Then one day I had a compelling feeling to paint a lion. The Lion of Judah is one of my favorite names of Jesus. So, with that in mind I looked for lions and how to paint one. I found a tutorial and gave it a try.

To my amazement what started out looking like a mess to me revealed a lion. Then I realized this was not me this was a gift from God. This gift stirred a sense of joy and awakened a creativity that brought fulfillment and purpose.

Before I knew it, I had enough paintings to sell, so I did my first art show a few months after I first started painting with my son. I opened my online business, Impact Art Therapy where I sell my art and do commission pieces. It is a great success, and the rest is his story. I give all praises to God who authored this gift and brought it forth at a crucial time in my life to give me joy and fulfillment ■

America Quinn Paintings



A Love Like This

Dr. Mark & Angela Haynes

Mark and Angela Haynes Prove That True Love Can Blossom at Any Age

Mark: “If you had told me a few years ago that I’d find the love of my life in my sixties, I might have smiled politely and changed the subject. After the heartbreak of my first marriage, I’d learned to fill my days with family, friends, and small joys, but deep down, I missed the feeling of having a true partner. Meeting Angela changed everything. From our initial interaction, I experienced a notable sense of calm and felt genuinely acknowledged. I knew, almost instantly, that God had brought us together for this chapter. Every day since, I’ve been reminded that love is patient, and sometimes the best chapters of our story come after the hardest pages have been turned.

Our journey together wasn’t without its obstacles. For a time, Angela and I lived in different states—miles apart, but never far from each other’s hearts. I would count the days until our next visit, cherishing every phone call, every handwritten note, every moment we could steal together. Those stretches of distance tested my faith, but they also deepened my appreciation for Angela’s unwavering commitment. Each reunion felt like a celebration, a promise kept despite the miles. Love, I realized, isn’t just about proximity. It’s about the bond that refuses to break, no matter the challenges. Our story shows that distance can strengthen a genuine connection.

Living together has brought us joy, love, and laughter. Each day becomes sweeter and sweeter. We share a bond that is truly incredible and indelible. Our love is like a three-strand cord that is strong and hard to break. Our love has been stretched, pulled and has even bent, but it will never break. We credit God for being that true glue that holds it all together through thick and thin.

Before I met Angela, I had lost hope of finding genuine love. Finding true love today is challenging. Love is complicated by many twists, turns and obstacles that make its path unclear.

Discovering a hidden gem has been nothing short of miraculous. I believe this union was arranged by God for His glory

We both stand amazed in God’s presence as we travel on this journey. I truly believe in the power of prayer, because I did pray for someone like Angela. I faced tough odds. God sure proved me wrong. He had this amazingly talented and beautiful woman sitting on the balcony of my destiny waiting there just for me. She is just what I always wanted and needed in a woman. She is both my best friend and life partner.

I am praying for others that are looking for true love to remain steadfast and unmovable. Continue to trust God that you will be blessed with your gift in due season. Be prepared when love calls.



No matter how old you may be, or the distant that separates you from your potential love, God can and will be in the midst. Angela and I are perfect examples of how God provided every element mandatory to succeed. I encourage you to remain hopeful in this season.

Be ready to receive everything that God has in store for you. Don't get ready, be ye ready. We affirm these things and trust they will happen when the time is right for you. Love shines brighter than a thousand moons at midnight. Gaze at the stars and imagine love's genuine gift. It is achievable, and you will accomplish it.

I am truly blessed to have been united in holy matrimony with my soulmate, my best friend, my sister in Christ and the love of my life. She's very important to me; we look after each other. We put each other first as we put Christ at the head of our union. I regard my wife as a queen, and she, in turn, treats me like a king. It's a perfect match made in heaven.

I look forward to spending the rest of my life with Angela. This journey has been incredible, and I aim to help others seeking true love. I encourage you not to grow weary in well doing, for in due season, you will reap if you faint not.

Angela:

As I begin my story, I'm reminded of the song written by the phenomenal Luther Vandross, Love will be better, the second time around. The very first conversation that Mark and I had was magical. It was as though we'd known each other all along. There were no empty spaces, no rambling to find words, but a fluid, engaging, and enjoyable conversation. After hanging up, I felt something special had just happened. I couldn't stop smiling. Mark text me and asked, "What just happened?" I replied, "I don't know, but I think I like it." He then said, "This is going to be interesting." I can truly say, it has been interesting and exciting.

When Mark came into my life, a part of me was ready, but a part of me was hesitant. Having come through a tumultuous 25-year marriage, there was a lot of baggage I had yet to unpack and I had trust issues.

I'd been through so many disappointments, and though my faith stayed strong, my heart was cautious and guarded. But Mark's kindness, his laughter, and his unwavering belief in us slowly helped those walls to crumble. After three days of communicating, I found out that he was in love with me. I must admit, I was totally enamored with him. I had never felt what I was feeling and I wanted it to be real and I wanted it to be God. I did not want to unleash any unresolved anger, pain, or trauma on Mark. Together, we've discovered a love built on honesty, hope, patience, and the lessons learned from our past.

We were living in two different states when we first met and there were situations that prohibited us from seeing each other as often as we'd like. There were days when I would sit at home alone, longing for Mark's company, wishing a drive across state lines could be as simple as a walk down the street. The distance was at times lonely, but it was also filled with anticipation and hope. We leaned on faith and on each other's encouragement, making even the hardest days bearable. Every trip, every embrace after weeks apart, was a reminder of what we were building together—a love that could weather any storm. The few people who knew of our relationship often marveled at our dedication, and their support helped us through those times. We were intentional about guarding and protecting our relationship to make sure we were building it God's way. Distance taught us patience, gratitude, and the joy of coming together, all of which now enrich our marriage."

Growing up without a father in my life, it caused me to make some choices that were not the best for me. But Mark's love has taught me so much about genuine love, security and respect. I can truly say that I have never felt as loved, protected, or cared for as much as I do with Mark. I know I'm home when I'm with him. Because of this, I honor him and care for him without hesitation as a wife should. I put him first! I enjoy cooking for him and making sure he's okay. He always looks out for me and puts me first. I don't have to fight for that position in his life. He willingly helps with the chores of the house and works to make things comfortable for me.

Mark had an idea to start a nonprofit organization that helps individuals who have been impacted by gun violence. He works so diligently behind the scenes orchestrating, and organizing details, allowing me to be the face of the organization. I was impressed with his knowledge and background in the nonprofit sector. I saw his passion and fight for justice and the marginalized communities from older pictures. It made me want to do more. We had so much in common until it was mind blowing. We are both advocates, writers, orators, and ministers of the gospel. We know that we have been chosen to do greater works together.

Mark's writings to me are so heartfelt and memorable. He would send cards to me, and I would read them repeatedly. I've never known love like this before. I'm so thankful that my sons see him for the man he is in my life. They respect him and often thank him for making me happy and taking care of me. As Mark and I celebrate a year of marriage, our story is a radiant testament to hope, faith, and the belief that the heart's deepest desires can be fulfilled—even when it seems like love has passed you by. The joy of just sitting next to each other doing what we do is pure. That glance across the room knowing that someone loves me is enough. It's walking by each other with a gentle touch simply because you want them to know, I'm yours. My heart is so overwhelmed with gratitude for what God has done, and the feelings of loneliness are gone. I can say, God gave me beauty for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. I know that I belong now after feeling abandoned, rejected, caught in the middle, and not feeling like I belonged anywhere.

This Valentine's Day, I pray that our love story will inspire someone who is still searching, still hoping, still believing that somewhere out there, a love like this is possible. I can honestly say that every moment waiting for this love was worth it. We pray together, dream together, plan together, and cherish even the smallest moments. I thank God every day for writing this beautiful new chapter for us, and for showing us both that true love—real, lasting love—can find you, no matter where you are in life. Our days filled with laughter, quiet moments of prayer, and simple pleasures, long walks, shared meals, early morning coffee, and the comfort of knowing we have found a safe harbor in each other. Our love story reminds us that the best is yet to come, and that real love does not fade with time or distance; it grows stronger, brighter, and more beautiful than ever imagined ■



Reasons Why People Put Others Down

By Matthew A. Ford
Author of Fields of Dreams

1. To make themselves feel better.

As backwards as it may sound, these people feel better about themselves by making others feel worse. They will typically have low self-esteem, and their misguided way of boosting it is to take aim at another person. Even though they, themselves, are insecure, a common technique they'll use is to pinpoint the insecurities of others. Their ego will get temporary relief from its own pain by inflicting hurt upon someone else. Of course, this relief does not last long, and so the perpetrator is always on the lookout for ways to put people down.

2. They are jealous.

Given their low self-esteem, it aggrieves them to see someone else doing well, in any sense of the word. Causes them to lash out. Their aim is to bring the other person down to their level by belittling their successes or happiness. Yes, it's spiteful, but it's the only way they know how to approach those people who have what they want. The underlying message is "If I can't feel good about myself, neither can you."

3. To weaken the resolve of another person with a view to manipulating them.

This could be the malignant narcissist who simply wants to destroy his victim's self-esteem in order to control them. It could also be a person seeking to guilt trip someone into doing what they want them to do. Putting others down and belittling them can weaken their self-belief and assertiveness, making them easier to influence.

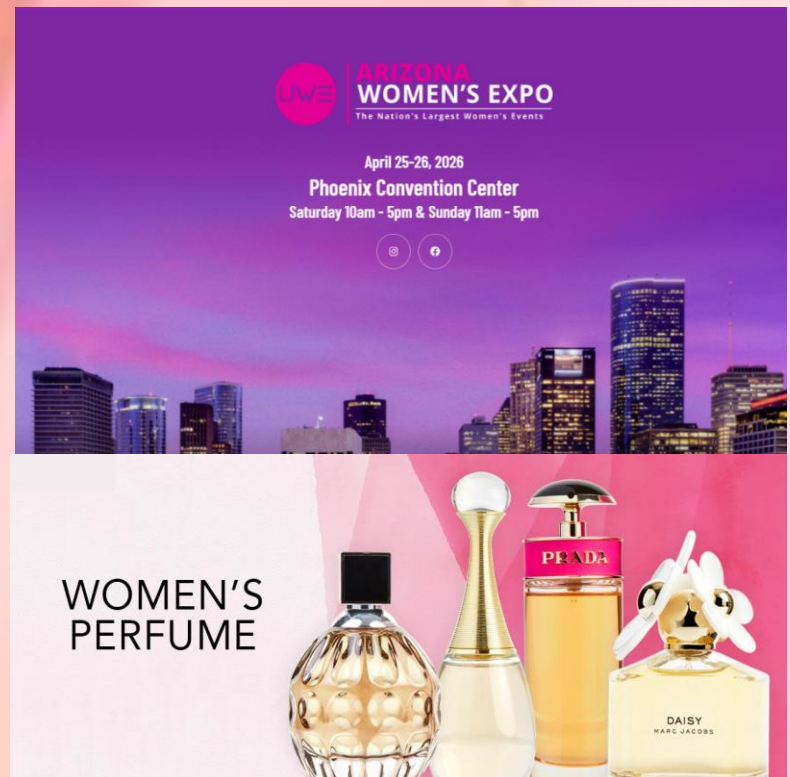
4. To get attention.

Some people feel a little lost when people aren't paying attention to them. And so, they make fun of others in order to get the attention they desire. Despite the previous point, it's not unusual for attention-seekers to be almost as happy with negative attention as they are with positive attention. Any attention makes them feel noticed and gives people a reason to interact with them.

5. They don't know how to communicate properly

Some people may resort to making fun of others because they don't know how to effectively communicate their true thoughts and feelings. They either feel unable to express themselves, or they simply cannot find the right words to say what they want to say. So, to avoid having to try, they use mockery and put downs as a means of distraction and to prevent any heartfelt conversations from taking place.

So how do you respond to people you interact with that treat others like the above? This is the really fascinating part to me because the hate is obvious to all of us, so what is the solution? Well, it takes a team and an intentional effort for sure. How can each of us do our part to help solve it? Of course, a simple smile, we know, is effective in changing someone's day; but for more resources on how to improve in some of these areas and help others in your sphere, please see the reference materials at the end of the book. I would encourage you, no matter your age, to take that halftime respite to remind yourself of those time-tested principles, create some discipline around them, ensure your heart is in the right place, change your countenance, align to your purpose, and then get after it with some newfound fire in your soul to ensure that you make your second half your best half!



From Sidewalk To Success

For years, most people passed me with a second glance. I sat on the same cold sidewalk every morning, wrapped in a oversized coat, my belongings tucked into two worn plastic bags at my feet. To the world, I was just another homeless woman, invisible, and forgotten. But inside I had a determination that hardship could not erase.

My name is Elena and my journey from homelessness to riches is a testament to resilience, faith, and the power of second chances.

LIFE BEFORE THE FALL

My life had not always been easy. I was once a hardworking administrative assistant, a devoted wife, and a proud mother of two. I lived paycheck to paycheck, but I had stability, purpose, and dreams.

Then everything collapsed. A sudden divorce left me emotionally shattered. Shortly after, the company I worked for downsized, and I lost my job. Medical bills followed when my youngest child became seriously ill. Savings disappeared. Friends drifted away. One missed rent payment turned into two, then three. Within a year, I was sleeping in my car. Within another month, I had no car at all.

I remember the moment I realized I was homeless. Not when I lost my apartment, but when I stopped believing I could get it back.

THE HARDEST DAYS

Homelessness stripped me of more than shelter. It stole my dignity, safety, and sense of identity. I endured freezing nights, hunger that came in waves, and the constant fear that something worse was always just around the corner. I avoided mirrors because I no longer recognized the woman staring back at me. Yet even in the darkest moments, I held onto one habit: Reading.

READING

Using books donated at the shelters and public libraries, I devoured everything: business, personal development, psychology, and biographies of people who had risen from nothing. Knowledge became my escape and hope. I told myself, this is temporary, even when it didn't feel true. I promised myself this chapter wouldn't be the whole story.

A SINGLE OPPORTUNITY

Change didn't come overnight. It arrived quietly, disguised as a small opportunity at a local shelter, I signed up for free workshop. I learned basic computer programs, practiced interviews, and most importantly I started believing in myself again. My first job after homelessness paid barely above minimum wage. I cleaned offices at night and worked retail during the day. Exhausted but determined, I saved every dollar I could. Instead of spending money, I invested time learning about online businesses, digital marketing, and freelancing. I borrowed a laptop from the library and taught myself how to build simple websites.

My first freelance job paid \$75. I cried when I received the payment, not because of the amount, but because it proved I still had value.

BUILDING SOMETHING FROM NOTHING

I reinvested every dollar I earned. I worked relentlessly, often sleeping only four hours a night. Mistakes were frequent. Failures were painful. But quitting was no longer an option. Within two years, I launched a small digital consulting business. I helped local businesses build an online presence, something I once knew nothing about. Word spread. Clients grew. Income stabilized.

For the first time in years, I signed a lease, this time in my own name.

I remember sitting on the floor of my empty apartment, I recalled. No furniture. No TV. Just keys in my hand. I felt richer than I ever had.

FROM SURVIVAL TO SUCCESS

Today, I am a self-made entrepreneur with a company valued in the millions. I own property, employs dozens of people, and speaks nationally about resilience and second chances.

But the greatest achievement isn't financial.

I fund Scholarships for homeless women. I donate to shelters. I personally mentors' women who are where I once was, sleeping on sidewalks, wondering if life will ever improve.

I don't believe success is real unless you bring others with you.

A MESSAGE OF HOPE

My story is not a fairy tale. It is not luck. It is proof that circumstances, even the most brutal ones, do not define destiny.

Homelessness is not a character flaw, poverty is not a life sentence, and resilience can grow even in the harshest conditions.

There were days I wanted to disappear. But I stayed. I fought. And I learned that rock bottom can become a foundation.

YOUR CURRENT SITUATION IS NOT YOUR FINAL DESTINATION

Sometimes, the distance between the sidewalk and success is not talent or money, but the courage to believe that your story is still being written ■

Elena

The Spirit of Rejection



Jacqueline Kennedy-Coleman,

Author of *You Can Make It*
How To Obtain And Maintain
Freedom From Addictions

My father abused my mother and every time she looked at me, she saw him because, of course, I did look just like him. That has to be a hard pill to swallow, to raise a child who looks exactly like somebody who has cause you to be filled with a lot of hurt and rejection yourself. Due to the way my father treated my mother, I didn't have the pleasure of being raised by my mother and father. My mother and grandmother raised me. Children need their father. I was told that Daddy didn't want me anyway; he tried to give Momma some toothache medicine to cause her to self-abort me. Maybe since I was rejected from the womb, his rejection caused me to go out into the world and try to find love in all the wrong places. Some people who suffer from rejection try to find circles where they are accepted. They do not know that we are already accepted in the Beloved. Rejection is the sense of being unwanted, the agony of desperately

wanting people to love you but being convinced that they don't.

Maybe your mother, your father, your spouse, or even some friends have rejected you. If so, God is going to show you as you continue to turn the pages of this book how much He loves you, because God is going to heal you and deliver you from that crippling spirit of rejection. Sometimes, a person can actually love, honor respect and accept you, but when you are suffering from rejection, you are unable to believe or receive it. It is a hurting feeling to desire to be a part of something, but deep inside you don't feel that you are. Some people who suffer from rejection are usually always suspicious and they find it very hard to trust people. Many rejected people are willing to be used or mistreated, just to be accepted by people or be a part of something.

However, if the person who is suffering from rejection has a lot of leadership ability on the inside of them, in most cases, they will usually go to any height to make a name for themselves. And once a person is determined to make a name for themselves, there is nobody who can stop them but God. When a person tries to make a name for themselves, this also causes a spirit of confusion to come into their life.

Genesis 11:4-9

And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.

And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the

children of men builded.

And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth.

I really made a big name for myself out there. I had a reputation out of this world. Everything I learned how to do I became real good at it, from shoplifting to picking pockets. Even in sin I was a natural-born leader, not a follower. Now God has made me a spiritual leader. The devil meant the things that he did to me for evil, but God brought good out of it. God is divinely strategic. He allowed a lot of people to know me in St. Louis, Missouri, where I was raised for twenty of the first twenty-two years of my life. Then He allowed me to move up here to Chicago, where I was well known in the different arenas I found myself in. Now I have the ability to go back to let all of my old associates see the before and the after. They knew me when I was a sinner and now they get to see me as a Christian. Many of them can tell my testimony much better than I can.

God truly gave me a miracle when He saved me.

Joseph's brothers rejected him because they felt rejected by their father. They thought that their father loved Joseph more than he loved them, so they decided to get rid of Joseph, but because God was with him, He allowed everything that he went through to be a part of his making. Joseph's brothers needed to be accepted by him in the end to the extent they even lied and told him that their father had left specific instructions for Joseph before he died for Joseph to forgive his brothers for the things they had done to him. Joseph's brothers knew that whatever a man sows he shall also reap, but because God had delivered Joseph from rejection, hurt and pain that his brothers had caused him, Joseph was able to love and treat his brothers as if they had never caused him any harm at all. Joseph knew that if he had not gone through the process that he had went through, he never would have ended up with the character and attributes that he needed in order to become the governor over the whole land of Egypt. We all need to know that when we all come to God, we are a work in progress, and we need to allow Him to make us the person He designed for us to be ■

He Is Amazing

It amazes me that out of all the millions and trillions of people in the world, God, you see me. You hear me. You love me. You protect me. Most importantly, you chose to save me, because you said that the sinner cannot come to you except you draw them. You drew me to you when I was a wretch undone. I didn't know which way to turn, where to go, or what to do. Most of the time, I made the wrong decisions.

Yet! Through it all, you remained faithful, even when I didn't deserve it. Right now, I am speaking to so many of you who feel the same as I do that God are so amazing that Words cannot express how wonderful you are, and even when I try, the words are still not enough. So, all I can say is THANK YOU, from the depths of my soul!

I want the whole world to know that you are an awesome and amazing God, the one and only true and living God who sits on the great white throne in heaven; the God who never fails, who never changes. I change, people change, seasons change, but you never change.

Remembering When

Remember the time when the doctors said they had done all they could do? But God!

Remember when the doctors said the baby you were carrying wouldn't make it. But God!

Remember when you were told to give up on your wayward child because there seemed to be no hope? But God!

Remember the time when you thought your marriage was over with divorce papers in hand? But God!

Through all those "remember when" moments, God stepped in. When you had done all you could do, He did what only He could do.

Because your extremity, your breaking point, became God's opportunity to show up strong. And He did.



WOMAN TO WOMAN

THE CONFIDENT WOMAN

A VALENTINE LOVE



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|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| CAR | ENGAGEMENT RING | HANDMADE NOTES | SWEETHEART CANDY |
| CARD | EXPRESSION | HUSBAND | TOKEN |
| CELEBRATING LOVE | FASCINATION | MOVIE | VALENTINES DAY |
| CHERISHED HOLIDAY | FEBRUARY FOURTEENTH | MR AND MRS HAYNES | VALENTINUS |
| CUPID | FUN | PICTURES | WIFE |
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