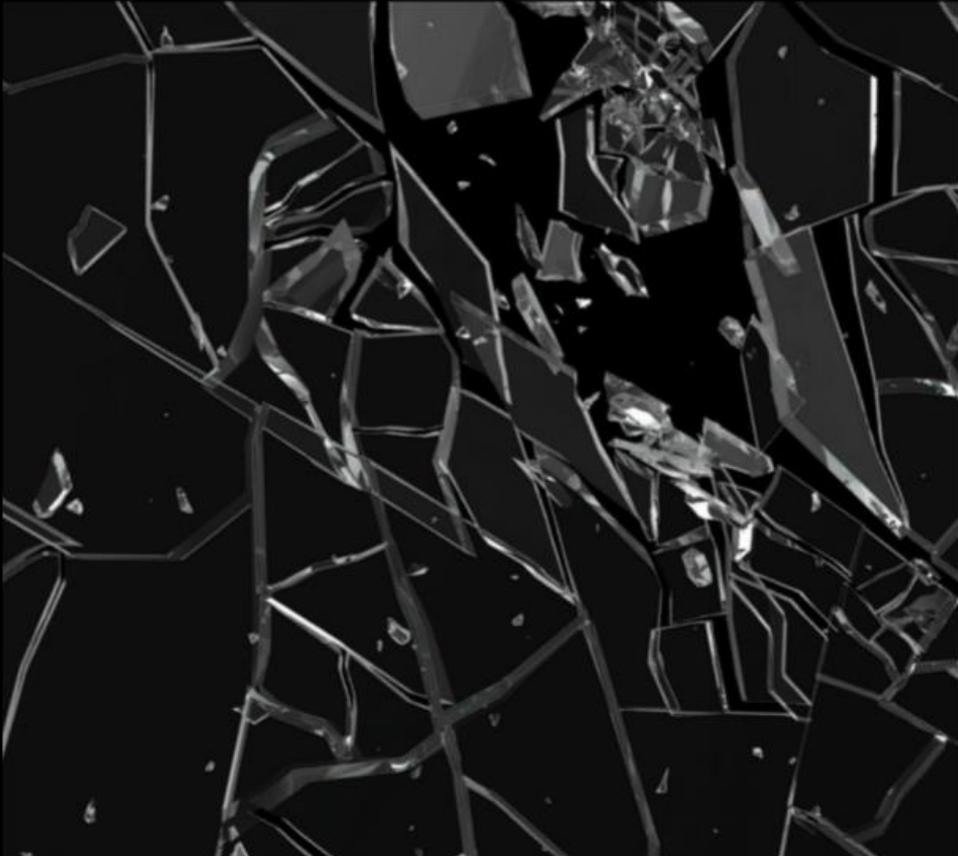


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L.I.V.I.N.G. YOUR TRUTH

A MOTIVATIONAL MEMOIR

"Reconnect the broken pieces of a masterpiece"



Tabitha D. James

TABITHA D. JAMES

S.H.E. thought She could, so She did.

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Not Posted:
L.I.V.I.N.G. Your Truth
a motivational memoir

Composed By:
Tabitha D. James

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DEDICATION

To anyone living in or attempting to live in their own truth. Often times it is easier to sweep reality under the rug rather than embrace and live in it. Reality is HARD to face. It is easier to live in what we wish was reality than to face our truths, so here it is to those wanting to embrace and live in the truth, whatever it may be.

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FOREWARD

Well hello, it is again that we meet to journey through a difficult aspect of this thing called life. “Living your Truth” What in the world does that even mean? What is your truth? How do you “live it”? How do you live beyond the shame of what it may actually be? Well, as you see, I am no expert on what or how, however I can attest that there is a peaceful relief when you embrace your truth. No, not when you write about it on social media or when you write a blog about it or even when you tell those around you. The moment YOU live it, YOU accept it and YOU embrace it – that is the moment when things shift. You may never tell a soul what it is but you decide to accept it for yourself. Oh boy, what a relief!

If all your life, the truth is swept under the rug and kept a secret, you suffer. Maybe not externally, but definitely internally thus leading to your relationships suffering, your career suffering and ultimately your well-being suffering. Abuse, neglect, violence, lies, secrets, diseases, addictions –the list goes on– all have impact our lives. Often times, we see these things very young and we live through them as if they’re normal because nobody is bold enough to address that they are not. Guess what happens? Those things become our normal. We all have a different perspective of normal based on the environment we were in when our awareness of life kicked in. For example, if abuse was okay in your household, it is highly likely that you won’t see it as a big issue in life. Abuse as it relates to physical abuse, mental or verbal abuse, substance abuse, etc. It will not strike as strange to you if reintroduced to it in life as you have already encountered the beast.

Even with living your truth, if openness was a thing in your environment then living the truth isn’t as hard to navigate as it is your norm. For many, that is not the case. The rape, divorce, drug addiction, uncommon illness, imprisonment, fornication . . . is a secret. Not to be discussed, acknowledged or even thought about, left to linger. How many family dynamics are ruined because of these case scenarios . . . Don’t be a victim . . . Live your truth!

House Rules

1. **Take your time with this read.** Ideally this can be completed in one sitting, however I need you to do more than just read this, I need understanding and strategic alignment to occur as a result of this read. Thus saying, take this one day at a time for seven(7) days, allotting for time to really comprehend what is being consumed by your mind.
2. **Don't just read this.** Take action, apply principles and practices to your life so that you can be better. Maybe you are already living your truth, maybe you've been on a healing journey for quite some time and this book will serve as a catalyst for support, hooray! You still have work to do; it is now your job to empower someone else to embrace authenticity.

If on the other hand, you will begin living your truth as a result of this read, you may have to read and re-read some sections, take a few notes or maybe even seek professional help. DO IT! This is not to be taken lightly, you have a life to be living so get to doing what needs to be done!.

3. **Share the wealth.** When you finish this, tell someone, not for me or my personal gain but for the betterment of people. Not sure if you've checked the rates for suicide, depression and the similar lately but they are rapidly increasing. People are hurting, people are neglecting the process of healing and living their truth. I mean, lets be honest, truths aren't easy to live but they are necessary. By sharing this you may very well save a mind, save a life and change a trajectory for someone else. Be the change!

Repeat After Me: I accept the rules, I am ready to read . . (Say It)

1 LETTING GO

"THINGS THAT DO NOT SERVE YOU HAVE NO PLACE IN YOUR SPACE"

So apparently there is some unwritten rule that the truth is not welcome. It is okay to just live in an imaginary mindset that things are okay, that you are okay and that whatever happened just happened. I am not sure where this derived but let – that – go. Letting go of what we are accustomed to can be one of the hardest challenges of living our truth. Often times, we fear the judgement of our family, peers or colleagues if we truly embrace who we are or what is going on. The truth is, if you are not comfortable enough to publicly embrace issues or circumstances, it is okay! Letting go isn't for them, it is for you. Letting go is about self-coping and dealing with things internally so that your life, your family, your career, your well-being can be okay and free from burdens of the past.

Letting go takes a heck of a lot of courage and is the first step from my perspective because it's tough. Let's just make an example, you know I love examples! If 25 years ago, (10 years, 5 years, adjust as necessary) Uncle John or Aunt Susie, because yes women do partake in sexual abuse, touched you and you never came to senses with the situation, it is highly likely that this still affects your well-being today. Rather directly or indirectly, especially if this person is still alive and around. Somethings we never

forget. If dad struck mom upside the head that one night when he thought you were asleep, the thought may very well still linger in your mind. Am I saying address Uncle John, Aunt Susie, Dad or Mom, no, you don't have to unless you feel comfortable. I am telling you to address you—Have you coped? Have you come to peace with the past? Or have you neglected that the truth of that matter is that person you love did wrong and it hurt you. It's difficult, I know, I tend to love tackling the “toughies”

Maybe the previous examples haven't hit home, maybe it's something you did that you need to let go. Maybe there is no action, only thoughts that you need to let go of which can be just as hard or harder to shake. What's ahead is more important than what's behind, yet it doesn't negate the fact that what's behind has impact. Possibly you were once abusive, possibly you used drugs or resorted to alcohol excessively, possibly you engaged in activity that you never want to see the light of day. Have you embraced that? Have you accepted that, “yes, once I did, but that is no longer me and I can move forward”.

I have the pleasure of working with people from pre-teen to elderly. From rural town to inner city. From various races and cultural backgrounds. Diverse education levels and so on . . . A common denominator continually shows among these varying groups of people – the inability to accept the things

we cannot change and move on. We're human, we mess up, people mess us up, things happen beyond our control, a lot just happens – it's life – gotta love it, gotta live it! The beautiful thing is we have choices, once we become of an age to understand what is going on, we have options. And here's a gag for ya, ***there is no set age that this occurs***. I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but age doesn't always equal wisdom. Sometimes it does, other times you can encounter people who have been around a while but don't know a thing. They haven't seen much out of their bubble. Often times these are the folks that hinder healing. As a result of them never venturing from their bubble, the bubble mindset and bubble principles are deeply engraved.

How do I escape the bubble? Thanks for asking! Challenge yourself, challenge your mind, challenge your motives and challenge “what you had in mind”. Inside the bubble, your bubble, is all the great things that you are accustomed to and feel very comfortable with. The things, the people, the routines, the thought processes, all inside your bubble, just relaxing. Well, outside of your bubble are the trillions of other bubbles. The bubbles that others live in; the bubbles that are similar to yours, the bubbles that are drastically different and the bubbles you can't even imagine. See we all have this vision of what “normal” is, however we often neglect to realize that our normal is someone else's weird and vice-versa. By stepping out of our own

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bubble and embracing the normal tendencies of others, you are accepting a piece of the challenge. The next piece of this particular challenge gets a bit tricky. Understanding the differences of others, rather you agree or not, understanding that everyone doesn't think, act or react the same way you do. Furthermore, you may only be thinking, acting and reacting in the way you do because you have neglected to let go. I will allow you a moment to ponder on that last statement *moment*

Pain, unaddressed anger, negative thoughts and all things related can negatively impact us in ways we do not even realize. Don't you remember Pessimistic Patty from S.E.A.S.O.N.S. of the Untold, she had become bitter as a result of never dealing with pass pain, never healing and never embracing the untold as a catalyst to living her truth. You my friend will not fall victim to being Pessimistic Patty, Negative Nancy or Complaining Carl. You are about to go on a journey over the next few days (or hours if you decide to read this all in one setting) to living your truth. It is time to tap into your *intrinsic motivation* that will carry you through the challenges, *venture out* from your norm and try *new* things, *intentionally connect* yourself with folks that align with your *new mindset* and commit to *good vibes only!* Are you ready? Well, ready or not, let's go, let's live!

So What's Next?

Repeat After Me: I commit to living my truth. I give myself permission to forgive those who have never said sorry, to no longer blame myself for unnecessary things and to live in my authentic uniqueness.

“Living your truth requires intrinsic motivation; the desire must come from inside of you, this journey ain’t for everybody”

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DAY 2: INTRINSIC MOTIVATION

“YOU HAVE TO WANT IT, NOT YOUR MOM, DAD, FRIEND, YOU!”

Okay . . . So you want “it”? You feel the desire for whatever “it” is but are you ready to work for “it”? Are you ready to sacrifice for “it”? Are you prepared to jump hoops and dodge puddles for “it”? Do you see something similar in those previous sentences. There are two words that are repeated multiple times “it” and “you”, “you” and “it”. The thing about intrinsic motivation that challenges most is the fact that it is internal and not external. It starts with you, continues with you and ends with . . . you guessed it - YOU!

Extrinsic motivation comes from the desire to win, to be noticed, to be validated in some sort. Working hard to get the raise, playing sports to win the game or award, studying to get a good grade, the list goes on but I am quite sure you get it by now. The behaviors exemplified directly relate to the desire to gain a reward. Behaviors that are motivated extrinsically may or may not be desirable however they yield reward or help in avoiding something unpleasant. For example, as a child, if you didn't clean your room, you were more than likely reprimanded by your parents and that's not desirable therefore you cleaned the room. Rather you wanted to or not, the task was completed. At work, you may or may not enjoy what you do however your income is important as well as your job security therefore

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you do it. Rather you do it well or not . . . We will not go there!

I think by now, you get what extrinsic motivation is however that is not our topic of discussion. I'm here to challenge you as it relates to intrinsic motivation and drive. Do you have it? Are you here for it? And, lastly, how can using it help you to live your truth?

Inside, you, self, personal -- just a few words to put in your mind for this conversation. This is ALL about YOU my friend. Intrinsic motivation has not one thing to do with others. Not mom or dad, not spouse or bae, not children or friends nor associates, it is about you and your personal desires. Playing the sport because you genuinely enjoy it, doing the work because you love it and completing the task solely because you want to. Yes, indeed, there may be some external rewards that come as a result of the action however the action was not done because of the award, the action was done because you truly had the desire inside to do it. The behavior was the reward and anything extra was just that, extra.

Now, don't run off and say I downed or doubted the power of extrinsic motivation because that I have not done, yet anyway. Though I do not condone it excessively, I actually won't be downing it at all. Extrinsic motivation has power to aid in motivation and self-esteem in certain instances. The issue is when extrinsic motivation is excessive and serves as

the sole reason why one is completing the task or doing the thing.

Lets talk about the wonderful world of Facebook for a moment. If the post was created solely because one felt it was what they wanted to say, the amount of likes, loves or related reactions do not matter. On the reverse, if the post was created for validation or external love, the reactions matter. The need for likes surpasses the content delivered. Same goes with photos, if it was posted because YOU, yes YOU believed it was what you liked, the reaction of others won't impact your mood following the share. If you're doing it "for the likes" it is highly likely that not getting the desired response is going to cause upset or a lofty feeling leaving you wondering if the photo was as appealing as you originally believed.

When it comes to living your truth, healing and well-being, you cannot do it for the likes, for the awards nor for the recognition. The desire has to come from inside of you. Contrary to what one may believe, living your truth isn't always desirable or appealing to others. When you begin to heal, to shift, to change, to become one with self, there may be a period of loneliness, a period of time when you begin to question who is REALLY in your corner. Wonder why? Glad you asked! Most people fail to live their truth, the masked, costumed and staged person is more appealing. It is easier to not identify with the hard truths, thus saying, when you begin to

live yours, you aren't the crowd favorite. Goodness forbid that living your truth means someone else is exposed as a result; you're really in for it then. Not saying this to scare ya, just a warning that living your truth sounds good until the dirty laundry starts falling out of the basket.

Let's just hypothetically say your truth is rooted in abuse from a loved one. Once you begin to heal, to identify with the pain and move forward, you are now airing that the person hurt you. Let's just say during your process you decide to approach the individual. This could go one of a few ways with chances being very slim that it is a smooth interaction. It is likely that the abuser does not want to discuss what happened, he or she may very well not even realize that it was abuse. You see abuse comes in many forms and is often dressed as love. Verbal abuse, physical abuse and mental abuse . . . all abuse. You may have never been physically struck or touched but emotionally drained and as a result you are faced with side effects that hinder your ability to live a full life. Abuse is just one example, there are a plethora of others, neglect, hardship, rape . . . the list goes on but the one consistent thing is the fact that YOU have to identify with whatever the trauma is and derive YOUR plan for healing.

The process of living your truth comes with rewards but not in the form of trophies and accolades. These awards are peace, understanding, happiness, joy and

the similar. The gag is, when you have those things you can actually enjoy the awards, accolades and associated praise. It does nothing for you to gain titles, assets and accolades yet have no idea who you are. Listen, trust me, find yourself, love yourself and live your truth. Dig deep, really deep and find the intrinsic motivation, the drive, the motivation to be better. So what if it exposes the naked truths of others, this journey is about you and it is your job to protect your peace. They have to deal with themselves just as you are dealing with yourself.

So What's Next?

Repeat After Me: I will find my intrinsic motivation. I deserve to be happy, I deserve to be healed and I deserve to live my truth, not for anyone else but for myself. I am ready to venture out!

“Be your first and most spirited cheerleader, if need be, be the entire squad; root for you” -T. D. James

DAY 3: VENTURING OUT

“DARE TO GO OUT, DARE TO GO FOR IT, DARE TO GO FAR”

Whew! Digging deep is tiresome, I am tired for you because I know what it takes to find intrinsic motivation especially for my fellow millennials. Trophies, awards and the similar have been given to us for years for doing little to nothing or nothing at all. Though it is quite amazing to have the luxury of unlimited resources at your fingertips; as time evolved we lost some great traditional principles. Things worth having must be worked for, they are not merely given and if they are they aren't always appreciated or manifested. If I give you one-hundred dollars it doesn't have the same value as if you had worked for that same one-hundred dollars. That is a very simplistic example with a deeper meaning that extends far beyond the hundred dollars or money in general. Shall we carry on . . . Let's go . . . Let's venture!

Being comfortable with uncomfortable situations is a crucial part of a venturing out and becoming the you that is ready for healing, ready to live in your truth. Often times, when surrounded by the same ol' things and same ol' people, it gets pretty darn easy to be complacent and comfortable with whatever is “regular” for the environment. Take a moment right now ****yes now**** to recap your life prior to ever being around folks outside of your family and initial surroundings. Think about your headspace, your

thoughts, your perceptions of life, your unconscious biases that were created as a reflection of the environment. Now think about the you of today ****now, do it**** -- What's different? What is the same? What have you come to realize was a bit spacy? What have you erased totally from your mind?

I want you to ponder a bit on the above exercise and questions. Really take time today to think about how venturing out from your perceived safe space shaped your thinking and views of the world. Maybe following this exercise, you will realize you need to challenge yourself more; possibly you'll reveal how much you have stretched yourself and your way of thinking. As humans, we are very easily influenced by our environment especially in our primitive years. Thus saying, we subconsciously form judgements about things, ideas and people without even noticing it.

Just in case you are having a hard time evaluating yourself, allow me to throw out some controversial topics such as homosexuality, religion, politics, education and financial literacy, just to name a few. Prior to venturing from your norm, your views on the said topics are highly likely to closely relate that of your parents or direct contact individuals such as other elders or peers.

Venturing out and developing an open mind, receptive of other thoughts and theories can impact

your own thought process whereas on the reverse venturing out yet having a closed mind, leaves one stuck in the mindset that is most comfortable. If you haven't already, go back, think about the said topics and the proposed questions. Think about yourself ten years ago and yourself today; how has your thought process shifted? What have you learned? What new practices or beliefs have you adopted?

On day one, we talked about the bubble, the complacency bubble, the bubble that many often get stuck in and stay for years. Today, you are being challenge to pop your bubble! Venture out farther than you ever have; engage in conversation with people unlike yourself, go somewhere you've never been, listen to something you would never listen to, **TRY SOMETHING!** Dare to go out, dare to go for it, dare to go far!

You can't possibly expect to *live your truth* without some level of exposure to different. Open your mind, open your heart and take a chance for you. Self-development is an ongoing, lifelong process that requires change and chances. The day we stop living and learning is the day we die though our funerals may be years later. Don't be a dead man walking! Venture out and be unapologetic in doing so; the more you know, the more you grow, the more you're criticized and questioned however you can't be influenced by the negativity. You are on this journey for **Y O U!**

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So What's Next?

Repeat After Me: I will venture out in the near future. I will find a way to step outside of my comfort zone and stretch my mind. I am excited for what I will learn and who I will meet.

"You're off to great places, today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so.. Get on your way!" -Dr. Seuss

DAY 4: INTENTIONAL CONNECTIONS

“NETWORK IS YOUR NET WORTH BUT DO YOU KNOW YOUR WORTH”

Wow! Day 4 already -- we are moving, this is beautiful! Yesterday you committed to venturing out and it is my hope that you have either started your journey or planned to do so very soon. Maybe you're not following the day-by-day guideline and you just finished reading that excerpt *stop and breathe* Either way, let's talk about these connections because it gets a little tricky out here. You're living, you're learning, you're yearning for positive people and connections that are beneficial to the you that you are becoming; you have agreed to be open and leave your comfort zone, you've agreed to walk in your truth.

The next agreement is for you to *find* and *follow* your intuition. As you venture out, you will meet new people and often times you will connect instantly, you see this is when the intuition must kick in and kick in *QUICK*. Since you have let your guard down in sense, you are open and looking for positive thus neglecting to think that this might be a trap. Sugar and salt look very similar! You might be thinking, “*they won't get me because I don't let people in anyway*”, **STOP** that and **STOP** now! By picking up this book and making it to day **FOUR** you are now somewhat trapped and challenged to adjust your way of thinking. Let go of past pain and don't be closed.

Go back, re-read that statement, don't be closed, let go of the past; now add -- don't be crazy! Be eager and open for intentional connections but don't be fooled. It is sometimes impossible to spot out the vultures but when the signs come, be cognitive and don't ignore. Everyone doesn't want to connect with you for positive reasons. Some folks have ulterior motives, some want to distract you from your destiny and some are just downright vultures who plan to suck the life out of you because they are unhappy or unstable. I guess you're wondering now why I even want you to step out and make connections, well stay with me, there is a method to the madness. Just as I am sending you the warnings of bad connections; I wholeheartedly believe there are people out there who want to see you win, they want to see you heal and they want to contribute to the process.

Over the years, it has been the most amazing experience to interact with people and make connections outside of my comfort zone. Our own personal zone only represents a very small portion of the world and all it has to offer. Furthermore, our perceptions are a reflection of our surroundings and level of exposure. Connections can challenge your mind, expand your thought processes and concurrently help you to see things beyond your normal scope of understanding. Intentional connections take it to another level, as they have the

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ability to aide in ways unimaginable. Let's say for example you are in a new career, making more money than ever and you meet a colleague who is versed in wealth management and investments. By connecting and nurturing the connection you are able to learn from the individual and potentially diversify the way you manage funds. Isn't that using them? Certainly not because they will gain something from you or someone you connect them to.

In the intentional space, it becomes a circle of shared resources and giving not with the intent to instantly gain a return. Trusting yourself and divine connection. For this reason alone, many miss out on intentional connections because human nature expects instant gratification. Now, be aware that I am not advising you to go giving out tons of free services, advice or time, I am however proposing that you take a chance at connecting and becoming comfortable in the uncomfortable space. Even in times when you run into a wolf dressed in sheep's clothing, take something from the experience, assess your discernment and move on. Never bask in mistakes and bad connections; it's a waste of time and time is a nonrenewable resource.

Today, I challenge you to take an assessment of your current connections. Compartmentalize the people in your inner and outer circles. How do they serve you? How do you serve them? Are there relationships that need to go? Are there relationships

that need some attention and work? Take time with this, don't rush this, this is important. You are the sum of your surroundings, especially those you spend the most time with. Being intentional starts with you! Know your worth, know the value of your time, your talents and your resources. Become the project manager of your life and the secretary of your time. Everyone and everything doesn't deserve a space. As you shift towards living and loving your truth, everyone will **NOT** be here for the process nor the shift; those aren't your people and that is OKAY! Susie and Tom have been down for you for 10, 15, maybe even 20 plus years yet that does not mean they are ready for you in *THIS* season. Pay careful attention to this because it gets tricky.

Loyalty matters, so by no means is this message for you to drop Susie and Tom UNLESS they are toxic. If they lie in that very special area of not toxic but not serving in this season, they will understand and respect the shift because the bond is genuine. If they don't understand and respect, the sad reality is they served their time and the season has ended. It is TOUGH but *it is* and *will be* okay.

As you review your circles and assess your surroundings, remember your worth. You matter and your well-being should not be jeopardized by any means. You have to love yourself enough to not only read that, but to also say and believe the statement. "I matter and anything that alters my well-being has no place in my life" -- say that a few

times -- Write it on your mirror, put it on your desk, heck, have it stitched on a pillow if you need to! Your network is indeed your net worth but KNOW your worth and don't discount it for others. There is a thin line between compromise and complacent, don't become complacent and okay with mistreatment or unappreciation.

So What's Next?

Repeat After Me: I promise to assess my surroundings and eliminate connections that no longer serve me. I will be a better advocate of my time and focus on intentional connections, ultimately believing that my network is my net worth but I must know my worth. I am responsible for what I allow and who I give my time. I will be intentional, open-minded and unapologetic.

“Even inconsistency is consistent if done persistently; remain aware, be intentional” T. D. James

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DAY 5: NEW MINDSET

“EVERYBODY CAN’T GO, EVERYTHING CAN’T STAY”

Welcome to Day 5 of L.I.V.I.N.G. Your Truth where we will explore your mindset. Yesterday, we focused on connections and being intentional with time and talents. Today, we are focusing on YOU, YOUR mind and YOUR thoughts. Why the capitals? Because I am somewhat screaming at you, emphasizing the possession you have, the power you have as it relates to YOUR mind. It is yours! Not mom’s mind, not dad’s mind, not child’s mind nor spouse’s mind -- it is solely YOURS and YOU have complete control of how you handle it. The difference between being *in* poverty and *being* poverty is simply mindset. The difference in a *broken place* and a *broken life* is mindset. We are what we think, we become what we believe. As you journey with me to living your truth, the mindset has to change. The mindset must reflect openness and abundance; accepting that which we cannot change and dealing with what we can. If a bird poops on your head, it’s not your fault but guess what -- ya gotta clean it up. Same goes for your life, somethings that occur have *nothing to do* with you and aren’t your fault however it is your job to deal with it.

It cracks me up when someone says “I want to move, nothing good is here”, I follow up with “what’s good about you”, as you can imagine, the responses are very interesting. Often times I get evil glares or stutters, other times a chuckle followed by a

statement that speaks negatively about the current environment. I will not be dishonest and say I do not believe that changing areas is important, we talked already this week about venturing out, I am all for it, it's necessary; however to leave an area but keep an impoverished and/or damaged mindset is pretty useless. Remember Pessimistic Patty from S.E.A.S.O.N.S. of the Untold? If she moves from Alabama to Tennessee but keeps her negative attitude and uncompromising mindset, she will face the same challenges miles away. Nothing will update with the exception of her mailing address. For Patty to experience a shift, she will have to find a new mindset, leaving behind past hurt and pain; allowing herself to heal and move forward in a healthy manner.

Let's be real, being negative, unhappy and pessimistic is easy; it doesn't take much effort to bask in unhappiness and complain about what's wrong. On the reverse, to be optimistic, open and honest is tough; it takes some work. When you are tired, when you are over it, when you feel like the world is literally falling on you, it is hard to find the silver lining, look at the bright side and find that smile. Welp, hard doesn't mean impossible so get to it. Find your happy in the hardest times, in those times where you want to give up and throw in the towel. Change your mindset and watch your whole life begin to shift. Look at challenges as character builders; look at shortcomings as projects to prove

yourself. Embrace uncertainty and learn from the process. Apply the energy once used to complain and use it to change your situation. It is honestly that simple and though often used interchangeably, simple and easy are quite different. Just because something is simple doesn't necessarily mean it is easy. You want to make more money, work harder, invest more, create another source of income - simple, not easy. Not happy with your current life situation, change it - simple, not easy.

Take the time to think about your actions and words; you see those intentional connections we talked about yesterday, they can help you with the shift. It is much easier to be positive when surrounded by positivity. It is much easier to grow when aligned with others who have the desire to grow. Living your truth is much easier when you intentionally connect with open minded, non-judgmental people who embrace that everyone has a past and deserves to live beyond it. Often times altering the mindset is one of the most challenging aspects of shifting for people. This is primarily because our minds are constantly influenced by what we subconsciously align with, our norm. When our norm is rooted in scarcity, secrecy, poverty, negativity or other disparities, the reprogramming and realigning takes not only effort, but also time, dedication, patience and careful attention.

Control your mind, control your life isn't just a simple saying to take lightheartedly; it is truly an affirmation and commitment that has the power to shift your being, thus resulting in shifts all around your existence. The conversation around mental health remains taboo for many when in reality it matters and has a high significance in our overall genetic makeup. Think about it, to lose your mind or control thereof is to essentially lose your life.

Discussing mental health and taking care of your mind isn't something "just for the crazy", it's for everyone, yes all of us. How is it even possible to live your truth, develop a shift or balance your connections without a new mindset? . . . There ya go, you've got it, it's not! Join me on the journey to a mindset shift today -- allow yourself to break free from the chains of uncontrolled thoughts. Align yourself with yourself and place yourself in the mental state of openness.

If you're wondering -- How do I even do what you just said? Keep reading, hear me out, I am not losing it, I promise. Trust me, but better yet, trust yourself. Think about the chains and limits you have placed on your mind. Think about the ways in which you have suppressed feelings and emotions simply because you didn't feel comfortable identifying with the reality. Let that go and let it go **N O W!** It is time to shift your mindset and leave the past pain along with all its particles behind you. ***PAUSE*** before you go on, take some time to breathe and ponder on

the aspects of life in which you have to merely “deal with things” before committing to a shift. Take a “mind trip” to those places and identify with what happened, how it made you feel and release any associated emotions. If this means screaming, going for a walk, shedding some tears or even having an overdue conversation with someone, do it, do this for YOU not for me or because the book says so, do this because you are invested in your growth process. No matter your age, career, financial or academic status, this works and it’s necessary. Trust the process, shift the mindset!

So What’s Next?

Repeat After Me: I am challenging myself to shift my mindset. I will not allow negative and/or demeaning thoughts to plague my mind. I will embrace openness and have understanding in all situations especially those beyond my control. I am committed to a mindset shift; I am preparing for the greatness that flow as a result of my new outlook.

“Mindset is everything, period.”

DAY 6 GOOD VIBES ONLY

“POSITIVITY PREVAILS”

Day 6! We have progressed, we have identified with some points of challenge and change. Now it's time to discuss vibes. Vibes or vibrations (we will keep it laid back here, formality isn't the focus today) -- how do they impact our lives? What exactly are they and what do they do they have to do with you living your truth? . . . Glad you asked! Vibes relate to the energies one brings into the atmosphere; needless to say, there are positive vibes and negative vibes. Often times we get caught living in autopilot, just living and doing the things that life demands, not even thinking about how vibes can cloud our minds. When this happens, sadly, we are more prone to be influenced because we become less protective of our peace. To stop this from happening, we have to 1) slow down and 2) pay attention. Easier said than done! With the demands of life, work, family, social circles and the similar, we simply get “caught up” in living and forget to protect our peace.

As you have made some commitments to shifting in various aspects of life this week, you must add self-awareness and appreciation to the list now. Love yourself enough to not allow others the power over your mind and well-being. Uplifting yourself after becoming miserable is very difficult, therefore work to keep yourself away from misery. Catch negative vibes before they drag you down! Remember those

connections we talked about a couple days ago -- have you assessed yours? Misery loves company is an old proverb that remains true to-date. When you hear negative talk, politely shift from the conversation and if that is impossible, remember your commitment to mindset and focus on the good. Even when people try to drag you into negativity, pessimism or drama, block it, block it, block it. Keep focusing on the good!

“Today is going to be great”

“The office party is going to be interesting but I am going”

“The kids have been busy lately”

Compare the above statements to the following:

“Today is going to suck, I hate life”

“I don’t want to go to the office party, I hate these people”

“My kids are bad as hockey, why did I have them”

As you can see and I’m sure also feel, what we speak creates vibes! Be serious with yourself right now, in this moment, what types of vibes have you been putting into the atmosphere? What types of vibes have you been allowing to impact your life?

As you can probably imagine, as you work towards living in your truth and embracing a more positive mindset, it is going to pose challenges. Everyone will not align with the mission, everyone will **NOT** understand the how or the why; that’s none of your

business. It is your duty to protect your personal peace and well-being; concurrently, you may have to assume the role of exerting extra positive vibes to shift the atmosphere around you. Negative vibes are common primarily because they are easy -- it takes very little effort to complain, to speak negatively, to see the wrong in people and things. Let's face it, being positive is hard as crap! Despite the difficulty, it is necessary! Take a moment to think about something that hurt you; rather it was today or ten years ago, think about it for a few moments. Now, I challenge you to develop a positive statement about the situation or aftermath. Whew! Child! Hard! –
“I was abused but I survived and now I recognize the signs of an unhealthy relationship”

“We were poor but I learned how to make a way, my work ethic is impeccable, thank God for the challenge”

“He/She took my innocence, I was raped but I can better prepare my children by having open sex conversations in hopes to change the narrative for generations to come”

A few examples, not easy, actually very challenging -- though not my exact situations, I resonate with how real and common situations similar to those are. As you recap and think about your personal truth(s) -- take time, breathe, deal, heal . . . You will thank yourself! Often times our negative vibes are an outward retaliation to situations we have failed to deal with.

Just maybe, you are already on the path to “good vibes only”, that is quite amazing and I commend you. Keep it up and share this with someone who you KNOW needs it; rather they receive it today, tomorrow, next year or five years from now, you did your part by sharing. On the reverse, maybe you have identified that you either accept negative vibes and/or exert negative vibes.

Possibly during your moments of thinking, you went back to some places deemed forbidden and remembered some **HARD** times or situations. Don't rush your process of coping, dealing and healing. Take as much time as you need because this is for you! The GREAT person inside of you needs you to handle this hurt so you can indeed live your truth internally.

Often times when telling people “*live your truth*” they think I'm referencing that they need to broadcast what hurt them to the world. Nope! Not at all actually! If an out and open avenue is what you choose, so be it but this process is for you and about you. Suppressed emotions create negative energy and we are working to rid that by all means necessary. It's highly likely that several things have happened to you that weren't your fault but it is your job to deal with them. I am wishing you the best and sending “good vibes only” your way!

So What's Next?

Repeat After Me: I will allow and exert good vibes only. I am committed to identifying with past pain and living my truth for me and me only. This action is not selfish, it is self-FULL; in order to be better for others, I must be better for myself. I realize that my vibes create an atmosphere and I want mine to be positive. The work begins today!

"You attract the energy that you give off. Spread good vibes. Think positively. Enjoy life." -Unknown

TABITHA D. JAMES

DAY 7 THE TIES THAT BIND

“TAKE WHAT YOU’VE GOT AND PUT IT TOGETHER; BE RESOURCEFUL”

DAY SEVEN - - We should have a party, welp, we’re not! We are going to have a moment though, a real one - - you have some work to do and some serious commitments to make, not to me, to you! You have purchased this book, you have gone through the journey for the past seven days or few hours if you broke the rules or potentially a few weeks if life happened and it took you a little longer to complete. Whatever the time frame of your trajectory with this challenge, you did it - HOORAY but what’s the aftermath? Are you really going to work on the shifts or will this be just another read that goes wasted? We all do it, we are very guilty, we read something or attend an awesome event and then we get home and nothing happens! Don’t let this be the narrative this time around -- no matter how tough it is to deal with past pain or eliminate connections that no longer serve you, do it! You deserve it and I am promising you that life on the positive side is beautiful.

On this last day of the challenge, we are tying the rope, binding the concepts and developing your work plan. Here we go, here’s to you, here’s to shifting:

1 Letting Go

How are you committing to letting go of people and concepts that no longer serve you? It is OKAY to be you, believe in you and do what's best for you! ***Grab your notebook, journal, mobile device or something similar and write down who and what you are letting go of, make this real!***

2 Intrinsic Motivation

How are you motivating you? How are you inspiring you? How are you connected with you? When are you spending time with you? You, you, you and more you -- remember intrinsic motivation revolves around the support, love and encouragement you give yourself! You may have one friend or 1,000 friends, either way there will be times when you are alone, there will be situations that you have to handle solo-dolo. Intrinsic motivation will carry you during these times -- fall in love with yourself, appreciate yourself and remain committed to yourself! ***Write down ways you have previously doubted yourself and affirm that you will release the chains of self-doubt and demotivation!***

3 Venturing Out

Go, go, go -- venture out from your norm and find comfortability in being uncomfortable. Head on a nature walk, take a solo trip, try attending an event

you wouldn't typically attend. Step outside of your comfort zone and embrace all this world has to offer. Not only will you learn about other things and people, you will learn more about yourself. ***Write down five things you will do outside of your norm before this year ends! (And DO THEM)***

4 Intentional Connections

Assess your circles, identify what's healthy and helping, identify what's draining and unnecessary. Get rid of the deadweight, say goodbye! If there are certain connections you can't completely eliminate, reduce your time with them and focus on the commitment you have made to yourself as it relates to well-being and mindset. Focus on building intentional connections and being a good steward of your time, talents and treasures. ***Make a list, map or the similar that represents your circles, direct and indirect. Identify what has to go and get rid of it!***

5 New Mindset

Commit to the mindset shift, allow openness and newness! Shift your thoughts and change your life. Find the silver lining in the bronze places. ***Identify positive reflections on challenging situations in your current professional and personal life. Write these, believe these!***

6 Good Vibes Only

There's not much more to say here, good vibes only, period. Slow down and take an assessment of the control you have on your life, your mind and your overall atmosphere. Are you easily summoned into negative talk, drama or pessimism? Why? Identify the issues and derive solutions. ***Write down five ways you can use your personality and new mindset to exude positivity.***

Alright, my job is done, get to work!

Ropes tied, connections made, the challenge outlined and action steps have been presented as a guide. While you work towards ***L.I.V.I.N.G. Your Truth***, remember why you started the process. Think about those who never even had the opportunity to think about their truth as they never learned the value of life. Think about those who are still so impoverished in the mind that the thought of relief and release is as unrealistic as a man on a the moon; but wait didn't that happen -- meaning this process is possible for ***any*** living being who has control of their mind.

You are now an advocate for this process, well I hope so anyway. It is my hope that once you have taken care of yourself, gathered your mind, soaked up the greatness of living AND loving your truth, you will inspire someone else to do the same.

TABITHA D. JAMES

Fair warning once again that everyone will not jump on board nor understand, that's not your business, do your part and hope for the best.

Grab your wine glass, water bottle or coffee cup and lets cheers to ***L.I.V.I.N.G.*** our truth, loving our truth and enhancing our live as a result thereof. Thank you for digging into the "Not . Posted" aspects of your life, until next time -- be well!

CONCLUSION

“NOW WHAT”

You have invested in yourself with this read and challenge. You have most likely read and re-read some portions as we all identify with different things and when they hit us in that special place we have to go back and grab it again. I am now challenging you to go and live your truth. Authentically embrace the person that you are, love that person, appreciate that person and align that person with things that make that person come alive.

Put a stop to the unnecessary, put a stop to allowing the pains of the past to ruin your current life and put a stop to wearing the mask. No, you do not have to go write a book or article, no you don't have to run around telling folks that you're now “living your truth”; remember this is for you. Believe me when I say, once you tap into the authentic you, it will be exuded into the atmosphere without you saying a word. There is a glow, a feeling, a silent expression that follows you once you embrace your untold and begin to live in your truth.

As you live your truth and journey towards being uniquely amazing, remember I warned you that it will not always be easy and you'll often be challenged. Just because you have accepted the challenge that does not mean that others will do the same or that they will understand what in the world you are doing. So what! This is about Y-O-U!

Affirm that you are willing to *live your truth*, tap into your *intrinsic motivation* that will carry you, *venture out* from your norm and try *new* things, *intentionally connect* yourself with folks that align with your *new mindset* and only allow *good vibes* in your space!

TABITHA D. JAMES

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tabitha D. James “Tiny Tab”, is a native of the rural South.

She is originally from Lake View, SC, a very small town located about 45 miles north of the tourist destination Myrtle

Beach. She can be classified as an entrepreneur, educator, facilitator, philanthropist, life-learner, woman of God and several other things as it relates to her accolades; however she is not the biggest fan of titles.

She is simply and authentically herself, a humble servant.

A **S**urvivor, **H**elping to **E**mpower.

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tabitha D. James". The script is cursive and elegant, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

May your journey be as blessed as mine; even in the challenging times, remember that you deserve peace and positivity. Don't jeopardize yourself for others; it ain't worth it!

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L.I.V.I.N.G. YOUR TRUTH

"Living your truth isn't easy, it's necessary."

Often times one will wonder why life isn't evolving as it relates to relationships, friendships, professional ventures and family; ask yourself these questions - Hey self, are you living your truth? Are you aware of your triggers and how to keep your peace? Have you identified the things that drain you and eliminated their existence? Have you tapped into your intrinsic motivation and derived ways to venture out from your norm? And lastly, have you taken off your mask? If your answer was no to any of the questions, cmon friend, let's go on a journey to living your truth.

L.I.V.I.N.G. Your Truth is the second release of the Not . Posted series. This motivational memoir challenges the mind to identify and connect with the truths under the core. Living your truth doesn't mean you have to release your secrets or challenges to the world however it does mean that you have to accept them for yourself, leaving you with a better connection to your inner-being. Your life will transition as result of being truly transparent with yourself about yourself.

The author makes intentional comparisons and shares methodology to ensure readers from various backgrounds can make connections to the excerpts. Within the memoir, the author reveals real life examples from personal account and her own journey to truth. Be sure to also check out the complementing books of the series:

Not . Posted: S.E.A.S.O.N.S of the Untold

Not . Posted: A Collection of the Untold



"Reconnect the broken pieces of a masterpiece"