CAN WE ALL GET ALONG?
Many of us have learned the GOLDEN RULE: Treat others the way you want to be treated. We challenge you to practice the PLATINUM RULE: Treat others the way they want to be treated.

You can get started by practicing the 30 Tips of Dignity & Respect in every interaction with every person.

You can become a Champion of Dignity & Respect by modeling the 7 Pillars of Dignity & Respect in daily interactions with others.

You can get involved and get others to join you in supporting our “I will do my part” Dignity & Respect Initiatives that promote dignity and respect for others:

— BULLYING IN SCHOOLS
— SEXUAL ASSAULT ON CAMPUSSES
— DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
— COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

It’s as easy as 1-2-3:
1. Stand up and speak out with family and friends. Invite them to take the pledge and encourage them to join you.
2. Attend or Volunteer at local events or fundraisers to support national and local efforts.
3. Make a Donation of goods or financial support to one of the causes.

Tell us how you do your part.

dignityandrespectcampaign
@WeRespectYou | #WillDoMyPart
dignityandrespect
“Can we all get along?” This famous appeal for calm was spoken by Rodney King, a construction worker who became nationally known after the Los Angeles police officers who beat him following a high-speed car chase in 1991 were found not-guilty, and the city erupted in riots. At the time, many ridiculed King’s statement because of its simplicity, but here we are nearly 25 years later in 2015 seeing race play out on television in very similar ways.

As we know, human relationships are complicated and infinitely complex, and problems can manifest from many different sources that can include difficult relationships from our past, pressure from others to begin or end a relationship and the media leading us to form an idealized view of relationships, which is oftentimes at odds with reality of how things really are in a relationship or in the world.

One of the things I cherish about my days in college was the freedom to share my opinion. Yes, oftentimes it led to heated discussions and a few folks getting upset, but at the end of the day we summed it up as healthy discourse and continued on with our lives. Nowadays, you are hesitant to speak your mind for fear that someone is recording you or may use what you said to ostracize you or end a relationship. The media is often at odds with reality of how things really are in a relationship or in the world.

So, will there ever be a time when we all get along? I doubt it; but personally, I pray for a day that we reach a point of understanding and peace that although we do not see eye-to-eye we must love one another as God loved us.

Martin Luther King, Jr. famously said, “We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools.” As a nation, we will probably never see real peace, but if we could find a way to live together with all of our differences and complexities that would be positive steps in advancing our daily interactions, making this world a much better place to live. Mahatma Gandhi, who King was greatly influenced and inspired by, charged us to, “be the change that we wish to see in the world.” If we really want to see change, peace and justice – it begins with us. We all individually play a role. It is up to us to collectively come together to make our homes, communities and our world a better place.

In this issue, we will take a close look at race in America and in the city of Pittsburgh and examine how we can make personal improvements within ourselves and improve how we interact with others in our everyday life.

What will you do in 2015 to improve relationships in your home, workplace, community or church? Every positive change we make on a small level assists in making improvement on a larger level. The decision is OURS.

“WE MUST LEARN TO LIVE TOGETHER AS BROTHERS OR PERISH TOGETHER AS FOOLS.”

Homesafe Foreclosure Prevention Program

Are you behind in your mortgage payment or received an Act 91 Notice?

The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh may be able to assist you. There is NO CHARGE for this service and we are HUD certified Housing Counseling Agency

For more information and to obtain an appointment call (412) 227-4164

Operation Home

Do you have home buying questions? Urban League may be able to assist you with the process.

The Urban League of Greater Pittsburgh will provide an intensive homeownership program consisting of one workshop and a follow up one-on-one credit counseling session. There is NO CHARGE for this service

For more details and information please call (412) 227-4164

URBAN LEAGUE OF GREATER PITTSBURGH

Urban League Of Greater Pittsburgh
610 WOOD STREET
PITTSBURGH, PA 15222
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CAN WE ALL GET ALONG?

BY ORLANA DARRINS DREWERY

“This famous appeal for calm was spoken by Rodney King, a construction worker who became nationally known after the Los Angeles police officers who beat him following a high-speed car chase in 1991 were found not-guilty, and the city erupted in riots. At the time, many ridiculed King’s statement because of its simplicity, but here we are nearly 25 years later in 2015 seeing race play out on television in very similar ways.”
Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as “Negro History Week” and later as “Black History Month.” What you might not know is that black history had barely begun to be studied or even documented when the tradition originated. Although blacks have been in America at least as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a respectable presence in the history books.

**BLACKS ABSENT FROM HISTORY BOOKS**

We owe the celebration of Black History Month, and more importantly, the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Born to parents who were former slaves, he spent his childhood working in the Kentucky coal mines and enrolled in high school at age twenty. He graduated within two years and later went on to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard. The scholar was disturbed to find in his studies that history books largely ignored the black American population and when blacks did figure into the picture, it was generally in ways that reflected the inferior social position they were assigned at the time.

**ESTABLISHED JOURNAL OF NEGRO HISTORY**

Woodson, always one to act on his ambitions, decided to take on the challenge of writing black Americans into the nation’s history. He established the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (now called the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History) in 1915, and a year later founded the widely respected Journal of Negro History. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history.

Woodson chose the second week of February for Negro History Week because it marks the birthdays of two men who greatly influenced the black American population, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. However, February has much more than Douglass and Lincoln to show for its significance in black American history:

**FEBRUARY 3, 1870**

The 15th Amendment was passed, granting blacks the right to vote.

**FEBRUARY 12, 1909**

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded by a group of concerned black and white citizens in New York City.

**FEBRUARY 23, 1868**

W. E. B. DuBois, important civil rights leader and co-founder of the NAACP, was born.

**FEBRUARY 21, 1965**

Malcolm X, the militant leader who promoted Black Nationalism, was assassinated.

**FEBRUARY 1, 1960**

In what would become a civil-rights movement milestone, a group of black Greensboro, N.C., college students began a sit-in at a segregated Woolworth’s lunch counter.

**FEBRUARY 25, 1870**

The first black U.S. Senator, Hiram R. Revels (1822-1901), took his oath of office.

**FEBRUARY 20, 2015**

The first black U.S. Senator, Hiram R. Revels (1822-1901), took his oath of office.
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke these historic words as the keynote speaker during a National Conference on Religion and Race, which convened in Chicago, January 1963. According to Rabbi Marc J. Tanenbaum, the author of the pamphlet, The Moral Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr., many historians consider that conference as the starting point of a new coalition of conscience in our nation. Dr. King spoke clearly to the real issue of race relations, not only in these United States in particular, but the world in general; the issue is “conscience.” Conscience is that voice within us that acts as our moral compass. It is the voice that probes and gnaws at the heart and soul and causes us to ask “are you sure?” Conscience brings awareness to those things that aren’t immediately noticed or; however, are noticed and dismissed because a stronger voice (self) commands the attention. Pulling at the conscience of racists in this country, trying to raise more awareness, protesting the injustice of it all is not new. It is good that legislation, throughout the years, have caused change in many civil rights issues. Legislation is like the Mosaic Law, it speaks to the behavior and challenges the behavior to behave better, often citing consequences if it doesn’t. However, conscience cannot be legislated.

Some years ago, I was invited to be the retreat leader of a very wealthy white women's group. These women were all the wives of the Pittsburgh elite. I quickly got the sense that inviting me, an African American woman to address them in a retreat setting, made them feel as though they were fulfilling some obligation to give a black woman “her portion.” I am certain of this because of the many references throughout the retreat to the fact that you are the first Black woman we have invited to do this.”

After lunch, I was approached by the wealthy, well-manicured, every hair in place, host. She informed me that during lunch her committee had decided to change the format of the rest of the day. Instead of focusing on the assigned topic, they wanted to have an open discussion about race relations. I was thrilled! As some of them began to recite their list of goodies they have given to the African American story that has been made so positive moves forward, but it is not a one way street. In addition to our white brothers and sisters, with deliberate intent, being willing to at least try to understand the plight of the African American story that has its root in slavery and being willing to own it’s history, we as Black people have a part to play as well. We cannot assume the position that we have a right to hate. We are called by the same standards and principles of God’s Word as those who have caused the disruption. We must understand that some may never acknowledge their sin against us. We must also understand that some don’t even have the mental and spiritual capacity to understand. It’s like trying to pour 12 ounces of liquid into a vessel that can only hold 6 ounces. We muse with as much passion as we can muster, keep hope alive, fight the battles, yes with legislation, open dialogue, speaking boldly to the injustices, but also with the weapons of our warfare, which are not carnal, but mighty even to the pulling down of strongholds. Who is to say? History just might record that our grand and great grandchildren looked back on the history of life in these United States, never having even heard the term n—-r, working, playing, making plans, building a better nation with our white brother and sisters and say…”Wow, did these things really exist? I can’t even imagine.”

Reverend Barbara Gunn is the Senior Pastor of Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Pittsburgh.
The truth is we have heard and we do untrust becomes too badly damaged. If police lose legitimacy and the public now has me extremely concerned about the potential for similar violence and for the safety of our officers. The incidents in Ferguson and New York highlight how tragic the outcomes can be placed on administrative duties pending completion of the U.S. Department of Justice investigation. Some perceive our unwillingness to do so as evidence of corruption of our accountability.

In Pittsburgh, we too have had our incidents, and the public trust is in jeopardy. If we, the police, are to regain legitimacy, we must assure those calling for accountability locally tell me they are not being heard. There has been a chorus calling for change that we hear and understand them, and are committed to police accountability.

Some of those calling for police accountability locally tell me they are not being heard. There has been a chorus calling for the officer involved in the Leon Ford incident to be placed on administrative duties pending completion of the U.S. Department of Justice investigation. Some perceive our unwillingness to do so as evidence of corruption of our accountability.

In the Police Bureau, we are deeply committed to improving the quality of our relationships with our community members, and improving integrity of our accountability systems. We are creating an Office of Professional Standards that will work closely with the Office of Municipal Investigations, and are conducting thorough audits of all of our accountability systems. We will be conducting a thorough audit of our police training, to make certain all training, including use of force training, includes a component of ethical decision making. We must never lose sight of our ethical standards of conduct as we perform our difficult and, at times, thankless job.

In other words, I am making sure we live our core values: Accountability, Integrity and Respect. The truth is, we have the power to choose our reactions to challenging circumstances. I have faith here in Pittsburgh we will choose wisely. The U.S. Department of Justice investigation is complete, our officer has been assigned to desk duty. He is not being so assigned for punitive reasons. Accountability is one of our core values, and we must respect the integrity of the inside investigation of our actions, honor the findings when they are determined, and, in the process, demonstrate to our communities of color that we hear and understand the pain.

Now the question remains, what are we going to do, Pittsburgh? Police work is often not pretty. Officers must arrest violators. Violators often resist, sometimes violently.

When the next ugly incident happens, will we be willing to withhold judgment and control our emotions long enough to give each other the benefit of the doubt? Are we going to work together toward reconciliation? Are we going to work on listening to one another with the intention of compassionate understanding?

I have faith in us. I think we will.

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I want to thank the editors of “The Mount” for asking me to write about the state of race relations in Pittsburgh and what we are doing in city government to address this complex issue. There is nothing of greater importance to our city or others across the country.

Part of the reason for the complexity, of course, is that the matters facing people of color are multi-faceted and affect every resident of the city of every race. How do we best support economic opportunities, from jobs to aid to small businesses? How do we ensure public safety in our neighborhoods and rebuild fragile relationships between our police officers and residents? How do we make sure all of Pittsburgh, not just certain parts of the city, is successful and safe?

The first step is acknowledging our problems. I know Pittsburgh in many ways is a “Tale of Two Cities,” with certain parts that are thriving and growing and others that have long suffered decay and been ignored by the powers that be. From the beginning of my administration last year I began taking this issue on through several means.

Officials from city government are now visible and engaged in every city neighborhood. With the help of local foundations, I established a new Bureau of Neighborhood Empowerment, overseen by Chief Urban Affairs Officer Valerie McDonald-Roberts, that works entirely on the needs of underserved neighborhoods. Specifically, the bureau focuses on supporting education, small business, housing and nonprofit/faith-based matters, many of them in the city’s predominantly African American neighborhoods. Additionally, four members of the city’s Community Affairs team attend every community meeting in the city’s predominantly African American neighborhoods.

In the fall Pittsburgh joined President Barack Obama’s “My Brother’s Keeper” initiative, which seeks to make this a city where young men of color have all the opportunities necessary to succeed. Led by LaTrenda Leonard, the City’s Deputy Chief of Operations and Administration, this work involves collaborating with community stakeholders across the city to ensure all youth graduate from high school, complete post-secondary education or training, find employment, and remain safe from violent crime.

There is so much more to do, which is why I need your help.

As much as this city requires leadership to confront its greatest challenges, it also needs the voices and power of the community to make the solutions whole. There are no places that bind our voices together more strongly, and meaningfully, than our churches.

...
“FREEDOM IS NEVER GIVEN; IT IS WON.”
- A. PHILIP RANDOLPH

“I CAN ACCEPT FAILURE. EVERYONE FAILS AT SOMETHING. BUT I CAN’T ACCEPT NOT TRYING.”
- MICHAEL JORDAN

“You’re either part of the solution or part of the problem.”
- LEROY ELDRIDGE CLEAVER

“Bringing the gifts that my ancestors gave, I am the dream and the hope of the slave. I rise. I rise. I rise.”
- MAYA ANGELOU

“The question is not whether we can afford to invest in every child; it is whether we can afford not to.”
- MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

“Racism is not an excuse to not do the best you can.”
- ARTHUR ASHE

“New Year’s Eve Services”

Thank you to everyone who joined us as we celebrated the last day of the year with three services: Noon, 6PM and 8PM. Attendees enjoyed live music, singing, prayer, fellowship and Mount Ararat’s Dance Ensemble. During the services, we declared that we would strive to live 2015 “Holy, Healthy and Happy!” We invite you to make the same declaration and join us for one of our four services: Saturdays at 7PM and Sundays at 7:30AM, 9:30AM and 11:45AM.
BRIDGETTE PERDUE
PITTSBURGH ARTIST USES MUSIC TO SHARE THEMES OF LOVE & INSPIRATION TO AUDIENCES OF ALL AGES

“Bridgette wins you over with the unblenched sincerity of her lyrics and vocal delivery. She delivers with no shortage of warmth and charm,” says international music composer Douglas Levine. The Pittsburgh City Paper raves, “Bridgette’s strong voice makes the album a pleasant listen. The tunes are heartfelt and catchy, and they’re relatable to plenty of us.”

Bridgette Perdue is a Pop/R&B Recording Artist, Songwriter and Teacher, dedicated to impacting the world through her soulful, vibrant music. As an independent musician since 2008, she has entertained audiences across the U.S., including Los Angeles, New York City, Washington D.C., and Orlando, opening for national acts and headlining her own City of Bridges Tour. She has also been on the cover of One Fashion Place Magazine and starred in a Disney commercial.

Perdue has performed at the Three Rivers Arts Magazine and starred in a Disney commercial. Perdue has been the spring musical director for Pittsburgh Public Schools for three years. Perdue has been the spring musical director for Propel Charter Schools, teaching dance and movement to students in kindergarten through 8th grade. Perdue has been the spring musical director for Pittsburgh Public Schools for three productions, teaching original choreography, acting, and singing to the cast. Perdue is passionate about sharing her arts with her church and community and strives to use her art for the enrichment of those around her.

Amidst the thrilling progression of her career, Bridgette’s true delight goes beyond simply delivering music. Behind each song is a desire to reach others with a message of hope and to encourage the continual pursuit of one’s dream.

“We all have a dream inside us that we’ll never outgrow. When you pursue it, there’s an indescribable feeling that comes from doing what you were ‘built’ for. I hope my music speaks to the part of you that still dreams and encourages you to go after it, arms wide open.”

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Marriage is a God-ordained institution, as old as mankind’s presence on this earth. In accordance with the gravity of commitment and responsibility, traditional wedding vows advise those who enter into marriage to do so advisedly and soberly. Anyone married to another imperfect human being agrees it is not easy. For those who have exited the marital union, designated by God as holy, they must be evermore thoughtful and prudent. Whether one initiates divorce or has it thrust upon them, statistics have proven that about half of those who enter into matrimony eventually face this reality. Among forty-three stressful life events ranked by a group of psychiatrists, the termination of marriage is a perennial second on the list. Only the death of a spouse is determined to be more traumatic than a divorce. Biblically speaking, divorce was meant to be a God-regulated procedure to protect one’s rep-
"THE THINGS WHICH YOU LEARNED AND RECEIVED AND HEARD AND SAW IN ME, THESE DO, AND THE GOD OF PEACE WILL BE WITH YOU."  
( PHILIPPIANS 4:8-9)
ne particular day I had a few moments left from my break at work, so I decided to take the scenic route back to my desk. In the distance, I saw someone that I had not seen in a long time.

My excitement started to build; I knew I was moments away from graciously greeting my friend and embracing her with the love of the Lord. Smiles, laughter and police conversation soon followed. I noticed that her countenance lacked what I know as the side effects of joy. “Are you okay?”

“No” She sighed, “I just found out my cousin committed suicide.”

My excitement started to build; I knew to look around the age of fifteen shot himself in the basement of his home. He was sad, spent a lot of time alone and was dissatisfied with where he was in life. He shot himself while standing on a bridge. My heart bled with compassion over the possible thoughts running through his mind. I thought about everyone that loved him and how much pain they were in and the HOPE we tend to lean on for our tomorrows. Our conversation concluded with an embrace of love as it had begun. I understood her countenance and praised God her load was slightly lighter.

Heavyness still rested on her heart, but relief was given as she shared her sadness. As I walked away, I thanked God for knowing all things. He orchestrated time, it was no coincidence that I had “time to spare” on that day at that time. He knew His daughter was in need of His Comfort. Little did I know my excitement and experience would be the catalyst to usher in His Love.

There are times when love is misunderstood and viewed under the lens of tainted perception. Its core fundamentals are challenged, security is breached and suspicion starts eating away at its authenticity, worth and value. Choices become dark and hope dwindles, but God has shelf full of noble vessels available to proclaim His Good News. We can fight for souls in need, not with weapons of violence but with the weapons of Spiritual Warfare.

Our feet will stand firmly on the Gospel of Peace; our words will encourage, comfort and lead those who are wounded to the Lord. We can speak of the manner of love that knows all, even the darkest tomorrows. Our conversation concluded with an embrace of love as it had begun. I understood her countenance and praised God her load was slightly lighter.

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Over the past year, I have been on quite a life-changing journey, the ultimate faith walk in fact. There have been a few people in my life that during this time have encouraged me, prayed for and with me and spoke life over and into me, and some of the situations that I have been through. I am not sure that I have ever really thanked them for being an embodiment of Christ in my life. We all have friends, but Thank You FOR BEING A FRIEND BY TIFFANY HUFF to have a friend, who is a friend of Jesus is something that until recently I have taken for granted. We see examples of such friendship throughout the Bible. Ruth and Naomi are one example, “But Ruth said, “Do not urge me to leave you or to return from following you. For where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people, and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there will I be buried. May the LORD do so to me and more also if anything but death parts me from you.” (Ruth 1:16-17 NIV)  

Dear Friend

You have no idea how you have touched my heart and changed my life. Your ongoing willingness to stand in the gap and pray for me, even before you have prayed for yourself at times has never gone unnoticed. I know that many have expressed concern, and offered their love, support and prayers, but none with the genuineness and transparency that you have. The passion that you have to honor God and to see me and others do the same by fulfilling their purposes in Christ has been overwhelming at times. At any hour of the day or night, a simple encouraging word and your consistent willingness to lend your ear is often unexplainable. At times you can recognize my struggles when I try my best to mask them with a façade, and you constantly remind me that I am never alone. Even through the sharing of your own struggles that you would much rather keep to yourself, in obedience to the Holy Spirit you willingly share, standing strong in your faith and knowing that if God can bring you through He can do the same and more for me. Always quick to listen and slow to speak, and faithful that God will provide revelation in His time, you have been an example of discipline and patience time and again. I thank you for respecting my feelings and opinions even when you don’t agree, and never being afraid to challenge me to support my ideas and decisions with the Word. My potential to walk into my destiny has been greatly influenced by your anointing and consistent encouragement and love.

If I have never told you before, for all that you have done, for all that you are, I thank God for you. Thank you for being my friend.

I love you,
Tiff

Tiffany Huff is the Founder, Speaker & Coach at The Best You, an inspiring community and personal development company. Tiffany is passionate about empowering women to become their best selves by first envisioning what being their best is and then taking the steps to making their visions a reality. She is the mother of two very busy boys and enjoys cooking, reading, working out and traveling in her spare time.
YOUR 2015 RELATIONSHIP ROADMAP

BY FAUNA SOLOMON

The New Year has just started, and it’s my opinion that’s the most important time of the year to set your relationships goals.

What do you want for yourself? Where do you see your relationship going? Are you ready for commitment, possibly marriage?

If you’ve thought about these questions there is no better time than the present to create a plan for success. If you’ve thought about these questions, there is no better time than the present to create a plan for success.

What do you want to do in your life? What are your goals? Because so many people believe that love is luck and it just happens, they don’t invest in their romantic futures.

You can create the love life that you want by simply having a vision for it. As we get older, lifestyle becomes the biggest determining factor in compatibility. You want someone who will walk a mutual path with you not someone who forces you to choose one direction over another, worst expects you to abandon your direction for theirs.

Your vision for your love life should start with a feeling. Finish the following statement: “When I’m with the right person I will feel _______. ” The key is to avoid anyone who doesn’t ignite this primary feeling.

Write this feeling down on the back of a business card and keep it with you. Use it as a reminder of the type of relationship you’re after.

A vision for your love life shouldn’t be strict. If you want to maintain a spiritual lifestyle your vision shouldn’t require finding a mutually devout partner of only a specific religion (they might convert). Choose someone who supports your faith and doesn’t require that you choose their beliefs over your own.

A vision for love means deciding specifics such as the level of commitment you desire, the social habits you prefer like drinking or smoking, their physical health or your physical ambitions, etc.

If you are committed to health and fitness then accepting a partner who impedes on your goals instead of supports them only makes a relationship more difficult. If you’re making healthy meals and heading to the gym the wrong partner could easily sabotage your efforts. With a clear vision of your life you avoid partners who would make that life impossible.

When we accept the person over the lifestyle, we find ourselves becoming what someone else wants us to be in order to make them happy. We settle for less than we want because we are more concerned with the interest of our partner over our own interests.

At times some singles abandon their dreams and plans because it isn’t aligned with their partner’s visions. If you are with the right person, your goals should be just as compatible.

WHERE DO I WANT TO LIVE?

If you’re open-minded about where love can lead you don’t be afraid to meet someone in a different city or try online dating. If you’re willing to relocate for love, try meeting new people on vacation or when traveling for work. Don’t limit your dating pool to just your city.

WHAT WILL YOUR LOVE LIFE LOOK LIKE IN 2015?

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A vision for love means deciding specifics such as the level of commitment you desire, the social habits you prefer like drinking or smoking, their physical health or your physical ambitions, etc.

If you are committed to health and fitness then accepting a partner who impedes on your goals instead of supports them only makes a relationship more difficult. If you’re making healthy meals and heading to the gym the wrong partner could easily sabotage your efforts. With a clear vision of your life you avoid partners who would make that life impossible.

When we accept the person over the lifestyle, we find ourselves becoming what someone else wants us to be in order to make them happy. We settle for less than we want because we are more concerned with the interest of our partner over our own interests.

At times some singles abandon their dreams and plans because it isn’t aligned with their partner’s visions. If you are with the right person, your goals should be just as compatible.

WHAT ARE MY RELIGIOUS GOALS?

If faith is a part of your life then set the standard for how you practice your religion. If you need a partner aligned with your spiritual practice then start to expand your lifestyle. Volunteer, join a meditation group, or attend bible studies at different churches. Open your opportunities through your faith to meet more people.

How we work is a direct reflection of who we are. It’s important to find a partner whose work ethic and schedule aligns with your goals for your financial future. Don’t spend carelessly trying to impress the wrong person.

WHAT ARE MY FINANCIAL GOALS?

Don’t put your career on hold or in jeopardy being distracted by the wrong person. Without a clear goal in mind you’re easily led down the wrong path for “love.” Keep in mind that the right person for you wants you to be successful. They would never interfere with your ultimate vision for yourself.

These questions also bring clarity to the person you are and who you want to be. Knowing what you want out of life can tell you more about yourself and help to attract the right partner. Create a vision for your life for the right person to avoid altering your dreams for the wrong one. Make a plan for love now. If you wait until it just happens, it might not.

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When you talk to Ayisha Morgan-Lee about dance and arts education, her eyes light up, as they seem to dance. The 31-year-old founder and Artistic Director of the Hill Dance Academy Theatre (HDAT) says that she didn’t even realize how long she had been working on and developing HDAT, until someone mentioned it to her during a meeting. “It hit me that for nearly 10 years, I have been doing what I dreamed about doing since I was a student in dance,” said Morgan-Lee. As the academy prepares to celebrate its 10th anniversary, Morgan-Lee admits it has not been easy, but the journey has been extremely rewarding.

To recognize and celebrate 10 years of HDAT in just 12 months is an exciting initiative for Morgan-Lee, her staff, students, parents and the arts education community. Not only will HDAT students be performing on the main stage at the 27th annual conference of the International Association of Blacks in Dance this year, in April, the HDAT will hold its annual Spring Dance Concert; featuring the works of 7 amazing black women dance artists. Yes, this 10 year anniversary will be busy, at times, demanding and laborious; but Morgan-Lee is up for the challenge, she’s doing what she loves.

Why did you start/create/found Hill Dance Academy Theatre? I created HDAT with the goal to insure that children and youth, ages 3 to 17 years old, who want to dance, would have an opportunity to dance regardless of race, size, or life circumstances. Students would have the opportunity to train with some of the best teaching artist in the field and be ready for the Concert dance stage.

Why is keeping the tradition of Black Dance alive so important? It is important to keep the traditions of Black Dance alive so that we, as a people, can continue to share our stories, contributions and accomplishments in Dance and use our voices to tell our stories throughout history, to celebrate Black culture, and give a very public voice to the injustices faced by Black people and the resilience of Blacks in so many challenging life situations.

It is also important for the next generation of dancers to know the history of the artist who came before them and how they broke down barriers so they would not have the same challenges to face. If this generation of dancers know their history than they also understand why expectations, that I and other teaching dance masters have for them is so high.

What have you learned about yourself in these past 10 years with HDAT? In the past 10 years I have learned to continue to keep my eye on the goals set forth and every decision that is made is for the good of this next generation of dancers to make sure they are more equipped with the analytical skills and techniques to be not only professional dancers but better people in society. I’ve also learned that a lot of people cannot believe children can do all the things we demand and expect our students to accomplish. However, HDAT students always deliver and rise to the occasion every time and that is one of the many lessons that I learned and others should have learned about HDAT over the past 10 years.

What is the biggest challenge you have right now, as CEO and Artistic Director of HDAT? The biggest challenge I have right now is strategizing and positioning HDAT to have a permanent location in the District that will provide us with the ability, nutrition, space and resources to continue to build and expand Black dance that the Arts for years to come. We have had a number of challenges but for me until we can get a permanent location that we can grow in this is a top priority.

Many people might be surprised about the student diversity of HDAT, students and that they come from every neighborhood of the city of Pittsburgh to attend classes on the Hill. Why is it important to teach Black Dance to a diverse student population? HDAT welcomes students from all races and ethnic groups because diversity is the greatest thing to me, it is our greatest gift. HDAT is unashamedly Black and the contributions that Blacks have made to the Arts must be celebrated and valued by all. The foundation of Dance, like so many other arenas of life grows out of the richness of Africa and the Diaspora and HDAT has a moral obligation to bring that journey to life in all genres of Dance.

HDAT is unique because and it is bigger than just dance, tell us about HDAT’s unique approach to developing students for life skills, careers and excellence in all that they do? HDAT, as an arts education program, understands that to have a positive impact on adolescents, the program offerings must be “bigger than the arts” and that students must see and experience that the arts provide rich opportunities to develop life skills in areas of discipline, networking and support systems, mentorship, developing healthy relationships, comportment, organization, time management, stress management, developing a positive sense of self, valuing diversity and differences in skills and abilities and setting personal life and career goals and developing bonds and a sense of belonging and community.

HDAT’s mission is to provide opportunities for children, youth and teens to study dance steeped in the Black Traditions of Dance and to develop within them a passion to sustain Black Dance. As a Black Dance Artist, I am a strong advocate for the growth of Black Dance in the Black community and HDAT’s history and legacy will always encourage students, youth and teens to know the traditions and richness of the contributions of Black Dance and to look forward to creating their own legacy in the world of Black Dance and on and off the stage.

This has not been an easy journey, but if the HDAT’s of the world do not provide the Black dancers, Black supporting professionals and children, who look like me, opportunities to Dance and develop a cultural identity, a sense of purpose for the Art of Black Dance and an audience that is comfortable with seeing Black dancers as the rule and not the exception, who will.

This is what HDAT’s history, mission, vision and narrative has been and will continue to be as long as God allows me to get up and come to this amazing work called Hill Dance Academy Theatre (HDAT). For more information, visit: www.5678hdat.org.

First and foremost, HDAT’s teaching artists are a black women dance artists. Yes, this 10 year anniversary is strategizing and positioning HDAT to have a permanent location in the District that will provide us with the ability, nutrition, space and resources to continue to build and expand Black dance that the Arts for years to come. We have had a number of challenges but for me until we can get a permanent location that we can grow in this is a top priority.

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BLACK HOLLYWOOD TASK FORCE FORMED AFTER SONY HACK

BY LYNETTE HOLLOWAY

After Sony's embarrassing email hacking scandal laid bare Hollywood's deep-seated race problems, civil rights leaders have formed a diversity committee to address the issue, "Deadline" reports.

The group has met three times to develop a set of recommendations it plans to present to Sony Pictures Entertainment co-chairman Amy Pascal later this month, the report notes. Pascal came under fire for racially insensitive email exchanges that emerged after a cyber-attack on the company late last year. "Deadline" reports:

"The task force was created with the express goal of combating the lack of black meaningful content in the entertainment industry," said task force member Jean Claude LaMarre, a producer and director whose film "Chocolate City" is a dearth of African-American executives.

Pascal and producer Scott Rudin have apologized for an e-mail exchange that included racially insensitive jokes about what Black movies and actors President Barack Obama might like, guessing that the list would include actor/comedian Kevin Hart. Both have apologized, but clearly civil rights leaders said their apologies do not go far enough:

"Kevin Hart comedies (produced by Sony label Screen Gems) are great, but if even the chairman of the company is laughing at them, there's an issue," LaMarre said. "There isn't a single senior VP or president of a major studio who is of African-American descent."

LaMarre says task force goals include getting Hollywood to nurture and develop African American talent both in front of and behind the screen, and to create more substantive programming with African American themes, the site reports. No comment yet from Sony.

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"There isn't a single senior VP or president of a major studio who is of African-American descent."

On Dec. 17, 2014 at the beautiful Omni William Penn Hotel grand ballroom, the Pittsburgh Chapter of Jack and Jill of America Inc. presented 14 highly accomplished teens to Pittsburgh. The Presentation Ball, this year benefiting Healthy Start, is the culmination of months of leadership workshops, service projects, and dance and etiquette rehearsals. With Charlie Batch and Latasha Wilson-Batch as Grand Marshals, and Janine Macklin and Charena Swann as Ball co-chairs, the following teens were presented to society: Dorian Jamal Anderson, Ashley Michelle Bridges, Candace Nicole Burgess, Dawson Lee Davis, Madison Danielle Taylor, Margaux Blair Wilson, Madison Nicole Morrissey, Darien Renee Hopkins, Wesley Alan Johnson, Joel P. Macklin, L. Braxton Swann, Ashlyn Ella Thompson, Martha Elise Yanders and Madison McKenzie Ware.

The young ladies were stunning in striking white ball gowns and the young men in elegant white tails. Carlotta Burgess, Pittsburgh Chapter president, said she wants to applaud and rejoice with the presentees and their families for the long period of preparation. "Your achievements are the reason for this celebration."

The Pittsburgh Chapter was organized in 1944, as the fourth chapter of Jack and Jill of America Incorporated and was integral in the development of a plan for the national organization and its incorporation in 1946. Joining in the 2014 Pittsburgh celebration were Jack and Jill of America Inc. National President Tammy King and Eastern Regional Director Joi M. Grady.

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In releasing its "Pittsburgh's Racial Demographics 2015: Differences and Disparities" report, University of Pittsburgh School of Social Work Dean Larry Davis said the major finding is that the disparities the school's Center on Race and Social Problems reported in 2007 still exist.

"This comes when disparities are taking center stage in national political discussions. These disparities affect every aspect of our lives," he said.

"Seven years ago, when we released our first report, it was used by foundations and schools, and served as a valuable resource. Relatively little change has occurred in quality of life in Pittsburgh, and the area continues to show major disparities."

The report covers the same seven areas as the 2007 report: population diversity; families, youth and elderly; education disparities; economic disparities; interracial group disparities; health and mental health, and criminal justice.

Ralph Bangs, the longtime center researcher who retired Dec. 31, joined Davis for the report presentation, announcing the data on educational and economic disparities. He noted that the report used the most recent data available (2011-2012) where possible, but some due to sample sizes, used a five-year average.

On education, he pointed out that preschool enrollment for Blacks is the lowest among the racial groups reported, the others being White, Asian and Hispanic. The same held true for private school enrollment, with Whites and Asians at much higher rates. Not surprisingly, those groups had higher incomes, and much greater wealth.

"If you look at reading and math scores, Whites are mostly graded 'proficient,' he said. "Asians and Hispanics have the disadvantage of speaking a different language at home, yet Black students still have a lower level of proficiency."

The economic data showed two to three times as many Blacks in poverty here as Whites, and live in more densely segregated communities than either Asians or Hispanics.

"So you have concentrations of poverty, which leads to bad neighborhoods, higher crime and poorer schools," said Bangs. "But there is no substantial change. The major finding is that these disparities continue to be a major problem."

One of the more telling bits of data was presented by researcher Sara Berg, who noted the typical White student in the Pittsburgh Area goes to a school that is not percent White and the majority of students are not poor.

"The typical Black student goes to a school where half the students are Black and the majority of students are poor," she said.

Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, who along with Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto attended the report presentation, asked if there were any trends that showed up. Bangs said the report was only that, it contained no analysis or recommendations and that seeing a trend would require even more current data.

Davis said the report is for others to use.

"When we started this center I said our number one purpose is to be useful, to take information and put it in the hands of those who can use it," he said. Peduto said at least it could be used to establish a baseline, especially with respect to affordable housing policy he wants to craft.

"It shows there's a problem that's been a problem and it has the data we can use as a starting point," he said. "I'm putting together a housing policy committee and asking (Councilman) Danny Lavelle to chair it. He's been on this issue for a while and it makes sense to have him lead it."
eleven years ago on a beautiful Saturday afternoon my soon-to-be husband and I stood hand-in-hand before God, our pastor and 200 of our friends and family at our wedding ceremony and confessed, in unison, one very important truth. As my knees trembled under my long white lacey gown and tears dripped from his smiling face, we looked deeply into each other’s eyes and repeated these words: “What you see is what you get.”

It wasn’t something we planned to admit on our wedding day. It wasn’t something we expected the pastor to require us to say, but I believe it was a simple truth that placed us on a matrimonial journey paved by our faith in God instead of our own desires. Even after months of deciding between wedding gowns, invitations and honeymoon destinations, it was clear, in that moment, that what we needed most to build a strong relationship was less about the fleeting joys of a wedding and more about acceptance.

Acceptance is a person’s belief in the reality of a situation without attempting to change it. Acceptance is a choice – one that exemplifies the power of forgiveness. It eradicates our right to judge what we believe is different and it gives credence to our ability to build a life together based on honesty instead of fantasy.

Relationships with acceptance at its core are often fundamentally sound. The act of seeing a person or a situation for whom or what it really is perpetuates real growth and understanding. The Bible teaches us that as believers in Christ we are completely accepted. Through the embodiment of God’s Word, we are equipped with the authority to look beyond the complexities that change can bring to find contentment and joy.

Author and spiritual leader, Eckhart Tolle, defines acceptance as a “this is it” response to anything occurring in any moment of life… it means that, in the now, we acknowledge and accept our circumstances, including ourselves and the people in our lives, as we and they are. What started out as an unusual confession to make during our wedding vows has helped us build a stronger bond. We have learned that the composition of life will never be a perfect orchestra. People will change. How we love and see those we love will change. These things are inevitable. But the strength to stay together, through the good and bad times, is often found in the love, peace and serenity of knowing that we can be our authentic selves.

Employing the act of acceptance reiterates to those we love that we will be there for them no matter what they are faced with. And although marriage will always require us to compromise, starting a life together based on honesty, understanding and acceptance allows us to be better positioned to have a strong and viable connection.

“O God, give us the serenity to accept what cannot be changed, The courage to change what can be changed, and the wisdom to know the one from the other.” -REINHOLD NIEBUHR, AMERICAN THEOLOGIAN
Mind-Body Connection for Weight Loss, Part I

The GUT ISSUE

Mind and the Gut

Have you ever had a “gut-wrenching” experience or felt “butterflies” in your stomach? The brain has a direct effect on the stomach. This connection goes both ways. A troubled intestine can send signals to the brain, just as a troubled brain can send signals to the gut. Therefore, a person’s stomach or intestinal distress can be the cause or the product of anxiety, stress, or depression, and what do people do when they’re feeling stressed or depressed? Overeat and become less active, which equals to weight gain!

But, what causes intestinal issues?

Eating a lot of processed foods.

Processed food compromises the bacteria in the gut because these foods, in general, will destroy healthy micro-flora and feed bad bacteria and yeast.

Antibiotics from medication, meats and poultry. Though antibiotics kill off bad bacteria, they also kill the good bacteria that our body is made up of, which is over one trillion.

Chlorinated water, Antibacterial soap, Agricultural chemicals, and Pollution.

What studies say?

Studies have repeatedly demonstrated that the makeup of your intestinal flora can have an impact on your weight. A 2010 study found that obese individuals had about 20 percent more of a family of bacteria known as firmicutes, and almost 90 percent less of a bacteria called bacteroidetes than lean people.

Firmicutes help your body to extract calories from complex sugars and deposit those calories in fat. When these microbes were transplanted into normal-weight mice, those mice started to gain twice as much fat. This is one explanation for how the micro-flora in your gut may affect your weight.

Solutions

Decrease stress.

Dietary. Eliminate processed foods, and be aware of any food allergies or intolerances

Environmental Stress. Decrease usage of chemical products.

People. there are individuals in your life that you know you have to cut out.

Solace. Make time to pray, meditate, relax and regroup

Take Probiotics. A study from 2010 showed that obese people were able to reduce their abdominal fat by nearly 5% and their subcutaneous fat by over 7%, just by drinking a probiotic-rich fermented milk beverage for 12 weeks, while the controlled group experienced no significant fat reductions at all.

Probiotics have also been found to benefit metabolic syndrome, which often goes hand-in-hand with obesity. A probiotic supplement can be incredibly useful to help maintain a well-functioning digestive system when you stray from your healthy diet and consume excess grains or sugar, or if you have to take antibiotics

Eat fermented or live cultured foods. Cultured foods like raw milk yogurt and kefir, some cheeses, and fermented vegetables are good sources of natural, healthy bacteria.

In the next article, I will discuss how anxiety and stress affects our hormones when it comes to weight loss. Until next time, keep a positive attitude and stay committed to focusing on a healthier and happier you this year!

Camille Clarke is an IFBB Figure Pro, Fitness Model, Nutristylist and owner of Camille’s Fitness Inc. Camille holds an MS in Exercise Physiology and is currently certified through ISSA, ACSM and NASM. Camille’s experience as an obese adolescent weighing in at 283lbs gives her a firsthand understanding of those who struggle with weight loss. Camille’s quest to change her health and appearance has pushed her to motivate, inspire and educate others to do the same!

Website: camillesfitness.com
Instagram: camillesfitness
Facebook: Camille Clarke NPC Figure
Twitter: CamilleFitness

I always say, “mental fatigue is worse than physical fatigue.” When you’re physically fatigued you can still push through, but when you’re mentally fatigued you might as well just forget about whatever you have planned. Your mind is so powerful, and it controls more than you think when it comes to weight loss. In the next couple of articles, I will break down how the mind impacts a different process in our body that can inhibit weight loss. In this issue, I will be focusing on the connection between Mind and Gut, and how it can be stalling your weight loss and fitness goals.
New Year’s Resolutions are easier to make than to keep, especially when it comes to dieting. While life can often seem at odds with your health and fitness goals, there are plenty of ways to avoid common pitfalls this New Year and stay on the weight loss track.

SNACK AND DRINK SMART: When you’re on-the-go, easy protein-packed snacks will help you stay on track. Try beef jerky, low-fat string cheese, or 100 calorie packs of almonds. Fiber-rich whole-grains, fruits and vegetables can also help keep hunger at bay.

Calories from drinks add up fast. Stick to water and dry wines, as they often have fewer calories than sweeter varieties. Light ales, lagers, and�rês with 1.5 oz. of spirits. Look for programs that help you stick to your goals by offering convenience and support. For example, Nutrisystem helps with the hard part—the counting, weighing and measuring—by offering pre-portioned and personalized meal plans designed to fuel individuals with the right amount of calories for how their metabolism burns, as well as satisfy individual taste. And with their Fast 5+ kit, you can jumpstart your weight loss, since it promises to help you lose five pounds plus an inch off your waist in your first week of dieting. You’ll see results quickly, giving you motivation to keep going.

There’s no better time than now to start your weight loss journey and make your pledge to lose. To learn more, visit www.Nutrisystem.com or the Nutrisystem Facebook page to #pledgetolose today.

EAT OUT, RIGHT: Eating out is sometimes unavoidable. Just be sure to check out a restaurant’s nutrition information online before you go, so you can make wise choices. Make substitutions like salad, with dressing on the side, instead of fries and don’t be afraid to ask if a menu item can be modified. Also, be mindful of portion sizes. Take half your meal home and enjoy it for tomorrow’s lunch.

FACING THE SCALE: Weight fluctuates throughout the day. Weigh yourself at the same time of day in similar weight clothing to get the most accurate readings. Remember though, the number on the scale won’t always reflect your hard work. Focus instead on healthy, positive changes and how you feel.

AIM FOR 30: Squeeze 30 minutes of activity into your day. Walk during lunch, jump rope during your favorite nightly TV show or turn on music and dance around the house. Remember, everyone falls off the wagon from time to time, but the New Year is the perfect time to commit to your weight loss goals.

(StatePoint)
During the month of February, Americans see the human heart as the symbol of love. February is American Heart Month, a time to show yourself the love. Learn about your risks for heart disease and stroke and stay “heart healthy” for yourself and your loved ones.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD)—including heart disease, stroke, and high blood pressure—is the number 1 killer of women and men in the United States. It is a leading cause of disability, preventing Americans from working and enjoying family activities. CVD costs the United States over $300 billion each year, including the cost of health care services, medications, and lost productivity.

TAKE IT ONE STEP AT A TIME
You can control a number of risk factors for CVD, including:
• Diet
• Physical activity
• Tobacco use
• Obesity
• High blood pressure
• High blood cholesterol
• Diabetes

As you begin your journey to better heart health that can last a lifetime, keep these things in mind:

TRY NOT TO BECOME OVERWHELMED. Every step brings you closer to a healthier heart, and every healthy choice makes a difference!

PARTNER UP. The journey is more fun—and often more successful—when you have company. Ask friends and family to join you.

DON’T GET DISCOURAGED. You may not be able to take all of the steps at one time. Get a good night’s sleep—also important for a healthy heart—and do what you can tomorrow.

REWARD YOURSELF. Find fun things to do to decrease your stress. Round up some colleagues for a lunchtime walk, join a singing group, or have a healthy dinner with your family or friends.

SOURCE: CDC.GOV/FEATURES/HEARTMONTH

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SOURCE: CDC.GOV/FEATURES/HEARTMONTH
Most fans of sports teams are more familiar with the nicknames of a team than the city that they represent. It is easy to identify the major Pittsburgh teams: Steelers, Pirates, Penguins and Panthers, but what about the New England Patriots or the NBA’s Golden State Warriors? Have you heard of the Minnesota Vikings, Twins Wild or Gophers? Do you know the cities where these college football teams play?

The New England Patriots are in Foxboro (near Boston) Massachusetts, the Golden State Warriors are in San Francisco, and all of the Minnesota teams are in Minneapolis. What about the New York Jets and Giants? These teams are actually in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

The Washington Redskins? Landover, Maryland.

Nicknames are usually something fancy to get the attention of the supporters, and serve as a nod to the team’s city. The Steelers for example, speak to the Steel industry; the Baltimore Ravens reflect poet and Baltimore native Edgar Allen Poe and his famous poem: The Raven. Baltimore’s other team; the Orioles symbolize the state bird (as does the New Orleans Pelicans). The New England Patriots remind us of the soldiers of the Revolutionary War. And the Los Angeles Lakers’ name points to the 10,000 lakes in…Minneapolis Minnesota; the team played in that city from 1947-60.

**WHY THE ARIZONA CARDINALS ARE CALLED “PITTSBURGH WEST”**

BY RAY PORTER JR.

In the NFL there is a team with a peculiar nickname that is associated to the Steelers in a unique way, and that team is the Arizona Cardinals. They are called “Pittsburgh West.” The Cardinals’ name derived in 1988 when Chicago painting and building contractor Chris O’Brien established an amateur Chicago-based athletic club football team named the Morgan Athletic Club. O’Brien later moved them to Chicago’s Normal Park and renamed them the Racine Normals because Normal Park was located on Racine Avenue. In 1901, O’Brien bought used maroon uniforms from the University of Chicago; the colors had faded. “That’s not maroon,” O’Brien exclaimed, “it’s cardinal red!” The team changed its name to the Racine Cardinals.

The Cardinals relocated to St. Louis in 1960, and then moved to Phoenix in 1988, where they reside now.

But why are they also called “Pittsburgh West”?

The past several years, this team has inherited lots of former Steelers players and coaches. Most are in the twilight of their careers and usually retire from there. Some names you may know are: LB Larry Foote (current), LBs Joey Porter, Clark Haggins, cornerbacks Deshea Townsend, William Gay, Bryant McFadden and Crezdon Butler, DT Nick Eason, TE Jerame Tuman, FB Dan Krieder, RBs Rashard Mendenhall and Jonathan Dwyer, G Alan Faneca and C Chucky Okobi. And the Steelers actually signed 5 players from the Cardinals: Re-acquiring McFadden and re-signing Gay and trading for T Levi Brown, and hiring former offensive coordinator Todd Haley as their offensive coordinator.

In 2007, former Steelers offensive Coordinator Ken Wisenhunt became the Cardinals head coach, and he took former offensive line coach Russ Grimm with him along with former special teams coach Kevin Spencer, former LB coach Matt Raich and former defensive backs coach Ray Horton with him. After the 2012 season, Wisenhunt was fired and the Cardinals hired another former Steelers offensive coordinator - Bruce Arians, and along with Foote, Mendenhall (who retired in 2013) and Dwyer, he added former Steelers offensive line coaches Larry Zierlein and Harold Goodwin, former special teams coach Amos Jones, and former Steelers DT Brettson Buckner is his defensive line coach. Prior to that Hall of Famer Joe Greene was the Cardinals defensive line coach from 1987-2009.

The special moment between the two teams was Super Bowl 43 in 2009, this match which set as rivals Wisenhunt against current Steelers HC Mike Tomlin. The Steelers came out victorious with a score of 27-23 in that game.

There may be other teams with similar connections, but they certainly don’t compare to what the Cardinals and Steelers have, that’s what’s makes a nickname so special.

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Merecedes J. Howze, 26, started Movie Scene Queen last January to share her thoughts about the latest movie happenings with fellow movie lovers. She’s studied journalism at Clark Atlanta University and Duquesne University, while practicing the discipline for nearly a decade. The New Pittsburgh Courier named her one of their Fab 40, Under 40 recipients in 2013 for her vast volunteering endeavors, while being the single mother of two young children and maintaining her post as a project coordinator with the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Dozens of films have been created to depict the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., but none have been as riveting and piercing as Selma. In delicate detail, the movie highlights the three 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches which ultimately led to the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act. The movie also resurfaces sensitive topics like Dr. King’s marital infidelity, FBI wire tapings, intimidation tactics, and the initial resistance from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).

Directed by Ava DuVernay, Selma has a teeming lineup including David Oyelowo, Oprah Winfrey, Carmen Ejogo, Tom Wilkinson, Tim Roth, Common, Lorraine Toussaint, and Cuba Gooding Jr. Oyelowo and Ejogo were spitting images of the Nobel Peace Prize recipient and his late wife. From voice to posture to presentation, the pair of near impersonators provide for the most compelling potions of the film. Their lonesome moments together on screen echo a true depiction of one of the greatest marital unions of all time. Additionally, some of Selma’s reenactments of notable moments in history are are able to provoke a visceral and physical response—causing your whole body to shake in disbelief. For example, the the bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church and subsequent deaths of four little girls is one of the country’s most heinous crimes. We all ought to be familiar with the tragedy. However, for some reason, when DuVernay gives her rendition of the bombing it takes cinematic recreation to a whole new level.
MOUNT ARARAT COUNSELING CENTER

OVERVIEW
The Mount Ararat Counseling Center (MACC) is designed to fill the gaps identified in both the Church and in the greater Pittsburgh community by providing affordable and accessible services as well as trained licensed mental health professionals who incorporate culturally sensitive and culturally appropriate counseling services that include spiritual, Christian and faith-based interventions.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES
MACC’s approach to addressing client needs integrates spiritual, Christian, ethical and religious values. It is MACC’s belief that the infusion of these elements into the counseling process is essential for the overall development of those that will be served. Another goal of MACC includes providing Christian-based psychological and emotional support, as well as social services to clients, who may or may not be members of Mount Ararat Baptist Church (MABC), but who are in need of professional guidance and advocacy in dealing with issues that may prevent effective and responsible conduct of their daily lives.

TARGET POPULATIONS
The target clientele for MACC are individuals, couples, families, and groups across the lifespan (i.e., children, adolescents, adults and older adults). MACC will be targeted to members of MABC, to other church congregations, to members of the East Liberty area of Pittsburgh, and to members of the greater Pittsburgh Community.

COMMON CONCERNS ADDRESSED BY MACC
Depression; Anxiety; Stress; Abuse; Crisis Support; Relationship Issues; Grief; Death & Loss; Self-Esteem; Alcohol & Substance Abuse; Identity Development; Career Planning & Development; Anger; Life Skills; Deficits; Retirement.

MACC STAFF
Trained professional or clinicians (i.e., licensed or masters-level) with diverse qualifications and backgrounds, including professional counseling, marriage, couple and family therapy, psychology, pastoral counseling and counseling psychology, conduct the Mount Ararat Counseling Center (MACC) counseling sessions. Some counseling services may be provided by qualified students enrolled in masters-level and doctoral degree programs under the supervision of MACC licensed mental health professionals and faculty members or doctoral interns who are licensed mental health professionals.

INSURANCE & FEES
Highmark, UPMC, and Community Care Behavior Health (CCBH) insurance companies cover MACC’s services, and we also offer fee-for-service and sliding scale for those who may not have insurance and/or may have difficulty paying. In extreme cases of financial hardships and lack of insurance, pro-bono assistance may be available. Please contact MACC for further information on the rates for counseling services.

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