Book Announcement and ACEs Introduction

Hey, you guys, it's me, Dr. Tori. My book is officially out. And yes, It is time to talk about ACEs. You guys can find the books everywhere. However, I would encourage you, guys to go to my website, bevictorious.com and place your order today.

Yes, its time, to, talk, about, ACE's. Let's go, y'all. Hello, hello, Hello you. Welcome to another episode of, Y'all know what it is, it's be victorious.

We have an amazing guest, you guys. Let me tell you, I've been knowing this young man for a very, very long time. When I mean a long term, we gonna let 98, 99 had his conversation, let's to be clear.

That's number one. Number two, when I'm mean podcasting, what I meant conversation when mean experiences, You really wanna talk to a grown man. because when you talk to men, men will provide what they need to give you what you need in order to answer whatever questions.

And you to check out this podcast, y'all. It's Growing Man, and when I tell you it is a great podcast. Do yall know, it's about a thousand videos out there.

So when you have questions, concerns, real life discussions and conversations, these are the people that you need to talk to and get in contact with on podcasting because the information is out there.

But I think what I really love as a family woman. is the fact that there is a podcast for family. If you're going to podcast, include your family and this is what I love about doing too much.

I have met his wonderful wife through social media, through podcasting, I can't wait to meet her in person.

Introducing the Guest and Podcast Background

The fact they have a Podcast where they had that conversation about everyday conversations. They've been doing this, you guys, for a while. So to have this young man here, one of my brothers is humbling.

And John, Mr. Nine-Nine, that's what I call him. Where are you? Hey, hey! There he goes! What's up, Nine Nine? How you doing, young lady? Oh, my young lady.

Of course you already know I am wonderful and blessed to have you on my podcast. We've had this conversation for a while. And I want to share with my audience.

Honestly, when we talked about podcasting, you were very inspiring. You already have been out here since 2008. No, no way. So I wish. actually I was introduced to podcasting in 2020. I did that YouTube channel was just created because that's when I actually started.

So yeah, I've been podcast since 2020, but we actually really did start podcast and around the same time. Absolutely. Cause I remember us, we started having a conversation about our passions and what we wanted to do.

And I'll be honest, here it is five years later and you are doing it. I appreciate that. I'm trying to get better every day. And you have, I love the podcast.

Now you had several podcasts and people have to understand and know it's okay. You can have more than one podcast, but I like how your podcast intertwines, if that makes sense, because you'll have a few of them.

Would you like to just share with us a little bit about grown man first? And then we can go into details about your

next podcast? Definitely. I'm growing man.

It's a play on words, it's spelled grown man, but the N is big. So the end is like exponential. There's so much room for growth. so it is called I am growing, man so I just using my past experiences to to present information where it's easy to digest for people that don't have any guidance.

And reason why I'm saying this is because I grew up in an environment where I only knew two people that had college degrees and I met them in high school.

And that was because it was a friend of mine on the basketball team, his parents. So I was not exposed to any type of education other than my father telling me, if I die today, what are you supposed to do?

He said, I'm supposed go to college, get a degree and get good job. In my head, that's the maximum exposure I have to the college other then what I may see on TV.

I was just thinking about in 2020, when I first was introduced to this, I started a journey to kind of un-layer why my life was where it was. Now I do want to give a little background.

In 2020 I separated from my family. I lived in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates in the Middle East about an hour from Dubai. I was separated and nothing was wrong other than I financially ignorant.

And when I say financially ignorant, I was in another country making the most money that I've ever made, traveling with my family. My wife wasn't working, my kids were going to international school, cost more than my undergraduate institution.

And in my head, and I'm living really well, wearing this 3,500 square foot flat that has windows to the ceiling on the beach. Right. The experiences by far are something that words probably won't justify, but I'm gonna do my best.

But I wanted, I just wanted to kind of present where I was as a man. I wasn't happy and I an assistant principal and, and then I lose my family. And when I say I lost my families because They changed the contracts and we couldn't figure out what we were gonna do.

And my wife was like, it's probably time for us to transition back to the United States. We kinda agreed, but I couldn' go back because I had a contract and I hadn't fulfilled it because we wanted the opportunity to still come back.

So I was away from them for a year and a half. In that year-and-a-half, probably in the first month, I experienced, I guess, a loneliness I had never experienced before in my life.

Growing Man and Personal Turning Point

I was, honestly, this was the first time I lived by myself outside of like two weeks, because I live with my family, and I got a college roommate, had a roommate.

And then me and my wife, well, we were cohabitating, raising our daughter, then I married. So I never ever by my self to have any type of reflection on how I got anywhere and was just kind of just moving through life.

So when my family left after that month. I just remember yelling out like what why are you also quiet back there. Nobody's in this house with me and. And I got quiet and I just was like, how did I lose my family?

And, I started to cry because I was, like me and lose they families all the time and, and i'm doing what I'm supposed to do. How did i lose? My family.

I realized I lost my, family because i was financially ignorant. i thought i, was going to be able to make that money and do that for the rest of my life, at least for long enough for me to figure it out.

But I wasn't putting enough, for a rainy day where my. Family and. Would ever be separated. So I'm going through like a mini depression. I've never experienced this before.

And while I am going though it, I got a friend that says, hey, man, you might be depressed. Now mind you, that's crazy. Actually happy. In my head, am super happy, but I wasn't because I was away from my family and I didn't realize how instrumental they were until they we're gone.

You know, want you to understand this part. This is probably, the main reason why I'm growing may exist. So when I am in there, I mean, in this apartment and I feel like, oh my God, lost my family.

Like, like I really lost him. We have intentions on coming back together. I just filling my contract out, but I was out of my own family and it was like a heartbreak.

that I've never experienced in life. And I was just like, I thought I doing the right things by leaving my family and I don't even know what I'm doing.

So when I felt this pain, this is what men must feel when they lose their family, and they can't get them back. I know a lot of people think men just move on, you can't just move on because if you're responsible for something, there's a part of an accountability within you that probably has not been said out loud.

And it was like, I don't want another man to feel like I felt. So I was, like… I need to push a message that was different from the one that led me to this one.

Right. When I looked at how financially ignorant I, was I like what else am I messing up on? So I started to like really dissect myself and I noticed like, I'll just give you an example.

I remember my wife used to say, you're too important to be drinking and driving. And I used be as arrogant as saying, I drive better when I'm under the influence.

Like I used to say things like this. I use to convince people, I don't know what I was doing, but I living reckless. And then this kind of made me realize my wife, if it wasn't for her having the patience and the grace for me to mature, would have been another example of a man who lost what everybody thought was a beautiful thing.

Being that I did lose them without losing them, I started to evaluate my time. Like, what am I doing with my times? Why am not getting money, like real money?

Like why am i not holding something? And I just started unlayering my life and I was like, I've cheated my way to this point. I got all the way Abu Dhabi with family because I had some degrees, some experience, i was black and i knew how to work well with others.

But I wasn't able to get to the next level. I wasn't as polished, and I would just beat myself up. Like, you know, people say, You shouldn't beat yourself up, And I'm like, well, if I don't do it, nobody else was doing it up until this point, I need to do something to put myself in a position where I could be as important as I believe I am.

And then I realized my routine was so It was so simple. And then I started to, this is the benefit of being a Q, living in multiple states and now countries, being amazing.

Going to Michigan State, going to University of Central Florida. And I'm just naming these things out so you can see what type of groups I mean, where I can the different conversations that I am having that are aligned with what men think.

A lot of men, sometimes men get mad at me because they think I'll be beating us up. I don't mean to, I just want them, to feel like I feel. Because I've never met a man who cheated on his wife to ruin the family, but it's it happens on an everyday basis and When I decided to do I'm growing man, I was like what can I do to make it easier for men to mature into the man I'm trying to become?

I've never met a man that said, I want to remain immature my whole life. And they ruined everything. A lot of men don't know that they become different people.

What's the worst part about this? Men die early, in my opinion, because they realized that their family was able to prosper without their day-to-day interaction.

They were not as important as they thought they were. Like, I don't believe in co-parenting in different households. That's another conversation. Yeah, oh, for sure, but I'm telling you why I grew up in Cane, because I didn't know that my wife had me on a six-month time clock.

She was gonna leave me. I didn't even know it until after I had showed her that I was a different person, but I just kept thinking about like me raising my kids in two different households because I didn't mature.

My wife wanted this thing that I could not create because, I did not come from it. I came from a broken household. Uh, my mother left my father. So my Father raised us.

And I had a very skewed view on how life was supposed to be. For me to being there, I have to somehow figure out how to become better. And that's when I said, I'm going to work on communication.

I was like, if I could communicate effectively, maybe people won't misunderstand me, including my wife. You know, and I used to tell her, you married me.

Do you already know how I am? Why would I change? This is who I why is she trying to change me? This is who I am. And I'm like, I should have been thinking like I can be changing for the better.

and I think like she's trying change for me the worst, but it wasn't even for worst. It was just, afraid of being uncomfortable because I was very comfortable with my skin even though it was not the best version of myself.

So that is the reason why I Am Growing Man came in because, wanted to be a voice where Mia could be like man, he made sense. yeah like like because at the end of the day you want to be like dang why didn't I think of that yeah that makes a lot of sense not like I'm gonna do it my way and then you mess up and it's like you got a whole generation of kids that have to go through the trauma of your ignorance as an adult and where I am now I was like i refuse to make any perpetuate mistakes and I know the outcome from it just because you haven't got caught does not mean that it is not creating this this fear of invincibility, like you could keep getting away with it.

Because when you do that, you impact so many people around you from your decision-making, but you don't know how important you are until you blow it up.

That's it? Then people gotta adjust and move on. And I refuse for me to move forward without being a better example for anybody who's watching me, because I was not the best example.

I lived a life that probably a lot of men wanted to live. And when I say that, I mean, like, take your family here. Like, my wife kept my family together.

I thought because we were doing these things, she never asked for that. But I felt like I could do what I wanted for the most part. Not saying directly I can do I want it.

but I was like what other man is doing this for their family? And this is what i'm thinking. So the blessing of not being able to like blow up this beautiful thing that I have today is the motivation for me to make sure that i can create more of a perspective for me to say, that's what I want to do.

I wanna end up like that when I'm almost 50, you know, like, cause a lot of my friends are going through divorces, already been divorced, two or three marriages, single, their single life is cold out there for men.

And especially at my age, because all the women I told my wife, All the women want to be where you are, but all

the men don't know how I feel for them to feel like this is probably where they should head toward.

Yep. So that is the mayhem. Sorry for that was so long. I love it. And I'm going to tell you why, because you're here because your a cycle breaker. That's why you here.

We're already doing the Psycho Breaker series. See, I need to bring powerful people like you here so people can understand, number one, they're not alone in their journey.

There's a lot of people that have been through what you've been though. However, we're here because we don't want people to experience that no more.

Cycle Breaking, ACEs, and Family Accountability

And let me connect it because when we did meet, we met in 2000 and we were both, I was going through a divorce. You were separated. It makes sense to me why we're here now because That's how I met the growing man.

I meant you when you were a growing, you weren't going in through your situation. The whole conversation, I remember everything. And this is something that we wanted to do.

We wanted it to implement change. Also introduced you guys to adverse childhood experiences because the things that you just discussed. That's what it is.

And the problem is we don't know about it because we normalize it. So everything that you just talked about is what we do in our communities. We normalise separation, co-parenting, that type of thing.

Not to say that there's anything wrong with it, you guys, but under the ACES categories, household dysfunction, is what that is. But what you did as you grew and what I love about you so much is that you humbled yourself and admitted it like, listen, this is, what happened.

So you didn't do anything but just tell your story. Congratulations. That's what we encourage on our podcast. We want people to understand that. You're not alone in your journey, especially after you understand ACEs, but you are really a cycle breaker because that's where they're doing too much comes from.

Be clear, you guys. Wake up, wake up. We're psycho breakers. That's our connection. Yeah, that's my brother. He a Q. But we representing psycho breaking right now.

Let's be clear because we don't want people to go through what we went through. I'm still single. Sure, but when I had my kid, my kids changed my life.

But I will say with understanding unresolved childhood trauma, that's what led me to who I am. So I understand your story and I get it. And I just want people to understand that you are not alone in your journey.

Once you understand what your is and how much it means to you, That's when they become a person like you. I got to give you your props and let you know.

that I appreciated because at the end of the day, that's the reason why we're here. This safe space is for you to share your story. So thank you. You're more than welcome.

I do want to say, I believe every generation is a cycle breaker. Now it just depends on how much they want to break the cycle though. And they have to actually know that they're in the circle because I told my wife, I was like I'm doing way better than my father.

Like I've graduated from college. I have multiple degrees. We have a house, we're together. In my head, I'm already doing way better than my father so I didn't have to do much more.

What really broke it down was my Father was the lowest bar I could ever think about for the idea that for me to break the ceiling me being born broke the My job is to raise the ceiling so my kids would want the motivation to continue to rise it.

Because when you break something, it means it's broken. So I just want to make sure that whatever I'm raising up, I want show my kid that there's a process in getting better.

And my parents, they were just trying to provide a better life than them. That's not me and my wife's job anymore. Our job give them better information so that when we're no longer here, they don't need us.

When my father died or my mother's still here in my mind, educationally and experience wise, I've already passed them up. So they didn't give me the information I needed to be able to go if they did die.

Breaking the ceiling is however intentional you want to do it. But if you don't do on purpose, you're hoping for a miracle to happen. Come on. It's the truth.

And that's why he's here, you guys, because we need this awareness out here. You guys we are not alone in this journey. you just need to know who you are, understand your power and your purpose.

That's Why we Are Here. Now you talk about your wife so much and that is an amazing thing. I have heard about her so I'm looking forward to meeting her because I've been through the transition, let's be clear, and she is a force.

So I thank you, I love y'all podcasts together. Please tell us about doing too much. So it's pronounced, it is doing too much, but it spelled D-E-W, their initials.

It stands for does everything well. That's her nickname. When I was in college, I used to call her honeydew. And as we matured in our relationship, by just started calling her dew.

and I just thought that like her life, the things that she puts effort in, she does, everything. Well, like whether it was parenting, being a wife, any job she's done, she always excelled.

So her nickname was Dew, and then my entire life was John is always too much. He's always extra. I combined her name and what I always heard throughout my life, was doing too.

It was a play on us with us doing a whole lot. And I just thought about this recently, because I do want to say our podcast did come to an end. Yeah, because she doesn't really want to be in a public view.

She feels like she don't want be judged for making any mistakes or anything like that. Now, when we originally started, we wanted to a voice to help young people that were thinking about relationships to have a better perspective on approaching it.

Because we had determined that if we were mature, entertained each other. You know, we kind of grew into these people and I'm blessed. I want to say like she is the only person that I ever wanted to be with as a family like period and but I robbed her of that because she didn't, her ACEs test was kind of bad too.

So she couldn't recognize the riffraff I was. And when I say riffrap, I meant like I reminded her of her father in ways that attracted her. This is where I'm saying this, the podcast was wonderful because we did learn so much more.

But learning the person I wasn't attracted to her, attracted She, it was kind of like a, she wanted the best of both worlds. She wanted this guy who was arrogant, got this ego, and people generally attracts to him, but she didn't want all the stuff that came with this person.

And I was bigger than life throughout my life. I wanted to be seen and I wasn't willing to do whatever to being seen, whether it's throwing people under the bus, making fun of people, whatever.

I just wanted I wanted everybody to have a good time, but I want it to be the orchestrator of it all. So when we decided to do the podcast, it was like.

She she she told me in the last year or so, she's like, I never thought we would last this long doing the podcasts because I didn't think you were that serious.

But she tell me that she wanted to end it because she hates being judged. And she was like, people are judging me for being a parent of an 18 and a 16-year-old.

This is my first time. So I'm sharing my experience, not for you guys to tell me what I did wrong, but so that you understand the result. She didn't even look at the comments.

It was me telling her or other people saying, and I was you know I just I want you to know like it's okay because at least people are talking about it exactly that's all we wanted but it was hurting it.

Was bothering her too much and we decided to stop it like the last one was on our anniversary. It was the 52 episodes But we did one a week for four years.

And on our anniversary, we got to get our last one. But overall, it wasn't the end, because the conversations are timeless. It wasn' like we were talking about whatever was happening today.

it was like as parenting, as partners, a relationship, like why people failed in the beginning. Like it's timeless information. So we're not really worried about that.

It started out just because we wanted to be a voice of reason for people that were interested in trying to create a beautiful thing with somebody. And what we learned though is that most people don't know how to approach a relationship.

They're willing to pass red flags to change your behavior after they get them. Yep. I'm one of those people. Well, and it's not your fault, but it your thought if you remain that person.

Doing Too Much Podcast and Relationship Growth

That's healthy for anybody. And the only reason why you were like that is because of whatever behaviors you may have thought was okay, or maybe you couldn't establish boundaries to know what you are willing to tolerate.

If you don't know those things, it is easy to see the good in people who have horrible behaviors. Exactly. It's called unresolved childhood trauma. I had it.

You know what I mean? That's why I said I. Everybody does. No matter how good your life is, if you have not unlaired your childhood, you're a different person because you haven't unlayered it, like when you un-layer your trauma, You realize the person you've been protecting the whole time.

Yep. Correct. And until you unheal, that's what happens. So that what happened, like how you said, when you and wife met at college, and then you grew.

Yeah, I grew together, but then that apart is how understood that you had that depression. You know what I mean? Of course we not gonna put a name to it because we don't know it is.

And then you started and decided to grow. And here. So I want to say this, like, because I don't want people to get. I always thought I was growing. Like, I'm the most optimistic person I've ever met.

Even before I went on this journey, like, always used to say, make today better than yesterday. And I didn't realize I just saying those things. I wasn't intentionally trying to make to day better then yesterday, was hoping that something was going to be make it better.

Faith without work is dead. If you don't do anything, Nothing is supposed to change, just like the insanity thing, doing the same thing hoping something's gonna change.

And to me, she gave me time to mature. Like when I say that, I mean, time enough to compliment what she's been doing this entire time. because in my head I thought I was, I used to tell her, you're not gonna find another man better than me.

It's impossible because, in head, whatever she used tell me to do, In my was doing it. I use to ask her. Hey, what can I do better? Are you okay? I should do that all the time.

She'll tell you, she's like, he did do it, but I still was not fulfilling something that she needed because she couldn't even describe it or I couldn't receive it because I thought I was doing enough.

Right. So like a lot of times men. We're just ignorant, you know what I'm saying? If women knew what a man looked like, they would make less mistakes.

And if men knew how to be a men, relationships would develop and go further or they wouldn't create a relationship with somebody just because they look good or look on paper.

In order to have an awesome relationship in the beginning is to as many conversations as possible to determine if you even want to tolerate with this person after you do some adult activities.

A lot of times, we really feel like we can change this. When you can, but they got to be willing to change too. I'm glad you're speaking on it, because honestly, it's my story.

And when I share with people now, this is the reason why I also encourage therapy. Because if it wasn't for therapy, that also helps me heal. That also helped me understand.

Because for me, and I'm sharing with you, my brother, I am sharing on my podcast for the first time, that was my situation. Because out in these streets, let's be clear, out here, not in a bad way, but out there I was single, no kids, enjoying life, you know what I mean?

Being good. But as soon as I found out I wasn't pregnant, nothing but the fact that I didn't see anything else. Like, oh my God. I don't even know if I had kids.

So then I look at this guy, not to say it like that, but he was just a guy. Real talk. And it was like, so I don't want you to think that I'm going to force a kid on you, But I think I was blessed, which you think.

It was, like yeah, I didn't see red flags, green flags blue flags. Nothing. I saw the kid. Then I started taking the steps from there to try to make it work.

When I will admit from the beginning, there was nothing but red from the beginning. I wasn't thinking about anything but the kid. And here it is, 18 years later, the key has graduated.

She's a psycho breaker. she's doing her thing. But in that story also came a divorce. And what I don't do, what people may believe, is blame him for everything when I have to take the accountability of knowing from the beginning there were red flags.

Red, red, like blazing. And I couldn't see nothing but let's make this right and do right for the kid, you know what i mean? My poor baby has been through so much, because of the decisions that we both made.

So I don't blame the divorce. I blame my unresolved childhood trauma because that's the accountability for being a cycle breaker. Let's be clear, I went to college, graduated, did my thing.

My parents didn't even graduate from high school. But when it came to making life decisions here, they are seeking

opinions and offering opinions. Y'all ain't even make it.

Yall was divorced. I mean, like, let's be clear. So I understand, trust me, what you're saying. And that's the reason why you are so powerful. You know what I'm mean?

Because your story resonates and it speaks volumes to who you. Let's cut the chase. We know what cues do. We'll say this to being a cue. I needed it. You know, like how they say, don't let the fraternity make you.

Like I came from a place where I really, in my mind, feel like I needed the fraternity to complete me. And I'll say that it didn't complete, but it feels so many parts of me that I didn' get the experience in youth of maybe family, maybe a sense of siblings, trying to correct you or what not.

Being that I've moved so many different places, I just want to say that the benefits of it, because I never realized how much anxiety being in my fraternity took away because I participated so much.

Being that I moved so many different places, one thing I didn't have to worry about was finding a friend or friend group. Like you're automatically gonna find a group of men that have similar attainments and then you'll find your group within that group, like if you not in this and you move, You have to have the audacity to go meet people and create relationships with strangers.

And I feel like that just takes a different type of energy that I never had to use. I'm grateful because I met some great men in my priority. Without it, I don't want to say I wouldn't be half as a man, but I think I would have been able to become this man as soon.

For sure. Yeah. And see, for me, my respect for my brothers come from that. So I will also share, you guys, when me and my brother met, we met on my Brother's helping me out, because I had to reach out to my Brothers.

I was hurt, and it was like, let me take care of my sister. And that was the one that introduced me to you. So you got to think about it. The words that you're saying speaks volumes.

What you are saying holds truth. We didn't let, let's be clear. Now I didn' t. I love Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated. Shout out to Zeta Lambda Chapter, Spring 1998. Hell, Let's Be Clear.

However, That I've always been me, just like you've been you. We let our organizations enhance us, but we didn't let them make us. But that also makes us psycho breakers too.

Because we all know that people come into the organization falling for the stereotype. Let's be clear. Absolutely. Well, we did do that. We're actually, as of right now, let's be clear since when we crossed, we make our organizations look good.

We have to understand who we are. And that's the reason why we're having this conversation, you guys. I'm sitting here talking to an educated black man who's a family man that has had experiences, that hasn't ACES score, but he's cycle breaker.

Congratulations, because at the end of the day, there's nothing wrong with sharing your story. I think that's the reason why I love your podcast. Some of the topics, I'd be cracking up laughing, let's be clear, but it's everyday things.

Therapy, Trauma, and Choosing Better Partners

And I believe you share these things, even though the podcast is not there anymore, it is always going to be a gem for me because of topics that you have discussed as a couple.

Real life experiences, the things again that we normalize, that people need to understand that it is actually okay. Because one in three have an ACEs score and that's what people don't know.

We got aces. Cut it out. There's nothing wrong with having it. It's the awareness and understanding that's what's going to help you heal. And so I have to introduce the world to you because look at where we are five years later, five year later.

No, time has really gone by. And you can share. He just shared a story y'all and that we didn't talk about the childhood and the right we don't do that yet.

And that's the interesting thing because I actually, I know. Sister don't want to go on the show, but I think we need to bring it out together. I'm going to be totally honest with you, because I thinks life needs to see what it looks like.

You know what I mean? That even when you do grow up in love, some people grow apart, and some do go together, so this is what cycle breaking is about.

This is where manhood is. And you an example to me, poster child, say what you want to say. We've been bonded not just through our organizations, but through all experiences, because they're relatable.

And how many people can bring their communities together and say that? So you got to think about this. This is bigger. Y'all, he is an educator too. So I said educated black men.

What are you doing now? Are you still teaching? I am, hopefully this is my last year in the classroom. I purposely went back in because I was just tired.

And I didn't want the, I guess the hoopla of administration as far as the time after school, because my kids are in high school and my daughter just graduated also, but they're in High School and I wanted to make sure I maximize as much time as possible because Making money now means nothing if I don't spend the time with them when I can, because they're gonna leave at some point.

And I, my biggest scare, not scare. My biggest concern at one point was, I learned that a lot of older people always say, hey, they gone before you know it.

Enjoy the moment, be present. I took that, I took that challenge as to do it every single day. And if my kids leave, well, when my kid's leave I'm not going to look back and say, hey, I did not try to purposely do every day, because I didn't want to feel like these older people that told me that this time was going fly by.

So to me I feel I've been as present as possible. Now my daughter's gone, my son is a junior. I'm right now the principal of summer school for the school that I work for.

And I've been asked to apply for some administration positions. So we'll see. Hopefully I'll be able to get back in. But I think I might do this. I don't want to put a number on it because every time I put it, something allows me to say, hey, stop putting your foot in your mouth and just enjoy the journey.

So I'm enjoying my stay in education right now. But the biggest thing I can say I got from this, going back in and being in a total different area, I can see what they need.

My eyes are a lot better because I've been in so many different districts from a teacher to administration. So I could see, what works and what doesn't.

I feel like I have these ideas that I create a structure where the school will succeed. In my mind, I felt like everything happens for a reason. to not only change the school, but my whole goal is to become, again, the most effective communicator ever by giving these kids a perspective that they wouldn't get because they're not going to meet another teacher with my credentials.

They're like, period. And I understand that. So it's my job to inspire these kid to do more than their parents can provide, even through stories and their experiences.

Like, my job is to push them as much as possible. Like being in education, you learn that school building is the safest place for any kid because that's the only place with as many adults that is there to help kids.

So I'm there, and I know how valuable I am. Why am I not trying to articulate it so they can be like, that what I want to do? Because even if they don't do it, it's going to be more than what they're exposed to.

My job is to really say it where they can be like, my life changed when Mr. Lewis planted this seed. And that's all he talks about. Like, I pushed this.

I'm a big advocate for effort. Effort changes results. If you don't do it on purpose, you're hoping for an accident. and if you are really important, You will believe it, not just me saying it.

No, it's the truth. I did that too. So being here in, I think when we, when I know when met, was moving from Chicago and I came down to Dallas. Those three years, in a public school district.

I was in district one, two and three. Imma say it like that. Cause I talk about it in my book. District one was a black woman principal, first year, intimidated.

Cut it. Number two was a charter school. So I was like, let me try something different. This man had no clue about special education. Cut first semester, I couldn't even stay.

The last one, the DEI hire brand new position, train everybody and get rid of me, it triggered my systemic racism. That's when I left in 2023 to start the podcast, but what I didn't do or what.

I missed and going to do education full time is everything that comes with it. The mentorship. Especially the mentorship, because that's something that.

as educators and teachers is a job description that we don't need to add. So that's the reason why Be Victorious exists because that is my teaching platform.

That's how I mentor. I can't get rid of my mentorship. They still call me every day and then I get the great thing, I got this job. And it's like, yay.

You know what I mean? Good job because how else am I going to do that? if I'm not in a school building, when I used to have kids come into the school, share their story about the experience of being in high school and what to do and whatnot to, and then go out there in life.

So that's the reason why Be Victorious is here, Be Victoria's Foundation, shall I say, because I could not get rid of that part. I couldn't. There was no way I can leave education and not do that.

so I am going to encourage, to be totally honest with you, as a summer school person and administrator, don't leave. And I'm going to tell you why, because I need you.

First off, we need educated Black men, period. Period, you are a mentor, a role model. You are all that and then some. They need to see you, they need continue to that.

And so don't leave just yet. I understand what you were saying, I had this opportunity being mom for my kids, and I didn't know how important it was. until now because I was high school so to do it as a mom oh it was so fun because i was able to go to the game so i understand what you're saying but i want to link it so you can understand those were adverse childhood experiences those activities is what shaped us and that's what changed our life.

So I would have my students, that's what I did my dissertation on. I do my, my disertation on the ACEs score and the impact on extracurricular activity, because extacurricula activity works.

It does. When you think about it, you said it four times, not saying it like that, but that extricuricular out activity is

what can help us heal. You're not thinking about anything when you're playing basketball.

And you are not thinkin' about anythin', when your running.

Education, Mentorship, and Staying in the Classroom

That depression is not there, and if it is, we're doing something before so we can finish or race to the end or do what we need to do to achieve our goal of winning or however we do it.

But when I tell you it has such an impact, there's research out there. When we go to that conference, you're going to see it, Because it is impactful.

Trust me when I say, you can't leave just yet. Not yet, give us, because we got work we gotta do. We got plans. Don't just leave yet because in the society that we're living in right now, where they're trying to reverse everything, we are needed.

I said I wasn't going to go back into education ever, but I still can because contractually in the district you get one contract. As Dr. Torrey, I've gotten several, so we can still get in.

Let's be clear, you can get still in, we could talk about that a little later really because right now I think you need it in schools, seriously. So I want to say this, um I wanna thank you for that too because the reason why I wanted To leave education because I thought I could dedicate more of my time into my craft really sharpen it but.

what you don't know about me working on communication, I get my practice at work. You know, you can convince a kid that they're important enough to change their behavior, it's working.

So when you say I'm needed in public education, needed education. I am, and I know this. And it was more so me just feeling like, the option of not going to work.

And I wanted to become so good at podcasting where I could be like, I don't have to do this. But regardless, when I do become that good, That was really important, and I appreciate that because it doesn't hurt me by being there.

I can take off if I don't need to be there, but me being here is important. So thank you. Yeah, that's physical. That's what they need. And I say that, because me, being a mom, I met all of my daughter's friends.

My seeds act just like me, bad, like personality the whole nine. And I had the opportunity because I was supporting them to meet their friends. So now their friend are attached and now they're friends are starting to talk and the friends is starting share stories.

I actually uncovered that their teacher that they all had that bond with isn't a racist She's been pushing the kids, I found this out there, my daughter's senior year, seriously.

That the push that the teacher was doing wasn't a push for the students, it was a pushed for her. You know what I mean? To make herself look good. Like, My daughter really almost missed prom because she had, she's in theater, so she was the theater kid, you know how theater is.

During prom season, it was the same weekend as a play competition. So I go to the teacher and I'm like, so we're not doing prom? Oh, and this is what she did.

She said, they can bring their dresses and get dressed after the competition, And I had to let the students know, let's be clear, y'all not working for them, They work for yall.

And I hate to say it, now my daughter did well and her team competed. She's stage manage. So she's not, she speared her, but she does the stage. Let's go.

I got my MBA with her. This is the first born. so I knew she was going to be a boss, let's be clear. As soon as I told her that and told the kids that, No, Shay.

The kids actually didn't do well. She did. Stage production won superior ratings and did what they had to do. But all the kids could think about is their experience at prom.

So no shade, I hate to say that, but they did not do well. They didn't do, well, they got to experience prom. That's an experience they'll never be able to forget for the rest of their lives.

Do I regret it? Nope. You know why? Because why would you think about it when you about going back? Well, what did you do your senior year for prom? I didn' go.

I was competing for school. Well you know, when I hear that What if somebody wanted to really do that? Like everybody don't look at prom the same way.

And the ones that did, did. I will say that. The ones went in and competitively competed, they did it. They were the one that went to Indiana State a couple of weeks ago and qualified.

they were national qualifiers for the national thespian. So they qualified individually. But it was also uncovered in Revere during that trip that it what the kids said it racism.

I was triggered bad. When I mean triggered, bad, I would trigger pretty bad I just wondered like here, like why do you think is racism though? It's racism because she was, number one, she very passive aggressive, the way she talks to the kid.

Number one the decisions that she made. Like say, for example, I'll give you an example. We went to New York. When we went New New york, the parents had to pay to chaperone.

They had teacher chapparones, of course, but the parent's because they needed us parents chapperoned. Day one, i had all the kids. I thought it was fun at first until I realized I had 16 kids and the teachers who were a different color, kicked it.

This wasn't a trip for them to go and kick it in New York. They were supposed to be chaperoning. And so when I brought it to the attention, because again, they thought I was just a parent.

They didn't know I wasn't an educator. they didn' know i knew the rules. When you're on field trips out of town anywhere, it's supposed to be two kids or three kids max with the chaperone.

Like they don't I knew those type of things. And when I talked to the teachers, not the teacher, the parents in the past, They were happy to see me because this is what they were doing to their parents.

Now let's be clear. The black kids are going to go with black parents because These are white teachers. But I also saw that these teachers, they don't want them at all.

I watched it. We were at the museum in New York, the biggest museum out here. And I had to walk up to teachers and say, hey, where's your students? Because I'm stuck here in this huge museum with 12 students.

So can I get y'all to shop around your kids, please? We also took a walk in Central Park, and when we took the walk and Central park, I noticed one of the students had to stop and pause.

And I was like, Hey, y'all, we waited for teachers to get coffee. We waited four teachers, to give water. But this young lady is having a seizure. Well, And i'm looking at the teacher who's in charge and I'm like so we're not gonna stop.

Can we stop like I understand we need to walk through central park but can we start she's having the seizure, she

looked at me and said her mama gather.

So me being me, I asked the mother you okay she was like i'm used to this, this is what they do all the time, This is the reason why I go on my trips, they have stereotype my child that she can't do nothing with her mom like that's an issue that has to be an issues, so I started.

looking it up, asking questions, doing my research, talking to the kids. And that's exactly what it is because that normalize behavior. You got to understand.

That's why I'm happy that racial discrimination, bullying, community violence, those type of things have been added to CDC. The reason why stepped out on faith and have doing this ever since because we need to address it.

Racism is real. It's out here. We just reverse the whole Black lives matter. They're destroying buildings and things of that nature. The lady, we already know, let me add the icing to the cake.

Icing to cake for me was when I asked her, the kids were by themselves in New York. They needed a chaperone. In Indiana, they didn't. I said, so they don't have a Chaperon?

They walking around. Oh, They don' need one here. So why am I here? Because I thought I was here because first off as a shop around, I'm not staying in dorms.

so I got my own hotel room. Number two, What's the events? What the plans? The kids are saying they wanna do stuff. Well, there's not too much to do. There's something, can we at least get together and eat?

Racism, Student Advocacy, and the Power of Awareness

Well I'll think about it. I got a text message from one of the students where the student asked the teacher and the teach told him no. Our exit teacher, she send me a directions to Cracker Barrel.

Now I didn't think Crack Barrell at first. About this is a place where we're gonna go. We gonna meet the kids, we're going to congratulate them on the job well done, and we gonna get on our flight and leave.

I get the cracker barrel and guess what? They have set the kid, the chaperones have sat in another seat and there's no seat for me at all. So I'm like, wait, hold on.

You mean to tell me I got a text message from you to meet you here? You put in an account and you didn't include me? She looked at me dead in my face and said, oh, I didn' know he was coming.

I said, oh, okay. So it's the text message that I have right here that says, I'm on my way. You wanna look at your text messages and see if you got the message or not.

And when she looked at her text, message I say, because what you want me to do is do this angry black woman thing. and I am not gonna do that for you.

so I went to the kids, and said I was here for them, not for y'all. I find it interesting that yall not even sitting at the table with the black kids.

But okay, The kid said, we didn't even pick to come here. I said, did y'all get what they were supposed to give yall? Because as representatives of the school, you're supposed be getting some type of lunch.

Oh, I'm taking care of this. I say, do you mean the schools taking of it? because you are not taking anything. This comes from the School. Who chose this place?

And the kid said we don't want to be here. We know about Cracker Barrel. The kids said it. we know that Crackle Barrell and the racist lawsuits that they had.

So why would we come here? So it was painted in black and white. For me, it just proved the point. Let's be clear. How come you invited me to Cracker Barrel and there's no seat at the table?

I was triggered. I walked out, I stayed outside for about five minutes, prayed, said, Lord, this is the reason why you have me here. You got me in Bloomington, Indiana.

Not helping my daughter. Yes, she did get some period. Congratulations to her. She walked away with a superior rating. Everybody did. But it could have been because the chaperones didn't advocate for them and support them like they were supposed to the week that they we're there.

They were there a whole entire week and they did nothing but sit in a dorm, a hot dorm and do nothing. But if kids don't know those things, this is exactly what's happening.

And that's the reason why we're here on this podcast, to have these conversations. That's why I'm coming to the podcast so we can continue. Because if that awareness is not out there, how would they know?

Especially when those type of things are normalized. It was normalized to those kids, so that how they didn't. I heard from each and every one of those kid.

When I tell you I gave them a book, It's time to talk about ISIS? Oh, they're talking about it now. They're all a part of the victorious foundation. So let's…

I have to, people like us gotta keep doing these things. Cause you know why? Cycle breaking is real. Having ACEs is a-okay, let's be clear, we have it.

But it's what you do with your ACE score, it is what do you with you story that will help you heal. You sharing your story with me a long time ago has helped you to heal, It helped bring your family together.

It made you a better man. And here we are. I want people to know who you are. Let's be clear. You're my brother and I love you to death. But where can people find you?

On my website, we have a family website that's called www.lewisquad.com, 1S. You can find me on YouTube. I definitely have my own podcast, I'm Growing Man, like we talked about earlier.

My wife and I's podcast is still available, it's gonna still be there. And I told her that at some point somebody's going to try to pick it up and they're gonna bring her out of retirement.

So hopefully I can get her back out here because It's, I do want to say this before, like, before we end this or anything. My wife and I, we did four years of podcasts and so it ranged from 25 minutes to maybe two and a half hours an episode.

Like some people might think that's a lot, but we talk like that every single day. We just gave y'all an intentional conversation once a week. But we have conversations where we reflect and talk about how we feel.

And I feel like, are you familiar with Malcolm Gladwell? Malcolm Gladwell is an author who wrote Outliers, and he talks about how majority of the people do this, but it's always these outliers that get to do things.

But they're only outlier because they do more than everybody who thinks they are doing the same thing. So me and my wife, I can honestly say, that I've never met a couple who intentionally converse every day.

No matter what, like it's a part of brushing teeth like she and I have to communicate like and it is not just how was your day and passing or what not.

It's like we're interacting and what I learned that it changed the relationship completely. Right. And it made me as a man realize that men don't know there's a different feeling you create where you be like, I don' want to do nothing

with anybody else other than this person.

Where to Find the Guest and Closing Reflections

And you have to cross the threshold of getting to know your person on purpose, or you're going to think that that person is still out there. that person could be out there, but you're still going to have to put the same work you didn't put in this person.

And a lot of times we think that this, this you know, I just don't feel it anymore. You don t feel that anymore because you re not doing anything to create the feeling.

At the beginning, it s all new and hunky dory. But once you start talking to your person, Like you learn what they like, what don't like and you try to protect them in a way where you care about them.

Like if they don' like this, you don do it on purpose to make them mad. When you do that you become more vulnerable. because you want to protect this person.

When you protect a person over you, you create a different relationship. And a lot of times we're selfish thinking we need these bright lights to happen for us to feel like this is our person, whoever your person is, You have to put work that you probably have not seen for you to find the happiness in a relationship but there's power in that and knows with you doing that for four years stop saying that it ends when it's actually a resource.

So tell us about it so people can find out where to find this valuable resource Well, yes. I mean, you can look me up on YouTube. Look us up. On YouTube, Lewis squad.com Lewis Squad.

Me and my wife's podcast is called doing too much. Again, we got four years of some great. And you know what? If you are really interested in watching us grow, if you go back to the first season, maybe the second, You can hear how our tone and how sharp our words are when we're addressing each other, meaning that we are not the happiest at the moment.

You can see how typically we learned about triggers. It's like if somebody triggers you, you respond in a way that may not be the nicest, but you can actually hear it.

I also want to share the cohesion, y'all started like this, and then eventually yall ended closer together on the couch. Yeah. Oh yeah. So again, just for y'all that don't know, I watch it.

And those are small, subtle things that people may not pay attention to, but I did. That's because I think you guys are vested, not just in each other, invested in growth.

and that's what we need Psycho Breakers to do. So I want you guys to know this Psycho Breaker series is going to be real. And we're going have people like this on the show.

You're gonna see more of me in John, let's be clear, because I got some ideas from this podcast that we need to do. But you all know who I am. I'm Dr.

Tori, you can find me everywhere. We have another episode under wraps. Thank you, guys, again, for tuning in, and we will see you guy soon. Bye-bye.