

## A Moment of Transparency #3: Growing Can Be Painful



*“Life is constantly presenting us with opportunities to grow and to aspire to greatness. Yet we fall short in rising to the occasion, because we were trained at an early age to resist anything that feels uncomfortable. Hence, we miss the opportunity to grow and therefore remain as we are; dead to our potential.” ~ Rosalynd M. Rambert*

In this season of my life, I am holding myself accountable to LIVE. DO. BE. THINK. HIGHER! This declaration is no easy task; as it has required me to explore who I am on a deeper level. Like any exploration, one never knows what will surface. What an interesting discovery it's been! Exploring yourself on a deeper level compels you to ask probing questions about who you “really” are and what you really want.

Just when you think you have answered the question, you're confronted with a deeper and more profound question. Additionally, you must reckon with the belief systems of your childhood, carried with you into adulthood, that you continue to embrace as your own, but they really aren't. Yes, I can hear you saying, “*What the heck is she saying?*” Essentially, what I am saying is that most of what we believe are not really our beliefs; they were inherited and accepted as our truths. Hence, when we begin to awaken to who we “really”

are, our new-found thinking and beliefs conflict with our limited and negative beliefs. This can be extremely challenging.

Think about it for a moment. How often do we challenge what we believe and why we believe it? Interestingly enough, when someone else challenges our beliefs we will defend the beliefs as if we're engaged in a war. Yet, we don't exercise the same energy in answering the question, "*Why do I believe what I believe?*" On the path of awakening, you are forced to wrestle with the truths about who you really are, what you believe and what you really desire from life. Sometimes, the wrestling can take days, months and even years. Embracing who you really are requires courage.

On the other end of the spectrum, I am challenged to love unconditionally; forgive quickly and be totally accepting of other individuals. If I endeavor to be the change I want to see in the world, then I must love at a higher level. Loving at a higher level requires tremendous courage; which leads to tremendous growth. However, this growth process is very painful. Why? Because it takes courage to love people that don't love you back. It takes courage to be kind to people that assassinate your character and speak against your vision. It takes courage to be vulnerable when you've been betrayed, rejected and completely misunderstood. It takes courage to give people another chance when they've left you bleeding in the middle of the street. While these experience have been extremely painful for me, I understand that they were necessary for my growth. Each and every experience has brought me to this place...this moment. Without these experiences, ASPIRE TO GREATNESS would not exist.

Relationships will grow and stretch you like nothing else. What I have come to realize is that my periods of tremendous growth; have been birthed from my greatest pains. Hence, I am learning how to embrace my pain more quickly. More importantly, I have learned how to be kinder and more

compassionate with myself when I am going through my “stretching” process. Furthermore, I now understand the scripture, *“Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.”* The truth is that most people are asleep...asleep to their behaviors, habits and belief systems that keep them bound and prevent them from loving on a higher level.

I am now fully aware why I became preoccupied with the subject of “courage” over a year ago. Without courage, it is impossible to grow and love on a higher level. Maxwell Maltz said, *“We must have courage to bet on our ideas, to take the calculated risk, and to act. Everyday living requires courage if life is to be effective and bring happiness.”* Throughout life, we have learned that whatever doesn’t grow will eventually die. If your relationship doesn’t grow, it will die. If your business doesn’t grow, it will die. If you don’t grow, you will die emotionally, mentally and spiritually. Growth is necessary for our survival. However, we must recognize that we can’t experience it without its partner – pain. While it’s our nature to avoid pain, I invite you to embrace your pain. Feel it, flow with it and dance with it. Embracing your pain allows you to truly connect with who you are.

I am thankful to God for the growth that I am presently experiencing and am excited by what awaits me. The greatest gift that I have been given in this season of my life is that I have come into the knowledge of who I really am and who I want to be. The more I embrace who I am, the easier it is to ignore the opinions others have about who they think I am and what they think I should be doing. Wayne Dyer said it best, *“What people think about me is none of my business.”* I finally get it...thank God...I am free!

I am committed to LIVE. DO. BE. THINK. HIGHER! ASPIRE TO GREATNESS MY FRIEND!