

# What I Know For Sure

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On the eve of my 45th birthday, February 26, I could hear Oprah Winfrey's infamous question playing over and over again in my mind, *"What do you know for sure?"* Over the past couple of years, I have observed her ask this question of many guests as they share stories and pass on their wisdom. It's March 11, and this question has been playing as a loop in my mind.

As I envision myself sitting across from Oprah, we are engaged in stimulating conversation regarding our life experiences and lessons learned. Our time together is drawing to a close, and she smiles and asks me, *"Rosalynd, what do you know for sure?"* I share the following thoughts:

## 1. Being a Great Mother Is My Greatest Role

About a year ago, a colleague I worked with many years ago applauded me on Facebook for being a great mother to my now 28-year old daughter. Although, I appreciated her comment, I responded *"No, I wasn't a great mother, I was a good mother and here's why..."* I am sure that many people reading my comment were thinking to themselves, *"What is going on with her and why is she admitting this publicly?"* Well, let me first share something with you about me. I believe in the power of transparency. In this world today, I believe many of the epidemics we face are because most people don't have the courage to stand up and just be real. I wonder what the state of our marriages, relationships, companies, communities and churches would look like if we exercised great courage...just something to ponder.

As a single mother raising my daughter, I struggled with the

stigma of being a teen mother. I harbored feelings of guilt because my daughter's father was not actively involved in her life; and the list goes on and on. Consequently, I developed a mindset and value system of acquiring and attaining. I truly believed that if I provided my daughter with every material thing; sent her to the best schools; filled her life with great activities; purchased a home and excelled as a professional and entrepreneur, then I would become a great mother. WRONG...WRONG...WRONG! Providing your child with things doesn't make you a great mother. Ask your adult child...ask yourself what your experiences were growing up.

What I know for sure about being a great mother is this, you must:

- a. tell your child every day that you love them and how special they are.
- b. be emotionally available.
- c. be actively present when they show up.
- d. teach them morals and values.
- e. exercise great responsibility in what you allow them to hear and view. Everything they are exposed to will develop their personality and belief system (by the age of 7), which will determine who and what they become.
- f. allow them to be themselves and not what you want them to be.
- g. nurture the gifts, talents and abilities ALREADY within them. Each person was born unique, for a specific purpose. Help your child discover who THEY are, not what you want them to become.
- h. be impeccable with your words. Whatever you tell your child about who they are, they will believe and become it. Your words hold the key to shaping your child's destiny.

i. love your child unconditionally for who they are and where they are.

j. love, protect and nurture your child, no matter what.

My beautiful 4-year old Gabriella is very independent, verbal, opinionated and energetic. Most times, she is a handful. But you know what, I love and appreciate her for who she is. I am not seeking to change her, but to develop and cultivate the awesome gifts, talents and abilities God has given her.

I believe that every human being was created for a specific purpose. I believe we were all created to solve a specific problem; to be the answer for someone or something. What I know for sure is that Gabriella was created for purpose and that she is my gift. How Gabriella serves and shows up in the world will be an indication of the mother I am to her. Because she is the solution to a problem, my greatest role will be in how I love, nurture, protect, guide and serve her. This is what I know for sure.

## **2. The Only Person You Have the Power to Change is Yourself**

Like many of you, for many years I held the belief that I actually had the power to change the people I loved the most; such as my husband, children, parents and siblings. Although, I have heard all my life, *"You can't change anyone but yourself,"* I believed there was an exception to the rule that other people had not yet figured out. In most cases, I believed that if someone really loved me and wanted to make me happy, they would change their negative behaviors and attitudes. I was so wrong. While change is very necessary, it can be difficult.

What I know for sure is that no one has the power to change another, nor should they seek to do so. People will only change if they believe they need to change, coupled with a strong desire to do so. If people do not see the need to change, there is nothing you can do to bring about change in

their lives. Change is a personal decision.

At best, we have the power to influence one to change their actions, behavior, attitude or opinion; which is quite different. As human beings, we constantly seek to change another, when we should be consumed with changing ourselves. Like Gandhi, I believe that we must aspire to become the change we want to see in the world...and so, change begins with you.

These are the things I know for sure. When you know better, you do better. I am now inspired to ASPIRE TO GREATNESS in these areas of my life. Will you join me?

If you enjoyed this post, please be sure to subscribe to the blog as this will be a continued series.

Thank you so much for taking the time to stop by. I hope you were inspired to ASPIRE TO GREATNESS!

Always Aspiring,

Rosalynd