

Messages from the Mound



In 2007, I began my prison ministry where I facilitated my Relationship First Aid spiritual based personal development classes at Mound Correctional Facility in Detroit. After Mound closed in 2012, I continued to communicate with the inmates through newsletters, birthday cards and attending/speaking at events at various facilities. It is suspected that the facility got its name because of the many ancient mounds that were found all over Detroit, and I believe the most concentrated and/largest ones

were along what is now known as Mound Rd.

"Messages from the Mound" is named after the newsletters that I send out to the inmates since that is where we all initially met. Because the classes that I was teaching them focused on spiritual elevation allowing the negativity within them to die, thus ultimately elevating their consciousness, I thought it an appropriate name because a "mound" is defined as: an "elevation" formed of earth overlying ruins, a grave etc., a heap or raised mass. The following articles are from men that are currently incarcerated or released and this serves as an opportunity for the voiceless to have a voice. If you have a loved one that is currently incarcerated and would like for me to send them newsletters, please forward their contact information with a MDOC number to: Relationshipfirstaid@yahoo.com or contact me at: Relationship First Aid, Attn: Ma'at Seba, 15224 W. 7 Mile Rd., Detroit, MI. 48235.

By Raymond L. Carr Jr.
SPECIAL TO THE SUN



When the subject of Mental Health comes up, there is a negative stigma that comes with it. Many people don't want to be associated with a mental disorder, so they disassociate and back pedal from any appearance of having any mental health issues.

Such a negative cloud rests over the subject of Mental Health. Unfortunately, it causes many to deny and refuse to accept that they may have a mental health issue.

There are many forms of trauma, no matter what kind it is or who caused it, it can and will leave psychological wounds that can last a lifetime.

It is said, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt." This statement couldn't be further from the truth. Trauma does not just stop. Steps have to be taken to intervene in the trauma.

Intervening in trauma, you must identify with it and the root cause of the it. Part of the process of healing from trauma, starts with inner awareness.

When addressing and dealing with trauma, do not minimize or make light of it; take the concerns seriously. Responsibility for traumatizing or abusive behavior should never rest on the person. It is not their fault!

A Healthy Mind

We have the tendency to take the actions of others personally. It's not our fault we were traumatized, no matter what happened to us, we aren't what happened to us.

We have to heal from the trauma. In the healing process we should understand that the people who hurt us have a problem themselves and may have also been abused. It is said that, 'hurt people hurt other people.' Not to justify nor lessen the trauma, but to better understand the cycle of trauma so we can break it. There may not be a quick fix or an easy cure, but a healing definitely needs to take place.

We should learn that healing and closure doesn't always come from the culprit who hurt us. Even though, many would like for the one who hurt us to be punished or feel the same pain we have felt, healing comes from within and does not include retribution, in all cases.

A lot of us are dealing with suppressed trauma and don't know what to do with it or how to heal from it. When abuse, anger and unresolved issues are suppressed, it can show up in other areas of our lives.

If trauma goes unchecked, it can pull at the inner lining of our core, its like watching a loose thread being pulled on a sweater and seeing it unravel until there is nothing left.

Steps to Healing

- Find a safe place: someone you can open up and talk with about your trauma. (a family member, friend, pastor, teacher, etc...)
- Be willing to let go of the hurt and pain, so you can live your best life.
- Forgive the person or persons who caused your trauma.
- Remember, forgiveness is for you. Unforgiveness is like Drinking poison and hoping the other person dies.

Is the hood a killer of dreams?

By TOBY R. DAVIS #234179
SPECIAL TO THE SUN

I RECALL THE time when I was about 9 years of age and I found myself in a physical confrontation with my friend, Kareem, who at the time was around the same age as me, but happened to be bigger than me in size. In my mind however none of that even mattered to me because I had the real advantage over him with my imagined super power! After we both wrestled and rolled around on the grass grappling each other, we then stood back up to face-off when he decided to deliver me a rock-solid punch straight to my gut that caused me to double over in excruciating pain. Then suddenly, it happened in broad daylight in front of everyone without warning. My eyes turned a bright, fluorescent red and my muscles began bulging out causing my clothes to rip apart off my body as I slowly transitioned from the humbled David Banner to now the huge formidable green-skinned beast known only as the Incredible Hulk! "Aarrghh! Aarrghh!" I roared loudly, as the tears streamed down my cheeks. I was hotter than fish grease inside Hell's kitchen. With all my teeth clenched tightly together and my face shivering ferociously, I squeezed every muscle in my bony body; even my small pectoral muscles with both fist balled up tightly as I glanced around menacingly at the un-threatened spectators. I was now imitating the Hulk as I had seen him many times before on the TV screen.

Looking back at that incident I couldn't help but laugh at myself as did everyone else who stood nearby at the time watching me do my best impersonation of the Incredible Hulk that had failed to have the same effect as it did on the actual TV show where everyone immediately turned around and hightailed it to safety. I shared that story with you from my childhood for a reason -- not just for mere kicks. That particular occurrence marked a special period in my life when I was still innocent. It was a time when I felt completely free to dream and use my vivid imagination to take me anywhere in the world; or better yet, to be any of my favorite superheroes such as: Superman, Batman, He-man, and even Popeye the Sailor Man who my mother often used to coax me into eating my portion of green spinach at dinner when I was younger. "You do want to be like Popeye, don't you? Well then, you better eat your spinach, boy!" she encouraged me. I would then demolish it.

But sadly as time went on I gradually stopped using my vivid imagination. I stopped believing in my super power that I once believed I was in possession of and allowed my will to be thwarted by the loud and negative voices on the outside of me; instead of remaining faithful to the still, small voice inside of me that once convinced me that all my goals were attainable and possible if only I believed in myself and my ability to achieve them. In Genesis 11:6 affirms that nothing they have imagined they could do would be impossible for them. That I could in fact conquer my biggest fears and materialize my wildest dreams and aspirations until that still, small voice inside me began to be drowned out by the loud and unruly voices outside of me. It eventually overpowered my conviction and coerced me to yield to the belief that I wasn't good enough, smart enough, or even strong enough to be a superhero and save the world. In Proverbs 4:20 affirms, listen to my words; and tune your ears to my voice. We should never underestimate how brilliant we are and that we are only limited by how we see ourselves.

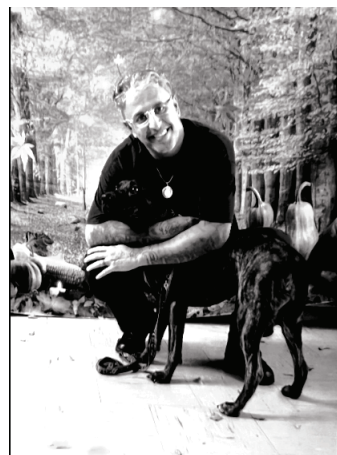
As a young boy I had no idea that God was speaking to me through that small, still voice inside me. The voice that would become completely inaudible after rendering me one last and final warning that ultimately fail on deaf ears. "Take heed, my dear son, before ye can set out to save the world from all the villains, ye must first save thyself from becoming one."

This is an excerpt from his new, inspirational book "CONFRONTING THE HOOD MENTALITY (HOW TO DISMANTLE YOUR HOOD MENTALITY BY INTO YOUR HIDDEN POTENTIAL & ENGAGE IN CRITICAL THINKING THAT IS CONDUCTIVE TO SUCCESS!) by Toby R. Davis. It's now available on Amazon.com and eBook format.

Change comes from the top

By Ammar Alsaady
SPECIAL TO SUN

How do you get the word out about how broken and misused this judicial system really is? When you hear the word "correction" you automatically think to "make right" but that's not the case in this situation of prison. You have men and women who stand in a courtroom expecting to be seen and treated equally under justice but yet they are not. What they get is over sentences, discrimination and an eye that clearly sees but turns blind at will, due to political stands, money, race and even beliefs. How is that right?, it isn't but we didn't make the law so what can be done to change that? Some may say that that change comes from the top, your right so let us go to the top and make the change that we the incarcerated so desperately need. We need our governors and senators to know that it is us who are placing them in these positions so when we all come



together on something such as Good Time they should listen and grant us what we want. Within the last decade, prison has been the most lucrative (stock) business known but where is the money? Because there are no classes for inmates to take to go home, there's no programming for rehabilitation and we wonder why these young men and women are showing distrust and anger in this whole ordeal. I feel that the same way we publicize the newest song or what's trending on social media we need to turn up our attention and to bring to us the very thing we are in need of, justice and liberty for all. I wonder where that came from?? Hmmm? Someone said it but that notion doesn't apply to black, brown even poor white people, so if not us then who? I've been told that dissatisfaction is the key to bring about change, so let us use this key to open more doors of change. Your local governor's info is available so use it, don't be afraid to call the prison and ask for the necessary info that will help with the fight of getting your love ones free. Thank you for your time and God. Peace and Blessings you.

**EVERYONE
HAS A PLACE,
A VOICE,
AND SOMETHING
TO CONTRIBUTE.**