Meet Collie Turner

We were lucky to catch up with Collie Turner recently and have shared our conversation below.

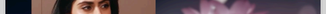
Hi Collie, appreciate you sitting with us today to share your wisdom with our readers. So, let's start with resilience – where do you get your resilience from?

I have been blessed with a family that I can count on. My mother, who didn't go to college, had to sacrifice and to do what's best to keep the lion of us, with a roof over our heads and food on the table. Future was never an option for me. Looking back, I don't know how she did it, but in every instance I ever witnessed my mother not falling strong. We moved around quite a lot in my early years, I was in a new school almost every year until I was 8. That's tough. I found myself constantly in a new environment, and I had to adapt. I had to be resilient, I had to overcome fear, I had to be able to talk to anyone, because healthy, I had to. In my mother's later years, she became an environmental tobacco. There were many land developers that didn't like the work my mother was doing, and they would come to our neighborhood and try to intimidate her. I remember one time I remember she and I meeting Don Brockbrunch at a conference in Washington D.C. one year. When we got up to the front of the room, my mother introduced herself and Doris spoke up, "Boys! I've been waiting for you to come to my town so I can kick your asses!" The room fell silent. I remember thinking, Wow! How does she know Don and why can I just finding this out now? Of course, my mother knew Don Brockbrunch. She was working to right a wrong – an environmental wrong. I know if she were still alive today, she'd be thrilled to see that I've been connected with very important issues and for continuing to help people impact in the world.

Let's take a small detour – maybe you can share a bit about yourself before we dive back into some of the other questions we had for you?

I'm a Veteran, I'm a Vietnam Veteran, I served as a Teen for Veterans called Heroic Gardens. We use Therapeutic Horticulture to assist Veterans and their families with their own personal healing path. It's scientifically proven that working with plants can help a person reduce their blood pressure, be less depressed, and anxiety, while increasing their self esteem, physical strength, mood and immune system.

I started this organization because I kind greatness and I wanted to help men and women coming back from service with their yards. That's it. It was a simple, just a little name offering, but I thought it was a great idea. I started it in my yard, I had a lot of Veterans and their families come to my house, and I thought, I'm a Vietnam Veteran, and the military and military service was always something that was part of my fabric. The experienced a lot of trauma in my life and I always turned to my garden to problem solve. I thought, I'm a Vietnam Veteran, I'm a Therapeutic Horticulturist, I'm a Master Gardener, I've learned there might be an opportunity. I didn't feel like I could go to the VA and organize. And I wanted to tell everyone reading this, if you have an idea, just do it. Please. Don't wait. If you are thinking, I'm not ready, I'm not this, I'm not that, I'm not the person, I'm not the person, I'm not the person, things in perspective. I wanted. I'm about 5 years. And then, I met my wife and learned that very question. During year one of our existence, I'll be honest, not one organization called us for our services. I continued to do it because I felt it was my calling. I felt it was my purpose. I felt it was part to every medication, I continued to reach out to members of the Veteran community, and I need a lot about the science of people and plants. I remember attending an event and all the other nonprofits had marketing and materials. All I had was my backing. And a dream. I thought people seeing questions and I'm trying to explain conceptually what we do. My enthusiasm and passion, I'm sure, was off the charts. I'm like, I'm, I'm, I'm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