

Encourage Courage

When Confidence Changes You Forever

My journey as a Black woman didn't begin on a stage or in a spotlight. It began in my early twenties, walking into the homes of families standing at the edge of loss—homes where love existed, but stability was fragile, and survival was a daily negotiation.

At the time, it felt almost familiar. I grew up in a family that fostered children, so I understood disruption, transition, and resilience. The difference now was that no child was coming home with me. Instead, I traveled across my city and into surrounding communities, meeting families in their most vulnerable moments—when fear, hope, and exhaustion lived side by side.

One family, in particular, lives with me still.

It was a young mother with two daughters. She was attentive, loving, deeply connected to her girls. But she was also navigating the danger of an abusive relationship. To protect herself and her children, she carefully scheduled our visits during times she believed the children's father would be gone—something we didn't yet know.

Then one day, everything shifted.

He arrived unexpectedly.

I watched fear move through her body before she ever spoke. I felt the power in the room tilt. In that moment, I didn't know how things would end—but I knew I could not

shrink. He demanded to know who I was. I told him. He yelled. He threatened. He ordered me to leave.

Calmly, steadily, I told him the only way I was leaving was with them—and that if anything happened, I would call the police immediately.

He stormed out.

The situation was reported and handled, but something inside me changed forever. That day, I understood that I was no longer moving through the world as a young-minded woman or little girl. I was grounded. I was strong. I was someone who could stand when others felt unable to.

Having witnessed children cycle in and out of homes—including my own—I learned an uncomfortable truth early: not everyone grows up being told they are beautiful, capable, or worthy. Not everyone is encouraged to dream boldly or believe their life can stretch beyond what they see.

Over the years, women have often said to me, "I wish I had your confidence."

And I always tell them the same thing: You do. You just have to believe it. That's where confidence begins.

That belief is why my work starts with children.

I create, teach, and guide them early—helping them build confidence before doubt takes root—so when they become adults, they don't have to wish for belief. They already know it lives inside them. They

understand that focus creates possibility, belief fuels action, and the first and loudest cheerleader must always be themselves.

I made a vow to offer encouragement wherever I go—even to strangers. If I see someone looking down, disconnected, or unsure, I remind them that the day can still turn toward the light—if they choose themselves.

Through creating and teaching with love, humor, and joy, I invite people to pause the noise of the world. To measure the fabric. To cut what no longer serves. To stitch together a reason to smile again. This work builds community. Sometimes it brings laughter. Sometimes hugs. Sometimes healing.

This is my fabric glue to the greater good.

Thank you for taking a moment to sit with my story—the moment I was no longer a Black girl, but a Black woman was the moment I knew my SOUL had grown stronger.

I am Shay Tate-Moore. TS#4 of 52 of The Souldown Magazine. I want to thank you all for having SOUL! ✨



<https://thesouldownmagazine.com/ts52>



“The moment I was no longer a Black girl, but a Black woman was the moment I knew my SOUL had grown stronger.”