

THE AUTHORS SHOW – Inspirational/Motivational/Self Help

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Hi Friend,

Please find a space to relax and get comfortable as I tell you why I absolutely love to write. You see, I realized the power of writing early on in my life. Once I learned the components of writing a letter, I immediately went home and asked my mom if I could write letters to my family. Of course, she was responsible for the envelopes and buying the stamps. (I'm smiling wide at the memory of my mom, who passed away 13 years ago this year.) She was a huge factor in my writing development.

I began writing letters to my family members, some were open and receptive to receiving my letters. And others, not so much. But, I wasn't deterred. It felt good to write a message that I knew would brighten someone's day. I have come to know that there is power in encouragement. My letter writing developed into a newsletter of encouragement to a few women in my local church. The newsletter was called SISTERGRAM, playing on the thought of sending someone a telegram. My target was women. SISTERGRAM was born!

I started sending the newsletter filled with encouragement to approximately 125 women in my local church. In less than 2 years, the newsletter mailing list had grown to more than 2,000 women. The women lived in different parts of the country. Many women were also incarcerated. People were forwarding the newsletter and sending it to their loved ones to encourage them. Although I have always known the power of writing, I certainly was not prepared for the response to my newsletter. I began receiving letters from women all over the country telling me how my newsletter touched their hearts and encouraged them to stay the course and to stay strong in difficult situations.

I labored over my SISTERGRAM Newsletter for several years producing it every month and always very excited to share a message of encouragement. Women were also excited to receive the newsletter telling me how excited they would get when they received the envelope with the red writing. Using a red felt pen was my signature. I felt it was important to

personalize the correspondence in some way. It was also important to me for women to receive something else in the mail, other than bills. Seeing the envelope with the red writing became a welcome respite from the everyday conundrum of life for many.

In addition to my monthly newsletter, I also started writing to the women in prison who were on my mailing list. My message over the years has been consistent, to encourage the hearts of others. I haven't always embraced the gift of writing that has been bestowed upon me, especially when my writing has been rejected. But, I have trained myself to focus on the positive impact that I am making and to put any negativity in its proper place and to maintain a positive perspective.

After writing for some time, I enrolled in a writing class held on the campus of the University of Pennsylvania. One statement made by the instructor has stuck with me over the years, "Your writing can go where you may never be able to go." The statement has been a guidepost for me for why I write and why I have published my writing. With that in mind, I set out to turn my newsletter into a magazine. SISTERGRAM Magazine was born.

In addition to my magazine, I began sharing my messages via email. Again, the response was overwhelming. My email database grew at an extremely fast pace. I decided to take several of my messages and put them in a book. I began the process of publishing my first book in 2009. When I published the book, and the instructor's words became a reality for me. My first book, Monday Morning Motivations: Encouraging Words to Start Your Week has been sold in Spain, South America, Europe and the United States. Wow! What started as a letter writing activity in Elementary School has blossomed into an international encouragement campaign!

I have continued to write to women in prison. I also write for magazines. My wish list is to work with a major publishing house and to become a New York Times Best Selling Author. I always keep the writing instructor's words in mind that my writing can, "Go to places that I may never be able to go." Working with a major publishing house will provide exposure that will help me to get my writing into areas of the world that I may never visit, but I know that my writing will encourage others.

I have written 4 individual books: Monday Morning Motivations: Encouraging Words to Start Your Week and Morning Meditations: Starting Your Day with Purpose, Passion and Power. The Morning Meditations book has also been translated into Spanish. The last book is Maintain Your Momentum: Success Quotes for High Achieving Women. I am also planning to have my books translated into braille for the hearing impaired. I have an aunt that is hearing impaired, and I want to make an impact in that group as well. I am also a contributing author in 9 books.

The culmination of my writing journey, to date, is a book collaboration for first time authors. Each first-time author was interested in sharing their story. I have a relationship with each one of the authors. I knew they each wanted to write a book. I also know what it's like to build momentum as an author. I humbly served as a coach to the first-time authors to help them build momentum to move to the next phase of writing their own book. I also leveraged my network to invite celebrity authors to join my first book collaboration. Together, we have a social media reach of more than 200,000 people.

I am very excited about how my writing journey is shaping up. I have thoroughly enjoyed encouraging others and lifting them up with my writing. I am confident that I am just scratching the surface on where I will end up as an author. I want to encourage you to help me send my writing to places that I may never go. I want to thank you in advance for your vote!

Respectfully,

Nicole S. Mason, Esquire