

W

WOMEN

-STAR

STRENGTH | TENACITY | AUDACITY | RESILIENCE

ARMY VETERAN LEADS
BUSINESS EXECUTIVES

**DR. MADELINE
ANN LEWIS**

CAREER STRATEGIST, AUTHOR
TRAINER, SPEAKER

**EVERYTHING
BEGINS IN YOUR HEAD**

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IS ABOUT
CONNECTION AND COMMITMENT

CHAPTER NEWS!!!

NETWORK FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF
WOMEN DALLAS CHAPTER HOSTS 2021
EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT

EUNOIA

Lifestyle Shop Inc.

Our Story

Eunoia: Ancient Greek : “well mind; beautiful thinking”.

An aspirational lifestyle brand shop, carrying unique multiple brands under one roof, our sweet little shop curates and creates!

We offer thoughtfully curated products that are mainly ethically sourced, fair trade and sometimes by visible minority women owned makers and wholesalers. We seek out these relationships by ensuring one or more of our core values are aligned with theirs: Social Consciousness, Ethically Sourced, Fair Trade, Sustainability.

We're excited to be able to leverage our brick and mortar to further empower makers and artisans, elevate the BIPOC and visible minority and especially women.

Our store is all about community.

In the spirit of community and empowerment, collaboratively working with a number of thoughtfully sourced makers to offer their handmade as well as foster the community spirit with regular pop up shop in store, as well, offer beginners workshops by the local creatives to empower budding entrepreneurs and we are still growing our community!

We strive to be conscious in reducing our carbon footprint in our curated as well as handmade offerings.

Joyfully curated meaningful merchandise, often one of a kind from around the global village, we are making connections! From the women at the market stalls of Uganda in East Africa using up-cycled materials to make jewelry and accessories to mothers in Northern Ghana with their age-old Bolga basket weaving traditions. Ethically sourced and fair trade are the common themes. When you purchase one of their products, you are helping provide dignity of income to these women and owning a “one of a kind” handmade piece in the process, and adding Eunoia!

We bring you a line of wood products all from the province, and milled in Halifax, these are made in a workshop that fosters common good with their free wood workshops.

Our shop is a place to meet your local creatives and learn about their passion for their skills and snag a free sample in the process!

A true lifestyle shop in the heart of the North End community.

New Collection!



Floral Bouquet 5 Heads Floral Arrangement \$12.00



Faux Hydrangea with stem \$5.00



Handmade Seagrass Basket From \$17.99



Handcrafted Ghana Bolga baskets fair trade From \$19.99



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

We are every woman's inspirational, leadership and lifestyle magazine.



Hey!

It's Summertime!

OMG!! It's June already, and the world is still battling the global pandemic? Only this time, folks are being vaccinated, and it looks like this thing is coming to an end soon - I'm hopeful. But, you know how they say, "it gets worse before it gets better?" I think that's where the world is now - seeing the worst of it to get to the best of it. Anyways, I am optimistic about a beautiful summer. So, stay hopeful with me!

How are you? So simple, yet, it is the most important question of all times, considering where we've all been the past year and counting. That question, "How are you," couldn't have a better meaning and be more appropriate than it is right now. As you move along and things get better, please do not forget to genuinely ask your friend, neighbour, colleagues, or that person walking past you on the street, "how are you?" You may be saving a life by just asking.

As always, this edition of our classic lifestyle magazine brings lots of life nuggets to help cheer you on and keep you on the right track no matter where you are on your life's journey. On the cover is a STAR woman. A 22-year Army veteran retired as Sergeant Major and a leader with influence - Dr. Madeline Lewis. She teaches women how to lead with Confidence, Charisma and Credibility. Dr. Lewis brings her years of experience and wealth of knowledge to everything she does, including hosting the Radio and TV Show "Success for Women." Her interview with me reveals how she helps women in America and beyond "accelerate their path to success" and help women tap into the centers of influence that will move their careers forward...with purpose, passion, and a unique brand of success. How cool is that?

Danie's corner brings the 15-year-old's perspective to "Self Love," Daniella Esonwune urges us to see each new day as a precious gift and utilize it well. The 10th grader emphasizes the importance of taking some time out in the day to inhale and exhale intentionally. Wise words!

"Empowered to win now: If not now, When? If not you, Who? Dr. Amicitia Maloon-Gibson poses this question to every woman. She states that "There is no force more powerful than a woman determined and destined to rise to the next level success in her career and relationship." This army veteran also recognizes how amazing it is that women have shattered the glass ceiling in the United States of America by electing a female Vice President and changing the trajectory of women in the workplace one step at a time. Women are rising!

Esther Akurut's story about the challenges moms face during the COVID-19 pandemic is a true testament to the resilience and tenacity of women today. She shares her challenges, pains, fears and successes of navigating family, home and work in the most uncertain times in modern history. Strength and Audacity capitalize the woman on our Profile feature - Diana Ocampo shares how she stays courageous and fearless in her personal and professional life. The power of woman!

Exciting is the news that the Network for the Empowerment of Women is growing and expanding its network with the launch of our new Dallas Texas chapter led by the indomitable Rita Nkem Onurah. The chapter is set to host its inaugural summit - The Empowerment Summit come July 17th 2021-themed "Stay Fearless." Interesting!

There's more! Sit, grab your favourite drink and flip through the pages to read other inspiring, educative and engaging stories featured in this edition. I bet you will not stop until you reach the end. Enjoy reading. Cheers!



Ifeoma Esonwune

Founder/Publisher

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"Be yourself. Everyone else is already taken."

ABOUT NETWORK FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN HALIFAX DISCOVER YOUR UNIQUE TALENTS

Network for the Empowerment of women (NEW) provides a safe and welcoming space where women can unite without discrimination or judgement to gain motivation and fulfill their dreams of business and leadership. Every woman has the opportunity to become empowered through the discovery of her unique passion and talent, to network and mentor one another, and to build long-lasting, mutually beneficial relationships.

NEW encourages women to brainstorm new ideas, acquire skills, and access resources through coordinated programs and events focused on Personal and Business Development, Leadership, Gender Equality, Social Consciousness, and Sustainability.

OUR MISSION

To be a safe and inspiring place where women share their knowledge and experiences, support and mentor one another, discover their talent, develop and nurture their passion, learn new skills, become visionary entrepreneurs, and transformational leaders.

OUR VISION

To help Women discover, develop and drive their unique genius to generate sustainable income, alleviate poverty, and reach their most significant potential through education, equality and inclusivity.

MISSION STATEMENT

W-STAR Magazine is a friendly and inspirational companion. It brings to you very emotional, truth-filled, engaging, and uplifting stories of women just like you to inspire and arouse the champion in you. It will compel you to step forward, find your voice, and use it wisely.

NETWORK FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

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Our Mission
To be a safe and inspiring place where women share their knowledge and experiences, support and mentor one another, discover their talents, develop and nurture their passion, learn new skills, become visionary entrepreneurs, and transformational leaders.

Our Vision
To help Women discover, develop and drive their unique genius to generate sustainable income, alleviate poverty, and reach their greatest potential through education, equality and inclusivity.

We Are Stronger Together!

PROGRAMS

- NETWORKING & MENTORING
- IMPACT & EMPOWERMENT SUMMIT
- LEADERSHIP & PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS
- SKILL ACQUISITION WORKSHOP
- RISE & LEAD GIRLS FORUM
- INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

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EMPOWERED TO WIN NOW: IF NOT NOW, WHEN? IF NOT YOU, WHO?



Dr. Amicitia Maloon-Gibson

The year of women on the rise is Now, for those of you reading this Article. There is no force more powerful than a woman determined and destined to rise to the next level of success in her career and relationships. Not too long ago it was not possible for a woman to have a “job” outside of the home. Long ago perception in society and tradition was that a woman was to find a man, get married and have children. Some of you can remember the figure of speech commonly associated with the idea that women should not work outside the home and that they should have many children during their reproductive years: A woman’s purpose was to be barefoot, pregnant, and submissive to her husband. Well, the Clergy sometimes use the “submissive” scriptures out of context; they forget to say as the husband submits to Christ. Well, not in today’s society! The socialization structure is clearly shifting. There is a “shift” in the atmosphere and growing together as a family is the new way of life. Let me share a short historical perspective, as it was in our Mothers and Grandmothers’ era, in comparison to our society today.

How amazing is it, in our lifetime, that we have shattered the glass ceiling; here in the United States of America, now, have elected a female Vice President, Kamala D. Harris. Her DNA is so inclusive, and it represents various cultures and ethnici-

ties. This is just an example of how the trajectory of women in the workplace has shifted since her swearing-in into office.

Family life is changing. Two-parent households are on the decline in the United States as divorce, remarriage and cohabitation are on the rise. Families are smaller now, both due to the growth of single-parent households and the drop in fertility. Not only are Americans having fewer children, but the circumstances surrounding parenthood have changed.

“While in the early 1960s babies typically arrived within the marriage, today fully four-in-ten births occur to women who are single or living with a non-marital partner. At the same time that family structures have transformed, so has the role of mothers in the workplace – and in the home. As more moms have entered the labor force, more have become breadwinners, and in many cases, primary breadwinners for their families.” (Source: National Vital Statistics Report, Volume 48, Number 16.)

As a result of these changes, there is no longer one dominant family form in the U.S. Parents today are raising their children against a backdrop of increasingly diverse and, for many, constantly evolving family forms. By contrast, in 1960, at the height of the post-World War II baby boom, there was one dominant family form. At that time 73% of all children

were living in a family with two married parents in their first marriage. By 1980, 61% of children were living in this type of family, and today, less than half (46%) are. The declining share of children living in what is often deemed a “traditional” family has been largely supplanted by the rising shares of children living with single or cohabiting parents.

Not only has the diversity in family living arrangements increased since the early 1960s, but so has the fluidity of the family. Non-marital cohabitation and divorce, along with the prevalence of remarriage and (non-marital) recoupling in the U.S., make for family structures that in many cases continue to evolve throughout a child’s life. While in the past a child born to a married couple – as most children were – was very likely to grow up in a home with those two parents; this is much less common today, as a child’s living arrangement changes with each adjustment in the relationship status of their parents. For example, one study found that over a three-year period, about three-in-ten (31%) children younger than 6 had experienced a major change in their family or household structure, in the form of parental divorce, separation, marriage, cohabitation or death.

(Source: The American Family Today, PEW Research Center Washington D.C.) (Parenting in America, December 17, 2015, (pewsocialtrends.org))



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You have the ability to change and affect lives long after you transition from this world.

Now is your time to rise to the top! A significant shift in the environment is taking place. This is indicative by the results in the 2018 Elections of Women in Political Leadership roles is a historical grand slam. Shifting of leadership positions traditionally held by males, specifically White males, are being filled by women of all cultural ethnicities. Glass ceilings are being broken in corporate America and among the Military Armed Forces. Also, women are getting more involved in politics in positions of Mayors, Senators and Governors. Many women that held hourly positions are shifting to salary positions. As I reflect back on my life in various po-

sitions I have held, I was the first Woman in the Military to receive the Woman of Color Award for Leadership and Service as an Engineer. Serve on appointments to boards as the only woman of Color many times. Although I was happy to be there and holding the position or seat at the table, my gut feelings were to be quiet and say nothing, unless you are asked to speak. Now I make it a point to accept positions on boards where my voice will not be muted. So, I say to you women on the rise, get the seat at the table or the position at the top and use your voice to impact positive change. Fear not, and you can enter the doors of opportunity as you elevate. Now is your time.

“Diversity and Inclusion is about connection and commitment. Can we commit to getting along and communicate to learn more about similarities and less about differences?” Dr. Amicitia Maloon-Gibson

You have the ability to change and affect lives long after you transition from this world. On your way up, take at least two people with you. As you rise up ask yourself how you want to be remembered (Legacy). Now, as you rise, if you don't like the hand you are dealt, change the end of your story. Do this by repositioning yourself with new goals and objectives that are measured to propel your journey from better to best and great to greater.

SPOTLIGHT - The STAR Woman:

Celebrating a strong, tenacious, audacious and resilient woman



Dr. Madeline Ann Lewis

President/CEO - Executive Women's Success Institute

Who is Dr. Madeline Ann Lewis at her core and why do some refer to her as Courageous?

I am a President/CEO, creator of the on-line course "Crack the Career Code: How to Lead with Confidence, Charisma, and Credibility." I am a 22-year Army Veteran (retired after reaching the rank of Sergeant Major), a career strategist, trainer, speaker, financial facilitator, author, and business consultant. I also host the "Success 4 Women" Radio and TV Show to inspire women to reach their full potential. I have been recognized by and received numerous awards from many organizations for my endeavors over the years. But out all of it, the one thing that I am most proud of is to be able to help women "accelerate the path to success." Why am I referred to as Courageous? I will answer that question with a quote that I keep in the forefront of my business and one that I

believe wholeheartedly, "You have powers you never dreamed of. You can do things you never thought you could do. There are no limitations in what you can do except the limitations of your own mind..." -Darwin P. Kingsley

What is the name of your business and its focus?

My business is the Executive Women's Success Institute (EXWSI), a consulting company where women can receive personal and professional development training. We seek to empower individuals, primarily women, in their career, business, and personal lives by providing them with a fast track, yet comprehensive toolkit of life skills and abilities. It is a formal environment where women can share their thoughts, their joys, their weaknesses, and in some cases, their successes.

Tell us about the business development and executive coaching you offer.

The women who come to me usually know they can be and do more in their careers, but their resources are not getting them as far as they hoped. I have decades of experience in the military, the federal government, and corporations - as an executive, a coach, and a trainer/speaker. I use this training to help women tap into the centers of influence that will move their career forward...with purpose, passion, and a unique brand of success, using my proprietary "8 Habits of Highly Successful Women" System and the "Woman's Advantage Forums." I believe my training provides ways to make adjustments in behavior, attitude, and image necessary for women, and that will help them advance in their career or transition into their own business.

“

I have always had a passion for helping others in any way I could, especially women.



It is never too late to follow your dreams.

Dr. Madeline Ann Lewis

President/CEO - Executive Women's Success Institute

Who has been your greatest influence in business and why?

My greatest influence in everything I have accomplished is my Mother because she instilled in me the attitude to “never give up and never quit.” My greatest influence(s) in business I must say that I have two. One is J. K. Rowling, Founder of the Harry Potter Empire. She went from being a destitute single mother on welfare to a best-selling billionaire author. The other would-be Oprah Winfrey, who rose from a Milwaukee ghetto and repeated sexual abuse to the Founder & CEO of OWN, Founder of Harpo Productions, and Founder of the Oprah Winfrey Leadership Academy for Girls all of which resulted in her becoming a female billionaire. Both these women have shown what it means to “never give up and never quit.”

What motivated you to support women?

I have always had a passion for helping others in any way I could, especially women. The defining moment behind me supporting women was seeing how hard it was for women to advance in their careers. I began to realize that women were coming

to me for advice on many things, such as reviewing their resumes, advice on what they should do next to move their careers along, helping them get through an interview – and mentoring. I also noticed that there were not many women helping each other to move up the career ladder. This inspired me to start my own business to provide guidance, coaching, personal and professional development to those who needed and wanted to advance in their careers or start a business.

What do you think are the biggest obstacles that most people face that prevents them from moving forward with their dreams?

I would say few things that are worthwhile are achieved without effort and struggle. Hours may be long, complications profound, and frustrations many, but your strength of character is defined by your ability to overcome. One of the biggest obstacles to success is underestimating our own ability. We dream of a goal, we wish for something but many of us do one of two things: (1) we believe the goal is unattainable so we never make any preparation; and (2) we make the preparation and start on our journey towards our goal but then drop out in mid-stream, we give up.

You stay pretty busy with your speaking, training, and hosting of the Success 4 Women Radio/TV Show, how do you balance work and your personal life?

I believe that without life balance you cannot be successful. I learned that lesson the hard way. When my Mom became ill, my focus changed drastically. I returned home (to New Orleans) because at the time my Mom's needs became my priority. This also helped me to take a closer look at myself and what direction I wanted my life to go in. To have balance with work and life, I now have set priorities. To day my priorities are firmly in place. I now make sure to set aside some time each day to do something I like doing. If only for 15 minutes to just sit and listen to my favorite music, I get that time in. And in my business, I have developed a passion to help women “accelerate the path to success” which can sometimes be a challenge, but one that I live doing, especially when I can help someone excel in their career or business.

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SPOTLIGHT - The STAR Woman:

Celebrating a strong, tenacious, audacious and resilient woman

Continued



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It can be challenging but, be selective about who you choose to be in your circle.

Would you share 3 ways women can accelerate the path to success?

First, everything begins in your head. It's cliché but true, and you are what you believe yourself to be. If you feel you are not good enough, you are done and out of the game before getting started. Second, be a good thinker. Good thinkers are always in demand. The person who knows “how,” may always have a job, but the person who knows “why” will always be the boss. Third, be a problem solver. As a problem solver, you become a key contributor and someone that will be viewed by others as the successful part of the overall “machinery.” You will get noticed!

What one thing have you learned as a small business owner that has served you well over the years?

I learned to listen to good advice. You have to be willing to accept advice from those who have already succeeded at what you are trying to do. This is especially beneficial if you can learn from their mistakes. Knowing what not to do is as important as knowing what to do. Having learned that lesson served me well over the years and it also brought great friends and colleagues into my life and my business.

What advice would you give to a woman who is now reinventing herself or pursuing her dream?

I would say to never let go of your dream. Passion and persistence are important factors to possess, make use of them. Look at your life and understand and know you are greater than you may give yourself credit for being, you have talents and abilities you haven't begun to reach for yet. And finally, focus on living the goals and dreams you have always envisioned for yourself. It is never too late to follow your dreams.



Dr. Madeline Ann Lewis

President/CEO - Executive Women's Success Institute

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Knowing what not to do is as important as knowing what to do.

What's next for you?

I will continue to bring guests on the Success 4 Women Radio/TV Show, who will share their stories about how they achieved their level of success or how what they do can impact women in business, women in the workplace, and women in relationships. I also run a monthly Short

Forum (3-session) on “Discover the Hidden Revenue in YOUR Business”, which will enable women (1) develop, launch and market a new product or service; (2) extend or expand a new product or service; and (3) uncover a new target market for an existing product or service. And in the fall of 2021, I will be hosting a Women's Virtual Retreat.

How can women connect with you?

Contact me through my email info@ex-wsi.com or go to my website www.exwsi.com. I am also on all the social media sites (LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram).

Diana Ocampo

Mother, Professional Business Woman and Influencer

Life presents an endless series of decisions, large and small, that require us to make difficult choices. While many factors are involved, the critical factor in deciding may be who we are at our core. I realized through adversity, challenging circumstances, and a roller coaster of emotions that I experienced more personal growth in the hardest periods of my life.

My own personal and career story has shaped my own life vision. I have learned during my own growth journey that you need to be consistent, put the effort and become your own advocate no matter what. Aligning your self with your core values is critical. Your core values become your compass in the hardest moments of your life.

Life is not lived in theory, is lived by action and practice. And that is something that has allowed me to shape my core values by being authentic, self-confident, creative, and resilient.

I never thought about myself as being courageous, however I can see why I am. I have overcome obstacles in my personal life and career because I have taken action to move forward despite my own fears. Also, I am a very vocal and direct person. It takes courage to stand for yourself in situations where other people may choose to be quiet.

I am not afraid to express my opinions and ideas, even if these opinions or ideas mean to open yourself to judgement.

As a business and marketing creator it is part of my thought process to ask myself questions all the time, so this has helped me to express my opinions freely. I believe that being opened, transparent and vulnerable is healthy.

We all need to get out of our comfort zones and be opened to have these conversations. You can have hard conversations to foster creativity and different perspectives with your clients, with your friends, with your family members if they are framed with respect, understanding and tolerance.

In 2018, DO Global Consulting INC (Diana Ocampo) was born from a desire to apply my experience, ideas, methodologies, and frameworks to create and execute marketing solutions that deliver results by helping companies grow and thrive.

My focus is to continue supporting companies and people in the natural product industry that

are looking to expand their products or services into different geographies and are looking for an action driven professional in global marketing and international trade like myself that can help them navigate the challenges of their business growth.

I work closely with my clients solving these challenges and uncovering new opportunities. I act as a member of their team. We go through an assessment process to understand where they are, where do they want to go, and what do they need to do in order to arrive to their destination. It is not a cookie cutter approach. Every client is different. Some are looking for more insights on products ideas and overall vision of their business, others are looking for a more hands-on approach on execution. Currently, I do not sell just services packages; I have a 1-1 project approach.

Do Global Consulting Company's Business Development Process is designed to help a company or people grow. We take a hard look at their numbers, marketing research, competitive analysis, market segmentation, product and services, current prospects, ROI – to identify business development gaps and opportunities.

In addition, I have been also doing 1-1 Executive coaching for people. This is an area that I am passionate about and I will continue strengthen as I grow. My offers involve mentoring on personal branding, productivity, and entrepreneurship.

I have different authors who have influenced me in my career and business over the years. I cannot think in one specific one. I am fascinated by understanding what are the traits that make entrepreneurs successful. And it is not just one element. As it is a blend between knowledge, hard work and mindset (Plus some luck too). One of the latest books I am reading is called Building a story brand by Donald Miller.

Individually, as a woman and mom of two little girls I have a direct interest.

Collectively, as women we carry the history of other women in our shoulders. And it starts from the women closest in our life. They all have shaped and inspired who we are. We need to honour what makes unique as women but also work on our current challenges as a group. If tomorrow we leave this world, we want to leave it better, right? That is my main motivation, for my self, for my daughters and for all of us.

My motivation comes from a place of intention. I want a better world for my daughters where there is more inclusivity and equality at the workplace and overall, in our society in general. Injustice triggers me. And I am also working on this. The only way we can change our own collective history and drive future change as women is by doing. That is why I have joined groups that support women, and that is why I have also mentored other women who have started their own businesses. One of the biggest challenges I have seen in women is that we are our own worst enemy. Individually, we may be all different, and we may pursue different goals, but we may all face similar challenges. This is where we come together as a group. I know that the road is long, and we have so many obstacles and challenges to overcome but we need to move forward as a united force.

Con't. - pg. 14

Diana Ocampo

Continued

Diana Ocampo

Mother, Professional Business Woman and Influencer

Based on what I have experienced through my own growth process and that of other people, these are the top 5 biggest obstacles that block people from living their best life:

1. Avoiding acting because you are not ready.
2. Getting attached to an idea, a business, a product etc.
3. Not adapting through changing times
4. Being afraid
5. Not having a clear value compass

More so, we must learn to balance life. It is never a perfect process. And some days I feel like I have a lot of balls in the air. One of the things that keeps me in track is that I have a strong value compass. It reminds me what the most important things in my life are. To be the best version of myself I need to honor who I am now.

This has also meant to make hard decisions. Like for example: Declining on projects or job opportunities that could jeopardize this. Covid has brought up a lot of challenges for women, making it had to achieve this balance. And the expectations that society puts on us is sometimes unrealistic. The reality is that to have this balance, you need to compromise. We just have some amount of time during the day to make things happen. This includes work, family, wellness and others.



We must learn to balance life.

And here are the things I think that can help women achieve success:

- **Focus:** This is critical. Do not get distracted by what others are doing or thinking about your own journey. Be determined with your goals and put all your energy on it. This applies to your personal or professional journey.
- **Original:** It is very tempting to follow the masses and trends. Even if you decide to launch a ME-TOO strategy with your products or services, it will just bring you so long. Consumers are changing, and every day is harder to stand out. So, take the time to understand the market needs, your offering, and find a sweet spot that is different from your competitors. And own it.
- **Make things happen:** No body is going to the work for you. Be willing to take risks and become your best advocate.

One thing I have learned as a small business over the years is not getting attached to ideas, products, people. Everything is changing all the time. The market, the technology, your customers, etc. You need to move fast, be flexible and adapt.



Diana Ocampo



My advice is to be patient with your own process. Work on your why. Do an assessment of your life and career. We all have our own power stories of accomplishments. Coming back to these stories is important to understand what motivates you and your skills. With this you can start working on your future and what do you need to do in order to achieve your goals.

What's next for me, It has been 3 years since I left the corporate world to become a solopreneur. I will continue working as Do Global Consulting and Diana Ocampo in specific projects related with international trade. In addition, I am also exploring different opportunities. There are a lot of things I would like to do, and I am ready to add to this new world post COVID. And if you are interested in connecting with me, feel free to reach me on my social media platforms - Instagram or Facebook as well as LinkedIn or through my website www.dianaocampo.ca

Network for the Empowerment of Women Celebrates IWD 2021 A POWERFUL VIRTUAL EVENT

~ Juliet Namugga



Network for the Empowerment of Women commemorated International Women's Day for the third time in a row on March 6th, 2021. Registered and unregistered members from across the globe came together on a virtual platform to celebrate women's achievements throughout history and across nations. This year's celebration was one of a kind, characterized by the restrictions presented by the global pandemic; women worldwide gathered via different online platforms, raised their hands, voiced their support and chose to challenge gender inequality, violence against women and other biases happening in the homes and at workplaces.

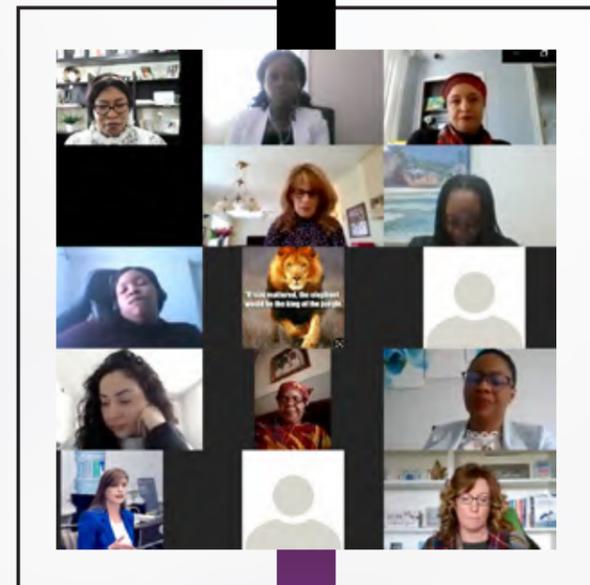
It was hard to imagine that it's been one year since the entire world began social isolation, business/travel restrictions and lockdowns while dealing with so many tragic and unwarranted events and deaths happening globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic. No one would have thought that one year since we celebrated our last in-person IWD in March of 2020, we still could not be together in one room, let alone hug or kiss each other. But true to the saying that "when life gives you lemons, you make lemonade," even when it was impossible to celebrate together in person, we made the best of online platforms and nailed it as always.

Through IWD 2021 event and other empowering events put together by the Network for the Empowerment of Women, we continue to engage, encourage, and inspire women and girls to improve themselves, live purposefully, collaborate and build sustainable business relationships while making meaningful contributions to their communities and society at large. Our efforts put together will help foster equality and bridge the gender gap. Hence, the theme for NEW's IWD 2021 event, "Women Rising - The Time is Now!"

We believe that regardless of the obstacles and circumstances surrounding women from all works of life, women continue to break barriers, rise, and take their seats at the table. It may seem slow, but it is happening, and we are not relenting.

In her powerful remarks, NEW's CEO and Founder- Mrs. Ifeoma Esonwune, during her opening speech at the event, highlighted the successes and achievements of women globally; she praised the current Vice President of the United States, VP Kamala Harris, for her resilience and focus and urged every woman to emulate her. She called on every woman and man supporting them to rise fearlessly to challenge systematic inequalities that are ravaging our society and robbing the

The day's highlight was the first anniversary of the NEW's publication, now renamed WSTAR Magazine - Women of Strength, Tenacity, Audacity and Resilience Magazine. The re-branding couldn't have happened at a better time, Now is the time that women are proving themselves strong, tenacious, audacious and resilient, and at the Network or the Empowerment of Women, we hope to keep it that way.



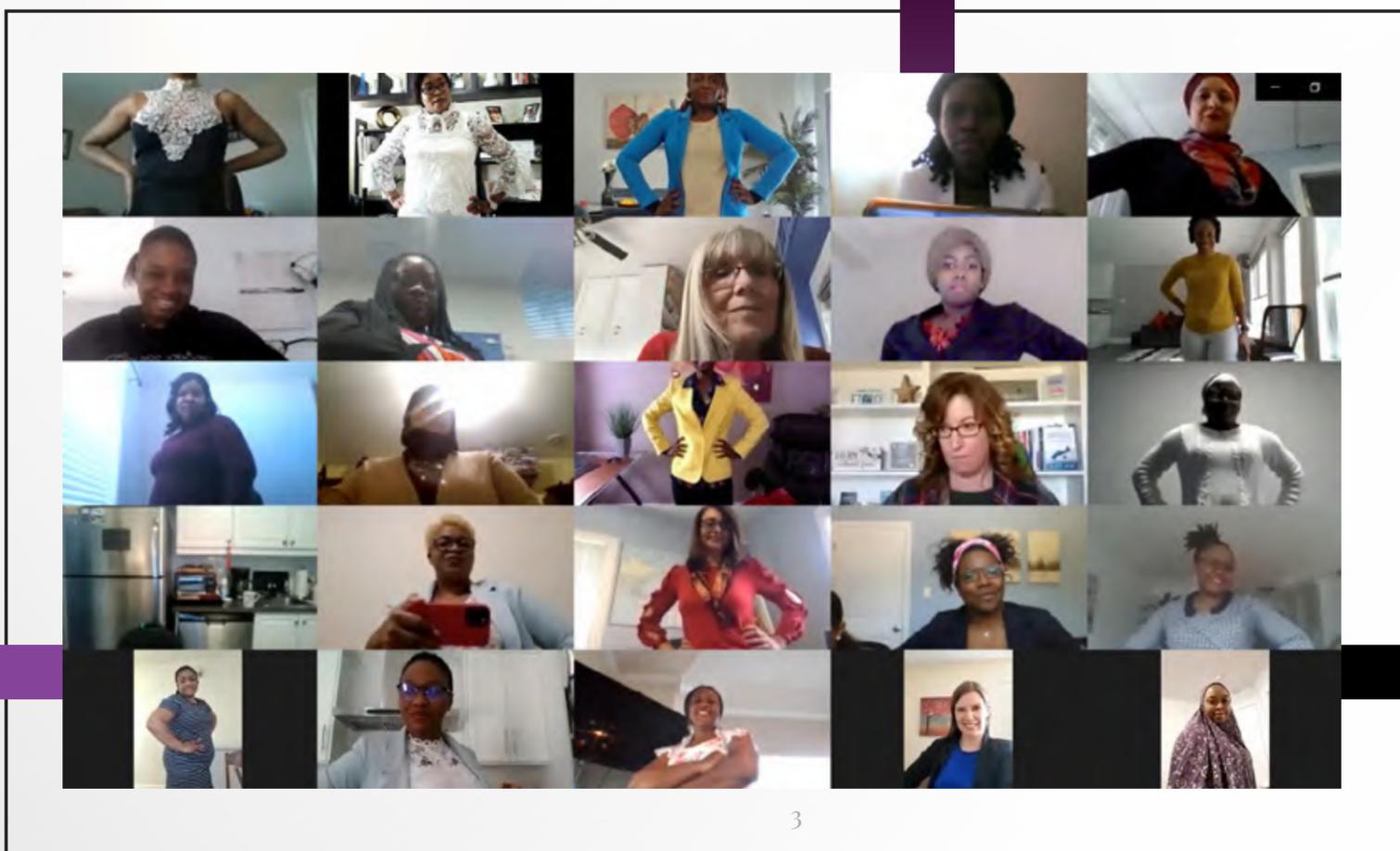
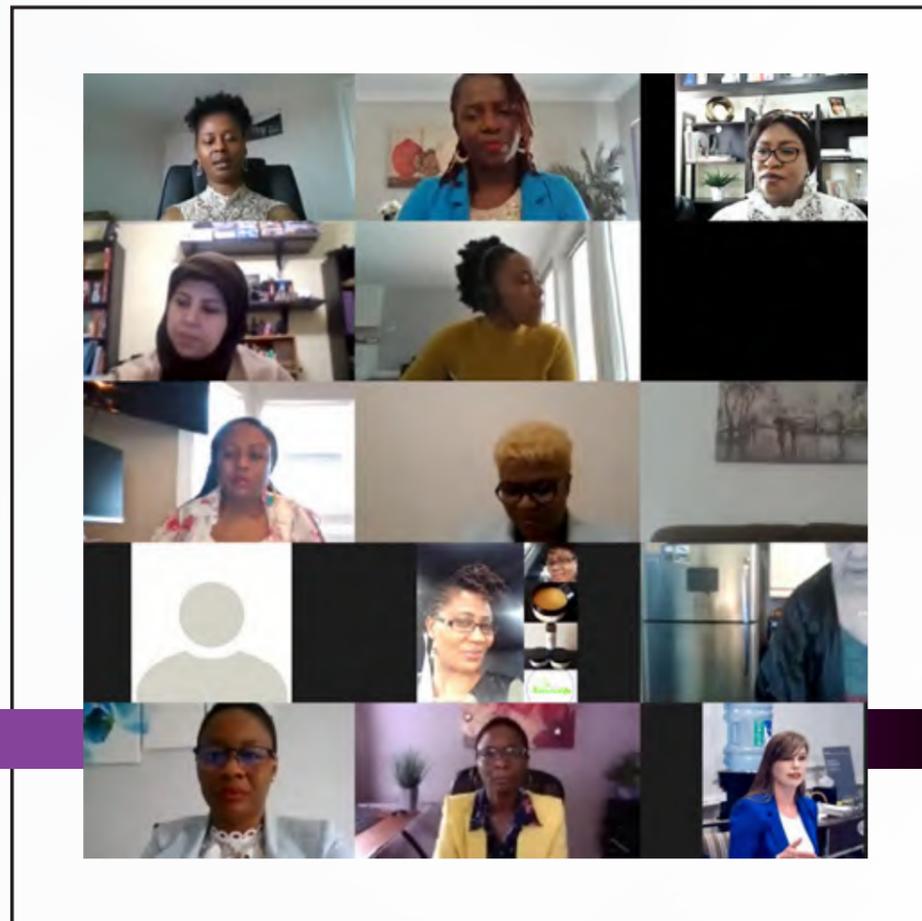
“Women Rising – The Time is Now!”

Ms. Esonwune emphasized that the magazine will continue to share the unique, incredible and extraordinary stories/works of ordinary women unnoticed in their community. These women represent the best of us and are worth celebrating. She went further to say that by acknowledging their works, we motivate them to do more and inspire others to do the same. She continued by recognizing that social isolation and the lockdown have increased domestic violence against women; now more than ever, women need to realize the power they have to take action against these injustices. She continued to say that women are all their own assets of change. We were reminded that collectively we could achieve more incredible things.

The event featured a lineup of accomplished professional women who shared their stories, offered proven tips and techniques that have helped them advance themselves and their careers, and urged all women in the room to borrow a leaf and stand firm in their purpose and dreams.

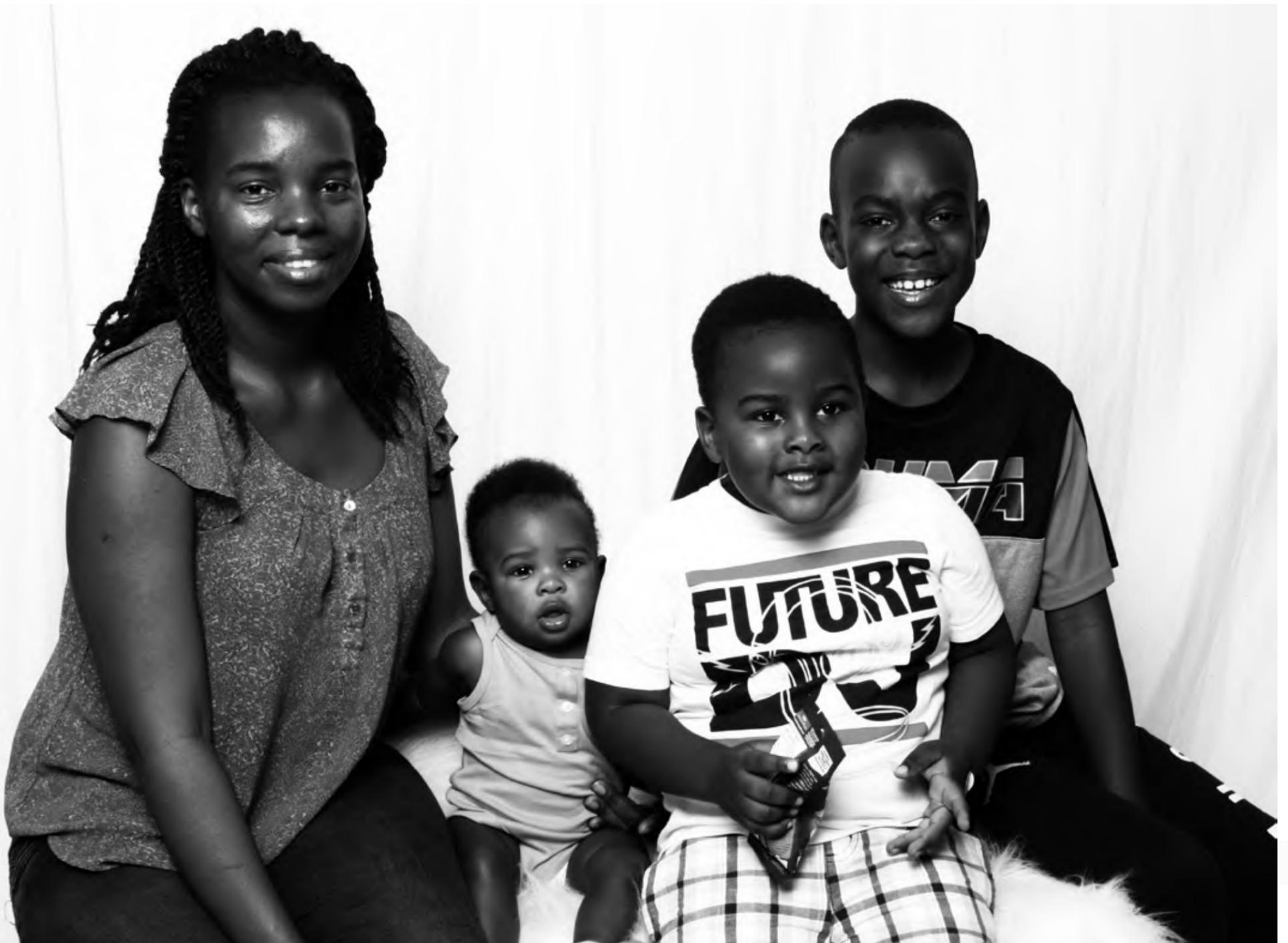
Attendees were encouraged not to let the difficulties they face wear them out or weigh them down but to hold on to their “Whys” and allow such situations to bring out the best of them. The speakers acknowledged that women sometimes find themselves in spaces where it’s evident that their voices aren’t heard or their feelings recognized. Still, they said that seeking support instead of validation during such times is usually the best way to rise above it.

The IWD 2021 virtual celebrations worldwide amid a global pandemic reiterated the need to stay fearless and be hopeful for a better world where gender equality and inclusion are possible.



Being a mom in COVID Times

Author: Esther Akurut



As the news of the COVID-19 virus started spreading around the world. It seemed so far off yet so near. And when the first presumptive case in Nova Scotia was announced in March 2020. I went into a panic mood. I had just returned to work after being off for one and a half years on maternity leave. I was filled with mixed emotions, and I was scared not only of the virus but also because I was leaving a one-year-old boy at home to return to work.

As a mother, there were and still are days I dread walking out the door, leaving behind my not-so-happy or sometimes teary children. So there have been times I have yearned for more flexibility and more time with the boys and their father at home. The thought of doing school runs or even being home early enough to get a head start on dinner. But this is not always possible because of my work schedule.

When the Nova Scotia Government declared the Provincial State of Emergency to help contain the spread of the virus on 22 March 2020, as scared as I was, I relished at the thought of having more time at home, bonding with my family. Finally, more time with family, I thought. But, just a few days into the lockdown was a shock to my system. Not only was I a mom, but I took on other new roles as well. A twenty-four-hour Caregiver, a full-time chef, a teacher, and now even working stranger hours than usual to try and balance everything.

▶ **I went into a panic mood.**

► My husband has been a trooper in all this.

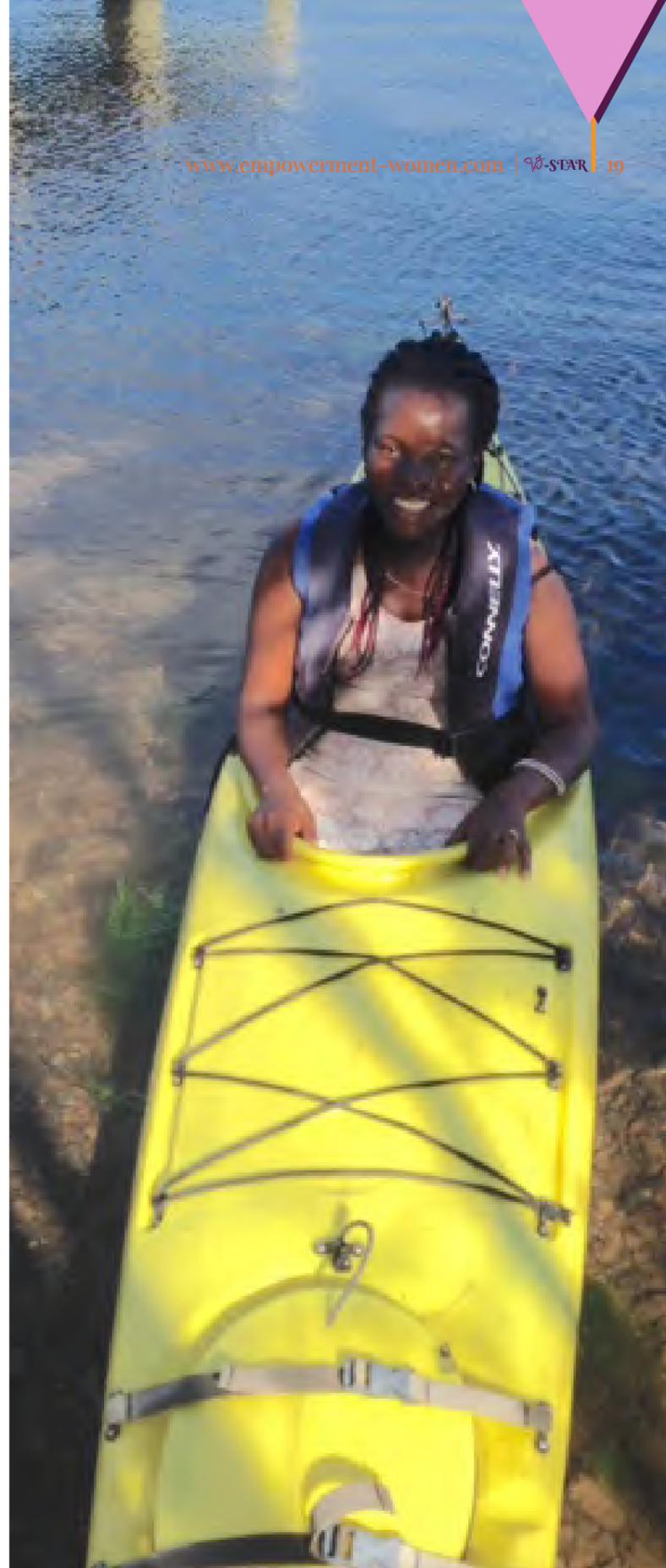
It was super challenging to put any routine into place. I found it even harder to balance all my roles at once and still give 100% of myself to every part. Halfway through the lockdown, I found myself more frustrated and angrier with everyone and everything. What I presumed would be a blessing in disguise soon turned into a nightmare. It quickly turned into a game of cat and mouse with the boys because sometimes all I wanted was just some “me time.” I had to ask the boys to give mummy some time alone to energize and meet other commitments and deadlines.

I have had to make adjustments to accommodate online learning for our 12 and 5-year-old boys and be present for our 2-year-old son with my work schedule. My husband has been a trooper in all this. He has been calm

in all this storm. There were moments when I wanted everything to go back to normal, to what it used to be.

Like many mums would relate, the moment we enter into our homes, all the children want is a mummy. Not daddy. Not toys or treats, but mummy. And the pandemic has made it even harder for the children to run to mummy and hug her after a day’s work or a quick run to the store. We now have a whole new routine that I have to follow before I can let them into my arms.

So, while all of this chaos is going on around me, I am still dealing with the emotions and fears about this global pandemic. And when and how it will end so, we can resume life again. I still have deep concerns about the long-lasting emotional and psychological effects that it will have on us all.



► To everyone reading this, you are not alone.

Iam still fearful about bringing the virus home to my family due to exposure, not just at work. But also, from a quick stop at the grocery store for essentials. I still dread that I won’t be able to self-isolate from my young family should I be infected with the virus. And having no family support in Halifax makes it even harder.

With the different international travel restrictions, bans and the risk of catching the virus while travelling, my 70-year-old mother, who had travelled from Uganda to visit us and went back with a promise to come back for another visit; and to spend

time with her grandchildren, can not come back to Canada anytime soon.

Every year, my boys always looked forward to summer vacation and our annual trip to Cape Breton to visit grandma Gail and our friends at L’Arche. But with this pandemic, these plans have been shelved until further notice. Just last month, my 5-year-old asked if we could go camping. Like many other times these past two years, our definitive answer has been, ‘There is a virus, buddy.’ In his little voice, he would respond, ‘but we can wear a mask.’

To everyone reading this, you are not alone. We are in this together! And with the vaccination rollout, there is hope. We are all fearful for our loved ones, children, friends, neighbours, ourselves and our future, but we’ll come out strong.



Being a Rider

Nagia Fawzi enjoys riding her motorbike in the summer; she finds it exciting and energizing to ride with her family. She, alongside other riders in the Province, has raised money to help different charities.

Q: Why and when did you decide to join the Dirty Divas?

I joined the Divas last Summer, and Before then, I always rode with my husband and his friends. Joining the Dirty Divas was an excellent opportunity to ride with the ladies, and it presented less pressure than I would have around the guys and worry about keeping up with them. The ladies are excellent riders, and they help me improve my riding skills and build my confidence for sure.

Q: What inspired you to be a rider?

I was always in love with motorcycles. When I got married, we only had a bike, and I enjoyed being on the back seat; it was so much fun, and I felt free. As time passed and we had kids, we sold my hus-

band's motorcycle because we needed the money for more important things at that time. But, when things got better and our kids grew older, my husband wanted to buy a new car, but I told him to buy a motorcycle instead. He agreed. We started touring on the bike again, but not for long as I got bored sitting in the back seat. I wanted more; I wanted to ride my own. I wanted to feel the natural energy that comes with riding, and the moment I could ride, I was excited, happy and super proud of myself.

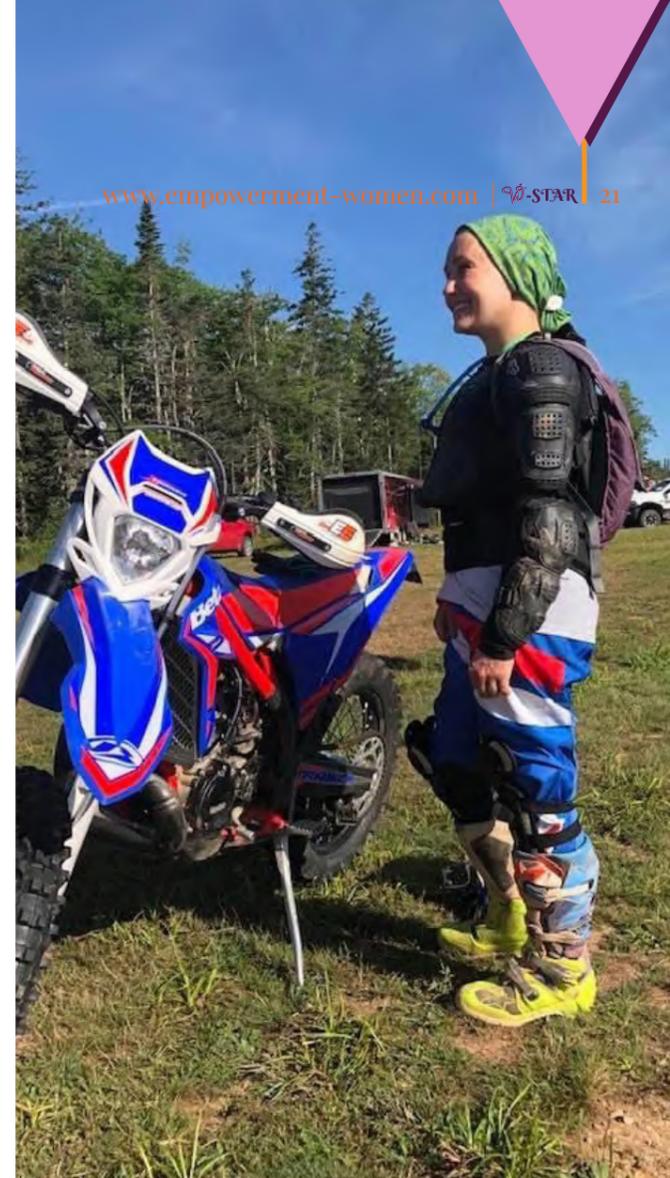
Q: How do you keep fit?

I am a very active person, mostly on my feet. I eat healthy food with low carbs. I enjoy walking the trails or running. I also keep some unique exercise routines for personal fitness.



I was always in love with motorcycles.





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Riding makes you feel alive.

Q: Do your kids ride motorbikes as well?
Yes. All three of them, and I must say they enjoy riding.

Q: Where do you want to see yourself as a rider in the next few years?
I improved my riding skills a lot this past year, and I look forward to riding more to feel more comfortable. I would like to see myself racing and competing in the future.

Q: And any other thoughts you would like to share with our audience?

If you are interested in motorcycles and still unsure if it will be fun, stop thinking and start riding already. It is so much fun, and the freedom you feel is inexplicable. Riding makes you feel alive. Don't be afraid, and it is not as dangerous as peoples think. It's challenging and will make you feel amazing once you overcome those challenges.

Nagia Fawzi



Nagia Fawzi

The Power of Identity

Forging my path to an immigrant success story

N I s h k a R a j e s h

You would think that knowing 5 languages, getting better than average grades, being the president of two University societies and bagging the Student leadership Award is more than enough for a girl who just turned 20 to be happy. But unfortunately, happiness was just as elusive as ever. What was wrong? Why was doing her best still not enough? Why was her mind filled with negative thoughts and why was she believing them? This is the story of that 20-year-old girl and her journey. This is my story.

Fast forwarding time to the present, the sky is cloudy and it looks like it's about to rain. I drink my favorite Korean instant coffee in my blue azalea mug and stew over what I should write for this article. Old feelings of imposter syndrome are fighting to get to the surface. But it's all okay now, I remember that I am not alone in this fight.

I think back to the time I first landed in Halifax. 18 years old, doe eyed and extremely excited for this next part of my life! I was accompanied by my parents who were thrilled for me but I also saw a

deep-seated sadness in their eyes as they would soon be empty nesters. When you are 18, as I'm sure many who are reading this can relate, you just want to get away from your parents and achieve that independence that you have always been craving for. I don't think many international students like me realize that leaving your family and slowly losing your culture comes with a heavy toll on your mental health. And that's what happened to me.

Two years into University, my loneliness and loss of identity had caused me to spiral out of control and my dark thoughts kept me prisoner in a cage made of lies I told myself. I didn't know who I was anymore. Was I Indian or Canadian? I didn't quite fit in either categories. Too foreign for both. Too imperfect for both. I was sort of in a limbo. It didn't help that the media was telling me that I wasn't the right color, didn't have the right body, was eating "weird" foreign food and dressed in clothes that were too "gaudy". Everything I was doing was wrong and it eventually became too overwhelming to even think. The guilt of conforming to society ate at me like a black hole. I

started hearing comments such as "I can barely hear your accent" which literally meant that I was gradually losing my identity. These were intended as compliments. Compliments for assimilating and becoming less like an outsider.

How did I get through it, you might ask? To be completely honest, I never got over it entirely. Hence the tussle with my imposter syndrome. But I promise it does get better. I know it's a very cliché line and in all likelihood has been said over 1000 times, nonetheless, you can overcome it. I was watching a Ted-Ed video on Imposter syndrome and they said that even Maya Angelou and Albert Einstein had these perceptions of being frauds and that they did not deserve their accolades. It was very comforting to me to know that there were other people out there who might have gone through similar situations and I really hope this piece of writing gives you the hope you need to get through whatever you are going through. I am not the best at words but I hope at least my feelings get through to you, who is reading this.





After years of processing, I finally feel like I belong.



N I s h k a R a j e s h

There are many ways to cope with what you are going through. Self-care is a buzzword often used these days. But what is it? We all need to find that certain thing that makes us feel at peace. It can be painting, meditation, prayer etc. I started finding peace by curling up in my blanket and watching Netflix. However, the biggest help for me was finding my community of people. Having friends who have faced the same adversities tend to be great company and a considerable support. The community I found were a few like-minded immigrant women of color. We all became close during first year of University and we still occasionally spend time together. During, the second wave of the Coronavirus, like a fairytale, I found this group in Alberta that every now and again meetup online. Because most of us were immigrants and facing lockdown together, we became extremely close even though I had never seen them outside the screen. We have become each other's support system and talk for hours at a time! I can feel their love and comfort even though I've never

met them. Like I said before, I am not completely over these negative feelings as they tend to pounce when you are the most vulnerable. It usually hits me when I have a really bad day and I'm just exhausted to do anything else. Except this time, I know I am not alone.

After years of processing, I finally feel like I belong. I am an honest, capable, fabulous brown woman and I have finally learnt to stop listening to what the world is telling me to do. And I am so thankful for having this community that transformed me from a little cocoon into a vibrant butterfly. I am working full time, on the verge of getting my PR and even saving up for a house! Never in my dreams did I think this was possible when I was younger. Being an immigrant woman comes with a lot of hurdles that are unexpected but please know that I and countless others have overcome it and therefore so will you!

Living an extraordinary life in challenging times

Ruth Thomas



What does it mean to live an extraordinary life? Tony Robbins once said “It is to live a life of meaning, a magnificent life, a life of joy, happiness, love, passion, success and fulfillment. Life experienced on your terms.”

Take a moment to think about the following: Are you living under the assumption that you have something to prove? May be your intelligence, your worth, your place in this world. Do you find yourself absentmindedly wandering the aisles, lost in a head full of worries may be about the house, the kids, money, career probably? Do you notice that as you check off the boxes of life’s to-do list – academic, job,

fitness, marriage, kids – you do not feel anything like you thought you would? The reason why life is extraordinary is because you made an effort to make it so. It is that simple!

Ingredients to live an extra-ordinary life

- Confront your fears. If there is one thing, we have all learned in life, it is that fear is one of human natures. However, when you start to have fears, the first thing is to examine your fears, although, your fear tells you something significance that you should consider the consequence, you should choose to confront it and dial it down while choosing to be courageous. According to James Neil Hollingworth “cour-

age is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgement that something else is more important than fear.”

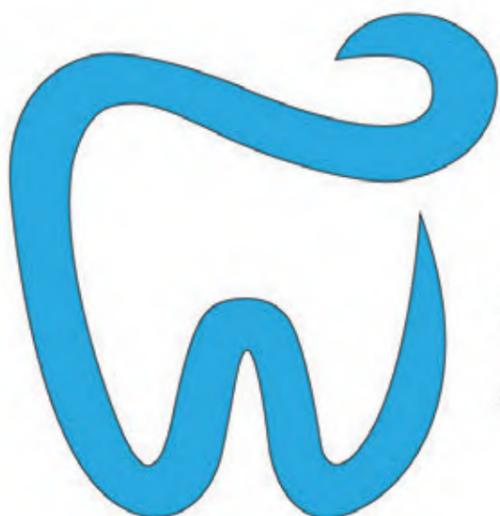
- Dare to try! If you do not try, you will never know you could. Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. Do not allow losing to affect your self-esteem. Losing sometimes happens in life and by practicing losing respectfully, you become a better person. Recovering and getting back after losing builds character and experience that will ultimately help you win. Living an extraordinary life is a matter of mindset that anyone can achieve rather than a status that one has been given!

► **Ingredients to live an extra-ordinary life**

► A step at a time,...

- Be grateful for the small achievements. Gratitude affects our attitude and over time, the attitude we carry with us daily affects our actions and interactions. Count your achievements and list them that way, you become tenacious in your appreciation and optimism creating an atmosphere for more achievements. More so, you would realize that little achievements which, when examined, are not little at all
- Stop comparing. When you refrain from comparing all aspect of your life to others and focus on looking inward, you would have less energy to direct toward meaningless activities such as social comparisons. Have you ever considered that some of the contents that are currently on the internet / social media may not be your reality but rather another's idealized, perfectly social media reality so why use the same scale to measure two entirely different realities which is a fertile ground to build self-insecurity? Social comparison ultimately leads to the feeling of lack and dissatisfaction which makes you lose sight of who you are and where you are in life
- Pay attention and be present. The benefit of enjoying life, living it a day at a time, and just doing what you love and be in the present moment rather than the past or the future is priceless. Consider cultivating being present by reducing the expectations you put on myself
- Have sometime for fun. Sometimes it is a deeper feeling of not feeling worthy enough to have the experience that stops us from having fun. Make time to follow the fun and let yourself overflow. Perhaps, you could take on a ridiculous project just because it lights you up, even if it is silly, or it is wasting time. Let it be messy, let it change directions. The important thing at this point is to enjoy every moment during the process not the outcome
- You may consider drawing strength from spirituality. Some people see spirituality as a form of buoyancy though there are exceptions, drawing from this could be a great restorative approach to implore for living an extra-ordinary life. When you realize that the world is big enough to contain every single person living an extra-ordinary life yet small enough to meet your needs and lets you even make a difference in the lives of others, you would define your extraordinary. A step at a time, and one step beyond ordinary through challenging times!
Have an extraordinary summer!

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Exciting News!!

Network for the Empowerment of Women Dallas TX Chapter hosts Empowerment Summit 2021

Theme: Stay Fearless

Featuring inspiring and accomplished entrepreneurs and professional speakers.

NETWORK FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN DALLAS TX CHAPTER



Rita Nkem Onuorah MBA
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Ifeoma Esonwune
Co-Host
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Author, Speaker, Trainer
Literary Award Winner



Dr. Madeline Ann Lewis
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Award-winning Author
CEO, Perfect Pitches by
Precious



Rita Nkemdilim Onuorah

Dallas Chapter Lead & Event Host

Bio

Nkemdilim Rita Onuorah, several years of experience as a medical coder offering vast knowledge in HCC/Risk Adjustment coding and the guidelines. Able to work on multiple tasks to achieve results, Rita understands the compliance and the importance and necessity of correct and accurate and timeliness to get projects done.

Rita received her certification from American Academy of Professional Coders as a Certified Professional Coder (CPC). She also holds a Masters degree in Business Management (MBA) from Texas Woman's University, Denton.

She enjoys guiding and helping people to be efficient and successful in their various endeavors. She also loves nurturing little children, sharing stories, teaching and encouraging them.

Cooking and reading motivational books are her hobbies. She also loves having quality time with her family.

Love Yourself



Daniel Esonwune

“Love yourself.” I’m sure we have all heard this phrase before. You may have said it to another person, or someone may have said it to you.

However, what does it mean to love yourself and how do you love yourself? The truth is, you really cannot focus on the good without acknowledging the not-so-good. Some days are good, and other days may feel like we should live it, but you must learn to treat each day as a gift. Be positive, and surround yourself with people who boost your confidence. These three tips that I will share in further detail help me to love myself more.

Every day is a new day. See it as the universe gives you a new page to write on, just like the day before never happened. Each new day is a beautiful gift you receive every morning, so why do we treat it as one, as something special? The day before is gone and will never return, so let it go, only retain the lessons learned.

Make yourself a promise to enjoy each day you get like it is your last. Take some time off each day to do something for yourself. It can take as little as ten to thirty minutes but make sure you get that time off

to inhale and exhale intentionally. You can journal; it does not have to be too fancy, but it is worth it because it will make you feel good.

“Positivity” is another common word we hear all the time. “Think positively,” “be positive,” “act positive,” the list goes on, but how exactly can we be “positive”? Like I have mentioned earlier, we really cannot focus on the good without acknowledging the bad. The way I do this is by smiling. I always try to keep a smile on my face, but just because I am smiling or laughing does not mean that my life is perfect. It just means that I have acknowledged what I cannot change, and I am willing to move on with a positive attitude. Another great way to do this is by giving yourself positive affirmations: “I am beautiful,” et cetera... The words work best when said out loud to yourself.

Often, your surroundings can change your perspective on things. Humans are, by nature, very social. We like to surround ourselves with other people, but the caveat is sometimes, you become like those you surround yourself with. Negative people influence you negatively, while positive people influence us positively. I am very grateful for the type of friends I have.

I choose friends who I feel good about and who make me feel good about myself. They are positive people, and we say positive things to each other. So, surround yourself with good people, and you will find yourself becoming a better person. Also, you only have one life; why bother spending it miserably with people who do not make us feel good.

In conclusion, take steps to love yourself more every day. I hope that you can find more love and beauty in yourself and your life. Keep in mind this is not something that you achieve overnight; it takes practice.

Next time you look in the mirror, I hope you fall in love with what you see.

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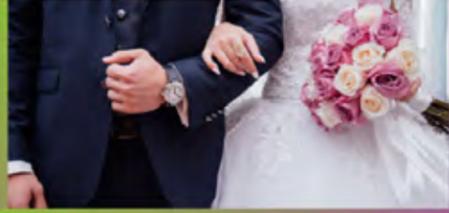
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