



Letters
To
My
Sisters

by Ebony Sherman

To My Sister in Transition,

Have you ever been in a place where you wanted to make a decision, but you were afraid to do so because of how hard it was? Well, if you have, this is written for you.

There are moments in our lives when we reach a certain capacity that requires us to move onto something different. Whether it is a job, a moment in our career, or a relationship; there comes a point when we must move from what is, so we can embrace what is to come. That point or moment in your life is called a 'transition'.

See, the thing about transitions are we never really know how things are going to turn out. We become so familiar with a place or relationship that sometimes we become intimidated by the unknown. At times, that intimidation can cause fear to come in and cripple us; convincing us that where we are is good enough. Nevertheless, there is no need to settle for good enough when better is calling your name. People think that transitions are just physical, but in reality, they are mental, spiritual, as well as financial. Sometimes we get so used to the same thing that when something different comes and knocks at our door we are hesitant to answer. Not on the grounds that we don't want better, but simply because we don't know where this particular path is going to take us.

When I joined the military, it presented so many different challenges and concerns because I was so used to doing things on my own. I soon realized that this was not just the biggest transition of my life, but also the greatest transition of my life. When I counted up the cost of things I've done and the things I've lost, I realized that it was time for me to take a chance on myself. It was time I proved to myself that I had what it took to achieve all that I aspired to. Making the transition from a civilian to becoming a soldier was one that transformed my entire life. I sit back often and can say without question, I would not be who I am today without that moment, that realization, and that decision.

So, you may ask, is it easy? No. Will it be hard? Yes. Will you get everything right the first time? No. But, is it worth it? YES!!

You already know what it is like to be where you are, but wouldn't you want to know what it feels like to accomplish more? The thing about life is, it has a way of forcing you to move outside of your comfort zone and make moves you wouldn't ordinarily make if you were comfortable. Staying comfortable is only going to allow you to see what is possible but becoming uncomfortable is going to allow you to experience the endless possibilities.

Sis, do yourself a favor and transition! Transition into that place that you see yourself in every night when you close your eyes. Transition into that place of financial freedom. Transition yourself into that place where nothing is impossible, and everything is in arms reach. Let this be your reminder that even if no one understands, do it anyway. Don't ever settle for people's opinions when it goes against your dreams. Stop selling yourself short because others don't understand.

We never want to get to a point in our lives where we just settle because it is easier. There is a famous quote that says, "anything worth having will not come easy".

See, most times when a person reaches their moment of transition, it is because we have become so uncomfortable to the point that we realize we are no longer growing. That hunger we once had in our current state is now gone, and we become excited about exploring a different future.

Keep Going!
Ebony

To My Overwhelmed Sister,

Hey Sis... As I was entering the coffee shop today, I saw you carrying all those bags, and the look in your eyes had me concerned. It appeared that what you were carrying was pretty heavy. I just wanted to tell you that I see you. I see you trying to juggle everything all at once. See, it's okay to want more out of life, it's okay for you to be ambitious and it's okay not to have it all together. However, what is not okay is watching you get overwhelmed with the cares of this world.

When we become overwhelmed, that is an indication that we have taken on more than we should. See the thing about life is, we become so engulfed with the cares of it that we miss out on the lessons and the experiences that life is supposed to teach us. Life is meant to be lived, and right now, you are only existing. You're allowing the weight of the world to sit on your shoulders when it doesn't have to. The beautiful thing about where you are right now is you get to make a decision; you get to make a pivot in direction on your path. You get to decide where you want to go from here.

I remember when I reached a point in my life where I was always consumed with stuff. There was a whole lot of motion but no movement. That was because I was trying to juggle my life and everyone else's. I took on the responsibility to save the world when that wasn't my job in the first place. At the time it seemed like a good idea because I wanted to be liked, appreciated, and accepted for being everything to everybody. When in reality, that thought process was causing me more pain than pleasure. I thought I was accomplishing something, I thought I was making a difference, but the truth is I wasn't. Every time I started working on something, something else would be added to my plate until one day I just broke. I screamed and cried because I felt like a failure. I felt like since I couldn't get ahead or since I couldn't do for others the way I desired, that I had failed. But in reality, that was just God's way of realigning me. See, when we become overwhelmed it is an indication that we are trying to figure out a plan for our lives that already has one. I came to realize that the feeling of being overwhelmed is not necessarily negative. It is a reminder that we are not in control. When we step from underneath His shadow, we then step into a world of "what if?..." That then causes us to try and rewrite a story that was already written.

So, Sis, do me a favor and just breathe. At this very moment, I don't want you to wonder, I don't want you to think about anything, in this moment, I just want you to breathe. As your lungs are inhaling and exhaling, you have just released all of your cares, fears, and worries. You have embraced peace, love, and assurance that you are right where you need to be to blossom.

Sis, I've been where you are, and came through it. Go wash your face and start again.

With Love,
Ebony

To My Shattered Sister,

Hey Sis! I was walking down the street and I saw your front door open. One of your neighbors told me that you had moved out. As I started back down the street, I saw a trail of broken pieces. As I started to follow them, I realized that they look familiar. It came to me that they were shattered pieces of you. Suddenly, I had a flashback to the thing that shattered me. Some of these pieces reminded me of abuse, some reminded me of regrets, and I saw a piece that reminded me of disappointment. I know getting to this place didn't happen easily, by far. It's just like things kept happening and suddenly you look up and you find yourself in a million little pieces. You run from place to place not realizing that you are running from the broken pieces of yourself.

Do me a favor, Stop Running.

Once you stop running, and acknowledge the fact that you are shattered, you have reached step one of the healing process. The next step is figuring out where you want to start. For now, let's start with the brokenness. Ask yourself this question, what broke me? Did you start breaking yourself and then others came along and added to that brokenness? The cares of life? The death of a loved one? Was it abuse? As for me, I started the breaking process by making decisions that I thought would cause others to be happy. I wanted to be accepted by my family and peers, so I did things that made them happy, not realizing the damage I was doing to myself. When I saw the self-inflicted wounds that I caused, I would just get a piece of tape and would self-medicate, hoping no one saw the wounds I was causing to myself. To me, that was better than acknowledging that every time I told them yes, I was telling myself no. All the while, robbing myself of opportunities that I deserved. As you can see Sis, I've been there, I've been that shattered person that was using tape to keep herself together. Eventually, I realized the tape stopped working and was no longer strong enough to keep me together. There were pieces of me scattered all over the place. Oddly, the great thing about being shattered is knowing that you can be put back together, but not just by anyone. You can only be put back together by the one who created you before you were conceived, even before your Mother ever met your Father. Before your existence, your story was already written.

See, our lives were designed to be purposeful and impactful. Your life is already a story that others are reading, the only thing that you need to do is turn the page. Sis, take the pieces that belong to you and own them! Own the pain, the disappointment, the depression, the regret, own all of it. Once you've owned those pieces of yourself, you can begin to heal. You know what broke you, now use those same things and fix you. Everyday make the conscious decision that you won't stay in this place of shattered pieces. I want you to know that you won't look like anyone else, we weren't designed that way. Instead, we were created to look like the one that created us.

So, Sis, gather those broken pieces and place them where you want them. Everybody talks about the process of creating a diamond, but you are so much more than something shiny being forged from pressure, you are a mural. You are the reflection of what it looks like to when something once shattered, is put back together, and molded into a masterpiece.

With Peace,
Ebony

To my Bound Sister,

Hey Sis... I think it's time we had this conversation.

I was out for my daily run, and I heard something sounding like chains rattling. I decided to follow the sounds and when I arrived, I realized it was you. Bound by chains of addiction, abuse, and low self-esteem. What I have come to realize about bondage is that it first starts in the mind. We think ourselves into a place of defeat. Once we reach that place, we then take a seat and stay longer than we should.

When we take a seat at the place of defeat, we get too comfortable not realizing that we are limiting ourselves. In taking that seat, we are causing stagnation in our lives because of a moment; a misstep in our path. Once your mind is in a place of bondage your body follows. You then start making all of the wrong decisions because you have allowed yourself to believe that you can not come out from where you are. But Sis, you can.

It first starts with honesty. Have a truthful conversation with yourself. The hard truth is, even though you might've had help getting where you are, the starting point was first in your mind. Now, it's time for you to fight like hell! Fight to come out of what was meant to be a temporary place! Do me a favor and look at yourself in the mirror and remind yourself that your freedom has already been paid for. Over 2,000 years ago, a man hung his head and died that you might be free from your fears, feelings of insecurities, and regret. See, the thing is, if you think a thing, then you can will a thing. Often, we look to others to save us or to come to our rescue when the reality is we must take that first step.

I know what being bound feels like. Bound by religion, the opinions of others, and even bound by my insecurities. The turning point in my life was when I realized that I can break free. I broke free from the lies that I told myself to survive; I broke free from how others perceived me; I broke free from generational curses. When I realized that I could break free and stay free, that's when I started transitioning from being bound to embracing freedom. See, what I have come to realize is that sometimes being bound is a lot easier than being free. Being bound allows me to place the blame on things instead of placing that responsibility on myself. Yet, I refuse to have excuses on why I'm bound, preferably, I want to offer reasons of why I'm free.

I'm free because:

I choose to be honest with myself no matter what others think.

I choose to believe that whomever the Son sets free is free indeed.

I choose to use the key of peace to release me from my fear.

I choose to use the key of forgiveness to release me from my mistakes.

I choose to use the key of love to release me from hate.

Sis, remember your freedom has already been paid for. There is no need to cash in your freedom because of a temporary moment. You might be thinking to yourself, "I've been this way all my life, I know no other way". Well, maybe it's time that you take a real chance on yourself. It's time to close your ears to all those things and people that remind you who your mom is or that your father was never there. Close your ears to everybody telling you what you can't do. It's time to open your ears to all the things that you can do! See, your ears are the womb to your life. What you hear, you will give birth to. So, hear me when I say this, "you are free, and never to be bound again."

Go ahead and spread your wings, because that's what eagles do, they soar.

Be Encouraged,

Ebony

To My Successful Sister,

Sis!! Look at you!

Somehow you made it to this place of success. Let me just say how dope it is to see you stand in the place where you are. I know getting here was tough. Many days you cried, had self-doubt, and probably wanted to give up. So, at this moment I take the time to celebrate YOU!! Celebrate the fact that when all the odds were stacked against you, you still managed to come out on top. You deserve to be celebrated and to celebrate all that you have accomplished.

See, people like to limit success based upon having materialistic things but that's only one form of success. If you have managed to walk out of an abusive relationship, I celebrate your strength. If you stood up to a person who was bullying you, I celebrate your courage. If you have completed your first semester of college, I celebrate your follow-through.

See, Sis the thing about success is that it comes in all forms. You just have to recognize the fact that it doesn't have to be big to others for it to be big to you! You have cried, fought and many nights did not sleep for this moment. I know that you still have things that you want to do and that you want to accomplish, but right now celebrate!! Never allow someone to box you in when it comes down to achieving a goal that you set. Once you set a goal and you meet that goal, you have just become successful in that area. Never let anyone take away your ability to celebrate yourself.

The thing about success is, we experience a whole lot of failure with it.

Success does not come without failure and failure is not the final result. Failure is just an indication that what you thought you knew, you had to learn. One of life's greatest teachers is what we fail at trying instead of what we succeed at doing.

See, failure has a way of reminding us that patience is truly a virtue. I think most people neglect the strength, courage, and pain that it takes to stand in a place of success. Nevertheless, Sis, you are HERE! You are at that moment where you can look yourself in the mirror and say, "I am successful because I have known failure."

I just want to say that I am proud of you! This is just the beginning of becoming all that you desire to be. Still, before you go out saving the world, celebrate all that you've already done. You deserve it!

I SEE you Sis! Love,

Ebony