

“The Book About M.E.: Mind Elevation” by Chanekka Pullens Excerpt

The mind is a terrible thing to waste. It is the most beautiful and useful component of the human race. You have the individual option of using your mind to change the face of the world. You have the individual option to change your mind.

The mind is the powerhouse of the body. The way you are able to control your mind determines the life you will live. If you exercise your mind to be able to reject and protect itself from negative influences, you will feel vast pride in having the strength to do so. But one has to take into account the term ‘exercise’ in my previous statement. You will not be able to have the strongest mind and will power overnight. Take for instance the great Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. or Malcolm X, even Ghandi. These great minds were established through will and exercise. Your mind can too, be an exceptional factor in changing the disadvantages of the nation, the world, or even just your life.

Negative circumstances and temptations surround us every day, everywhere, all the time. But the circumstances shouldn’t necessarily determine your reaction. For your reaction will always determine the outcome, your outcome. One must remain aware that there are components that can influence the mind. Mental illness, mental disease and age. Yes! I testify that beyond these three reasons, there are none that should determine the way one can use their mind. A critic might ask, “What about race?” I will then ask, what race has the ability to control their mind

more? White? Black? Asian? Though the skin vary in tones, the mind is a singular organ. Yes, it may differ in size and functions. One may find math easier than others. But what has that to do with Race? A critic might then ask, “What about geographic conditions?” I will then ask, a man who is raised in poverty doesn’t have the same choice and freedom to use his mind as a white man raised in the suburbs? Granted, certain circumstances does derive from living in certain conditions. A man in poverty may be introduced to harsher environments and lifestyles. But the man in poverty has the ability to control his mind. To rise above the trap that has been placed to keep him and his brother down.

So no, race and geographic conditions does not determine the way one can use their mind. As previously stated, I believe through observations and discussions that mental illness, mental disease and age are the only factors that should oppress the strength of the mind. My most valued observation is through that of my own life.

Testimony

I was born on August 16, 1991 in Nashville, Tennessee to my mother Latonya Pullens and father Christopher Bell. At the time of my birth my mother was sixteen years old and my father was fifteen. My mother had already birthed a son, Kelonzo Pullens, who was born on July 10, 1990. And as math would concur my mother was fifteen at the time of his arrival. One could not imagine the numerous obstacles and disasters that my family would have to face throughout the years.

One of my first memories would have to be when my older brother Kenny and I was at the home of my great grandmother. I vividly recall us sitting on the floor watching “The Lion King”, as I am around three and he is maybe four. I’m not sure why this particular memory decided to stay in my mind while others has vanished without a trace. As we were sitting, my father walked in and spoke with my mother before he helped me put on my jacket. I remember it being either pink or purple and made of a satin type fabric and puffy. Bubble-like. He proceeded to pick me up before we walked down a flight of stairs and pass a tall white gate that protected the pool. I know that my father fastened me into my car seat that held its position directly behind the driver. I can recall us driving down the street with lights and signs glazing and shining brightly. He was taking me to McDonalds, this

I know, but I don't remember turning into the parking lot or anything afterwards that night.

The next memory that I would have of my father would be the last. I remember that I am four years old in 1995 and the church was our location. I remember a lot of people mourning, even a person or two walked outside. I was sitting beside my mother I believe, before being interrupted when someone grabbed me. I'm not sure who it was or why they thought it was this great idea to hold me over my father's casket. My mother tells me that I was telling my father to wake up and that I wanted to take a nap with my daddy. Until this day, I remember looking down onto my father's corpse. I have the slightest clue why this particular memory has made its permanent imprint onto my memory. But it has. And many nights and days, I remember looking down.

One would assume that the life of a four year old would get better after she buried her father. He was only twenty years old. It haunts me to know that his murder was premeditated. Planned. Thought about step by step. Deliberate. As he stepped from his vehicle one night outside his mother's home. Boom! Gone. Bullet to his cranium. Executed. I can never imagine my grandmother who was maybe steps away, having to discover her baby, lifeless in the street. Like an animal. Like nothing. All because of jealousy. Granted, my father made a choice to live a life where there are only two real outcomes. I'm sure that he was aware of the

consequences of his actions. But nobody ever thinks that it would be them. You know. How could you? Why would you?

Throughout the following years I would be blessed with four more siblings, brothers to be specific. On April 1, 1997 my mother would give birth to her sixth and final child. Yep, in seven years my dear mother had given birth to six children beginning at fifteen years old. There is a lot of stress and responsibility that comes with having that many children in poverty. Over the course of the years, we would inevitably be divided. Three were 'taken' (and I use that term loosely and strongly simultaneously) while three of us stayed. Kenny, Seneca (the baby), and I stayed with our mother while William and Devonta went to live with their grandparents. D'tearius eventually went to live with his aunt for a few years before my mother regained custody of him.

Leading up to 2001, my family had: lost our home when my youngest brother's father robbed a gun store and brought everything back to our house; which resulted in us being evicted and homeless. He was also the person that shot my mother in the leg. I was young but I remember my mother lying on the front porch bleeding out. I remember the ambulance and its lights. I remember crying in the living room in the arms of one of her 'friends'. Next, another home had burned down with everything in it. Kenny and I had to be brought home from school by a teacher only to see it gone to the ground, all physical memories were now ash.

Also, Kenny and I had to go into a foster care system and went through roughly three families in maybe six months. But it wasn't because no other family would take us in after six months, it's because we were back with my mother. After going through so much pain and misery, she remained strong and did what was needed and required to get her children back, instead of just leaving us there as she could of. And I will forever be thankful to the woman I call my mother for that. We also went through our first awful tornado. My mother was gone and Kenny and I had to hide in the closet for what seemed like forever. Thank God my mother was safe, but our only place of fun was destroyed. The joys of living in the projects, one park. When the park was gone imagination came into play even more. My brothers and I would build forts with sheets in our room and sometimes we would climb on the gate that protected the electrical unit. One day Kenny got caught on it, and it ripped through his flesh from his wrist up his arm maybe five inches. I remember seeing meat and bone which made me terrified. There was even a time when Kenny and I had to go live with my uncle, his wife and two kids for a while. But finally, the move to Knoxville, Tennessee was in July of 2001.

For years I allowed anger and resentment to control my heartbeat. I allowed the struggle and system to control me and my mind. Don't get me wrong the only damage I created was to myself. I damaged my mind and my body. But just as it

was easy to allow my negative circumstances to control my life, it was even easier to absorb the positive entities in life. Ironically enough it was through a book.

Even more ironically it was through my book; my journal. One day while reading it I had an epiphany. You're living an uneasy life because you have been living an uneasy life. Get it? From the liquor and marijuana to the sex and deceit. I had been living an uneasy life. I must admit, it wasn't all bad, and although I lived in poverty, I am satisfied with my childhood overall. I noticed that it's not until your innocence has been taken that you begin living a guilty life.

Mind elevation. You must take control of your mind. Give your mind the chance to be exceptional. Give you the chance to be remarkable. You don't have to be the smartest or the prettiest to have a beautiful mind. And no, you don't have to become perfect to use your mind to its fullest potential. For no human is. But you must have absolute control over your own thoughts. Your own dreams. You must keep a tight grasp of your own destiny. Because this world will take your bright destiny and turn your life into darkness. If you let it. If you control your mind, you control a fraction of the world. And you gain the ability to allow it to multiply. You may be lost, confused, and afraid to step towards greatness. But always keep in mind that the greatest steps worth taking will sometimes be the hardest first

steps to take. Remain focused, dedicated, strong, and self-aware. Stay focused on the goal, dedicated to the journey, strong throughout the obstacles and self-aware of your ability to achieve all the above and beyond. Regardless of all the “No’s” and “You cant’s” that the world tells you and that you may sometimes tell yourself. I guarantee the moment you silence the doubt of the world and the doubt in yourself, you will sense a weight lifted from your back. You will begin to appreciate your mind and your ability far more. And once that happens, once you begin to speak up for your beliefs and conquer your fears. You will control the fraction of the world that is yours and you’ll love it!

We cannot speak one thing with our mouths while doing the opposite with our bodies. So practice before you preach. And overcome before you lead. The cycle of greatness will begin to spread, just as the cycle of weakness. Give our children the option and chance to learn from our mistakes. As I learned from my mother. As she had her first child at fifteen, yet I am twenty-three without experiencing my first. Or how hard it is to live in this world without receiving a proper education. My mother was not able to graduate high school because of her circumstances, yet I am less than ten classes away from receiving my Bachelors Degree. This is a testimony that it is possible.

But we must act now. My mother constantly told me that I was beautiful and smart. So when a man spoke of my beauty I had no need to fall in love with his view of me. Because I already knew of my beauty, because my mother told me daily. If she hadn't, who's to say that I would become attracted to every man that told me so. How many statistics would I of became? How many children would I of birthed? How many projects would I have lived? Only my Lord knows. But my mother, a single woman and through her experiences, created me. Created this woman. These words, this wisdom, this hope and burning passion in me. Now, if one woman can change the life of one child. Image what thousands of women can do to inspire thousands of children. To give thousands of young boys and girls hope and a choice. Teach your child the right way. My boyfriend constantly says "who's to say". Exactly, who's to say what is right and wrong. Society? But what isn't right is young men getting buried into nature without seeing adulthood, or women getting buried into statistics and losing hope. That isn't right, and this I know beyond a reasonable doubt. I'm tired of witnessing young mothers allowing their young baby to curse at her or speak the words that comes from the mouth of an adult. She laughs, not aware of the man she is creating. Another brother who will have two inevitable outcomes for his life. Death or jail. Because he was raised to think that is okay to curse openly and proudly, and gets kicked out of school. Forced to turn to the streets, sell drugs, or find comfort and peace in a gang. If

only, his mother or father would of told him to stop. Told him "No, don't say that word". Held a stern foot and strong mind instead of laughing him into a disastrous future.

A queen inherits her throne, rather she believes in her kingdom or not. The power and beauty is passed down from birth. Once you take your first breath, another queen has risen. Once you take your first step, a queen has embarked on her journey. And once a queen falls, her true self will be revealed. Either she will rise back up, take another step, and continue her legacy. She will empower those whom she embraces, rather a king or queen. Empower them to rise back up, and continue their destiny. And this will become the cycle of the goddess. She will brush the figs from her gown, wipe the tears from her eyes, and continue her destiny, with strength and dignity. Or, she will physically rise, leaving behind her mind. She will become content, on serving the world for their amusement. She will begin to lose control of her, because she has lost control over her own mind. That who controls the mind, controls the body, and through her body, her life will be controlled.

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