

LESSONZ LEARNED



Workbook
Part 1

Lessonz Learned

Self Help Workbook

Authored by She216

Lessonz Learned:

Workbook

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INTRODUCTION



LESSONZ LEARNED

Hello, and welcome to the Lessonz Learned Self-help Workbook! This workbook was designed not only to accompany the hot new urban drama Lessonz Learned. But it was created to help you reflect on YOURSELF! After many readers read the novel, it left them thinking about their own lives. Thinking what was next for them and what would be the best course of action to take, regarding success for their life. But even if we get this light bulb that goes off in our brain, and it tells us where we want to go or what we think we desire to do, then what? Sure, you can create a 6-month, 1-year, 5-year or even a 10-year plan to accomplish your goals. But what about the in house clean up that needs to be done?

All of us want this magnificent life that's built around financial freedom. The ability to do what we want, when we want. But in order to truly be happy, we have to first deal with the inner hurts and pains that will cause us to still be unhappy. Even when we have achieved the so-called level of success. You still hear the news stories all the time! About the rich and famous who have either ended up in a psych ward from completely losing their functioning mental capabilities. Or even worse, they have decided to just end their lives altogether! So many people think that if you get money, then you'll

get happiness. But I'm sure if you were to speak with anyone that has any level of financial gains, they will tell you the contrary.

They will give you the cold hard truth that most of us don't get to hear. Like, "Yeah, I'm rich but my mother still died of Cancer." Or, "Yeah, I'm rich but I still have nightmares about my uncle that molested me when I was a kid." And even worse, "Yeah, I'm rich but I hurt a lot of people to get to this level. And now I can't enjoy all these riches because of my guilty conscience." The list goes on and on.

Today, our counterparts known as the "Millennials" face so many emotional challenges that many of us who are 30 and older may not have had to endure during our adolescent years. Or if we did, it wasn't on such a major scale as it is today! Unless you've completely cut yourself off from society and you're living under a rock somewhere, then you know that this younger generation is severely depressed! One of the most popular outlets for expressing depression is music! Today, every genre has tons of music spewing out sadness and low vibration tones that indirectly speak to the brain saying, "I hate my life". While directly contributing to the mental health of our younger society.

Just put on one of your favorite songs from one of today's best selling artists. You're bound to hear something about heartbreak, unhappiness, wanting to be in a better place, or just sheer attitude and hostility towards the world and everything in it! The musical paradigm has truly changed from when you think of a time like the '80s, '90s, or even most of the early 2000s! It was about having a good time, having fun, and loving life. Nowadays music and other mediums like movies and the internet, showcase so much doom, gloom, and hopelessness. You can always find someone somewhere on social media either suffering from PTSD, (Post-traumatic stress disorder) from something that happened at some point in their lives. Or you can find someone just complaining about not being where they want to be in life and wanting more, in this age of "prosperity" that everyone is looking to gain from. At the end of the day,

rather you're dealing with depression, PTSD, or just being unhappy because you're not living the life you think you should be living. All these people have one thing in common. They think that being rich and having money will solve all their problems and make all the crazy unwanted thoughts in their heads go away.

Well, I hate to be the one to break the bad news to you, but it won't! I'm going to let you in on a little secret. Do you really want to know what the key to success is? Now, this is life-changing information I'm about to give you. So, you might want to take a seat... Ok, are you ready? The key to success my friends is knowing the truth!... I know, you thought I was going to tell you about some get rich quick scheme, but no. If you don't know the truth, then how do you know when you have obtained a true level of success?

“What truth”, you might ask. “What truth do I need to know to make me successful?” That's a great question! And just to let you know, everyone's truth varies. It's specific to the individual's life experiences. Your truth may not be the same as my truth! Let me elaborate, take me for example. From my 34 years of living, I can pretty much say that I've struggled with having patience. It's something that I know for a fact to be true. And building a stronger tolerance for patience is something I battle with daily! With that being said, this is one of MY truths about me! And I can apply that knowledge accordingly to make a better impact on my decisions in life! I'll elaborate further. With me being a person that struggles with patience, it would be a disservice to myself to make quick choices regarding anything! Especially when it comes to life-altering changes! If I wanted to buy a house, it would be in my best interest to work with someone like a realtor, a close friend or family member, that can help me pace myself in making such a huge decision! I would want someone guiding me in the process so that I don't make hasty choices. Since I'm impatient, if I act alone, I'd probably make a decision just because I'm anxious! It's important to put parameters around yourself, and act within them so you don't go out of bounds in your life.

Now, remember, I said this was one of MY truths! And although it's applicable to me, impatience may not be applicable to YOUR truth! You may be the opposite, where you have all the patience in the world! And you know how to evaluate things and weigh them out accordingly so that you don't make choices because you're in a rush. But what if your truth is that you're an undercover sex fiend, or to be politically correct, a Nympho. Pretty extreme but just follow me. You're patient but with you being a Nympho, it's hard for you to stay focused because you're always wanting to have sex! You've dotted all the I's and crossed all the T's in your life, done everything the right way, and built a successful business for yourself. But yet you can't enjoy any of it because of your truth, which is that you have a sex addiction. And it keeps you from feeling fulfilled.

If we don't do a self-evaluation on our lives and figure out what our truths are, we will never experience real success. And when we do achieve a level that we think is a success, our truths will always come back to remind us that we still have a lot of unfinished business to do.

It may sound cliché to say, but you honestly have to be happy at whatever point you are in your life, rather you have money or not. And the only way to being truly happy and successful is to know yourself! Find out your truths! And if some of your truth is toxic then you have to eliminate that toxicity out of your life! Besides, whoever said that all truth was good truth anyway?

Knowing your truths will better your health, both mentally and physically. And knowing them will be the aid that you need to ensure financial freedom in your life. Financial freedom is just the manifestation of you knowing yourself and what you're capable of doing. But if you don't know your truths you will only self-destruct when you get to any level of financial gains. Remember, if you haven't dealt with your truth they'll always come back at the most inconvenient times to remind you.

This is where the Lessonz Learned workbook comes in to aid and

guide you! Sheila, the main character in the story has endured so many issues that many of us are going through right now in our lives! Rather its pain, suffering, or poverty, we can all say that we have some pretty embarrassing and hurtful truths about us that we'd never want anyone to know! This workbook was designed to help you reflect on certain obstacles that you may have endured in your life. These matters have secretly caused you to hide in your "turtle shell" as I like to say. You cover up with material things like fancy clothes, cars, and other material gains. To hide what you perceive as ugly truths only so you can display what you think to be what people should see from you. Not knowing that your ugly truths still show to people rather you verbally express them aloud or not. You'd be surprised, but certain actions like wanting attention and wanting to be famous, can a lot of times stem from someone not wanting to deal with the very issue that's actually eating them alive inside. They'd rather portray a façade than to actually deal with their truths, own them, and grow from them.

Lessonz Learned is going to force you to deal with the truths you want to ignore. There's no need to be embarrassed or ashamed because you are not alone! Lessonz Learned is striving to create a community of people that want to use conversation as a tool for healing and growth with like-minded people!

This workbook will be broken up into two sections. There will be different topics under each section. A wide range of topics that are entailed in Part 1 of the Lessonz Learned series was incorporated into this workbook. It's important that you respond honestly, open and true! This is your truth! No one can change that except you! And you would only be hurting yourself by not being completely truthful. This workbook is intended for you to gain understanding and acceptance of your truth. Acknowledging what it is and incorporating that into a plan of action for your life moving forward.

Without any further ado, let's get started!

SECTION I

Pain

1:1 Abandonement

KJV Bible

Isaiah 49:15-16

“Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you. Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands; your walls are continually before me.”



In the opening of Lessonz Learned, the story starts out with a bunch of drama to say the least! You've got a teenage girl named Sasha with a newborn baby that doesn't have a clue on how to raise a child! And the stress and struggle of

her trying to figure it out drove her to abandon her newborn and run away from home. Such a drastic and selfish solution to all of us looking from the outside in, right? I mean, who in their right mind would abandon a helpless little baby, right? Many of you reading this workbook may have been abandoned as a child, adolescent, or even as an adult! Abandonment is that thing that no matter what age you are, it hurts like hell! Abandonment leaves behind real scars that sometimes never heal! And Sasha abandoning her daughter Sheila in Lessonz Learned was just the beginning of the many neglects Sheila would endure throughout the course of this novel. If no one left you on top of a table and walked away when you were a little baby like Sheila, then what was your abandonment? Was it a parent leaving you as a kid to figure out life on your own? While they went to work all day and raised a "latchkey kid?" Was there someone in your life that started off taking care of you as a child, and then they abandoned their responsibilities at some point? Leaving you helpless, or even worse causing you to go into foster care?

Were you in a meaningful committed relationship with a significant other, and they just up and left you? Never to be heard from again? Were you working at some corporate America job and you were just let go, without a warning? Practically rejected, dropped, without any provisions to help you move forward? While each scenar-

io I just mentioned is different, they all have the core underlying tone of the issue of being left behind. Have you ever seen a flock of birds all flying together as one? Or a heard of animals, all traveling together, with the head of the heard being accountable for all? Well, even nature tells us not to leave behind the ones we love. But yet, some of us humans have missed this critical life lesson. And in return we go out into the world unleashing our lifestyle of non-accountability. Hurting whom we please along the way, as long as our own selfish needs have been fulfilled. Not caring how our victims are left feeling vulnerable, broken, and scarred with trust issues. Ironically, many people that neglect their obligations have been neglected at some point or in some area of their lives themselves! You would think that if one has been abandoned, then certainly they wouldn't want to do that to others, right? Quite the contrary my beloved. Have you ever heard the saying "hurt people Hurt people?" There couldn't be a better choice of words to give an explanation.

So, with knowing that critical piece of information. It's important that victims of abandonment find ways to deal with neglect in a healthy manner so that they don't become a victimizer. So many things we hear everyday are considered simple, but clearly its easier to hear than to actually do them! Which brings me to my next point. ALWAYS TREAT PEOPLE THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE TREATED!

Time to Self-Reflect!

What abandonment issues have you faced in your life? Has this issue or issues served as an obstacle in your life, preventing you from having mental health as a result? What triggers the emotions that take you back to your past abandonment issues?

Now cut your losses!

What opportunities, friendships, and other benefits have you lost out on as a result of dwelling on your past neglect issues? Make a list of pros and cons that have come with you holding onto being abandoned.

Analyze

Once you've self-reflecting and made your list of pros and cons, weigh it all out! Have abandonment issues contributed to your life in a good or bad way? Has it served as your demise? If so, will you take all that negative energy and use it as fuel to build yourself into being the type of person that DOES take their obligations seriously?! Trust me, I know personally! It's hard as hell to deal with being abandoned. Especially when it comes from the people that are supposed to protect you the most, YOUR PARENTS! But what I've also learned is that we're either going to be victims or survivors. No matter which one you choose to be they both take a lot of energy, for either better or worse! Instead of being burdened by that pain, you have to channel it into being a better you! Not only will you be better at the end of the process. But there will be one less abandoned person in the world because you chose NOT to be like the person that abandoned you! You should never want anyone to feel the pain that you've felt! And that is how we move forward on the quest to healing humanity. One person at a time.

Time to Self-Reflect!

Now cut your losses!

Analyze

SECTION I

Pain

1:2 Parents and their children

KJV Bible

Hebrews 12:11

“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.”



Oh boy, the topic of Parenting! The one thing in life that doesn't come with a manual and gives you step by step instructions specific to your kid! Most of us just want our children to be better than we were. We want to give them everything we never had!... Well, that's one side of it!

What about a baby having a baby! In Lessonz Learned, we witness the spiraling downfall of what could happen when 15-year old Sasha from the hood has a baby. Not even fully educated herself, or even employed for that matter. She couldn't even begin to give her daughter what she never had! Sasha was still trying to get what she never had from her own parents! In return, her parents ended up playing the role of Mommy and Daddy to Sheila.

According to the CDC, as of 2017, 194,377 babies were born to teenagers between the ages of 15-19 in the US. That's still a high number of teenage mothers, AKA babies having babies! And while that number has been on a decline thankfully, its still an issue that exists! And as a result, we still have kids being raised by their grandparents. Even if you're not a teenage parent, its still a struggle being a parent as an adult. There are so many traps and snares set up in this world we call a society. It's only natural for any parent to not want their kid to succumb to the dangers that await them in the streets. Frank, Sasha's father, thought he had it all figured out with Sasha, as far as raising her. Him and his wife Nora, lived a modest lifestyle. Just a normal middle-class family going to work every day. They raised their kids to be smart, polite, and have good morals. They also encouraged them to get a good education so they

could get a good paying job with benefits once they were adults. That doesn't sound like a bad plan, right? I mean, it sounds like the plan that most American families have set up for their children. But what happens when that child you sheltered from the world all those years picks up everything you tried to hide from them.

As parents, we can do everything we think that's right for our children. And give them everything they ever needed. Only to have them still not follow the righteous path we set out for them. Rather it's their teenage years, puberty, or peer influences, evil still manages to introduce itself to our kids! Maybe through sex, drugs, music, whatever the tool used, the devil became acquainted with your son or daughter at some point. And now the real battle begins, follow the world or remember what Mom and Dad taught me. The book of Proverbs, chapter 22 verse 6 in the bible, tells us to train a child in the way he or she SHOULD go; and when he or she is old they will not depart from it. Well God must have known what he was talking about! Because most of the times, that son or daughter will be reminded of the values put in them as a child. But most of the times it's a very long and dark tunnel taken before that light shows up for them at the end of that tunnel.

But there's another side to this, your son or daughter! As parents, sometimes we don't question our kids at all. We just assume that they're happy, not having any worries in the world. After all, what problems could a kid have, right? Well that couldn't be any further from the truth! Kids today have tons to worry about! With bullying at an all-time high, we even have kids committing suicide. Taking their own lives because the harsh ridicule coming from their peers at school or on social media is just too much to bare. And they feel like they would rather be dead than endure such harassment! Sometimes a lot of kids and teenagers suffer with confidence and have low self-esteem. While as parents, we may shower them with gifts. And remind them that we pay the bills, and that they're lucky to have a roof over their heads. Unfortunately Mom and Dad, that method really has no effect on your kids. Be honest, they didn't ask to be born, so they expect those things

from you! Its really important for us to talk to our kids on a daily basis, pick their brains, and get as much info out of them as possible! Ask about their day, meet their friends! You need to know everything about your child, as much as possible! And I know, that can be hard! With a world full of bills and obligations. Most of us work 40 hours or more a week. And when we finally get home we just want to relax! But I'm here to tell you, if you don't assure your kids and find out what's going on with them, you will find out in the worst ways later.

In the novel Lessonz Learned, we know that Sasha ran away from home and abandoned her baby. Which is what we briefly discussed in the last section. But digging a little deeper. Sasha let her parents know in a letter, that she felt like she wasn't good enough to be their daughter. And she compared herself to her older sister Denise. Denise is a scholar, straight A student, and does any and everything to please her parents. While Sasha struggles to pass to the next grade level each year. And she hangs out in the streets with people that more than likely don't have her best interests at hand. Whom happen to be gang members by the way. You would think Sasha wouldn't dare intermingle with gang bangers. Since she comes from a loving family that provides for her, right? Well sometimes, the things we give our kids are the very things they don't need. Most of the time, they just need the reassurance from you, to let them know they're good enough! If we just scold our kids for all their wrong doings and never praise them for their accomplishments, they'll look to the streets for someone to applaud them. And tell them everything they never heard from Mom and Dad. Just when Nora and Frank thought they knew their daughter, they were in for a rude awakening. And it cost them greatly!

Time to Self-Reflect!

What type of childhood did you have? Do you feel like your parents are someone you can look up to as role models? Why or why not? What do you need from your parents that you feel you didn't receive from them during your childhood or any point of your life?

To the parents, I want you to answer the same question above. Now moving forward, as a parent, did you use your parent's as a model of how to raise your kids? How has that worked out for you? And if you didn't for whatever reason, has your method proven to be better than the way you were raised?

Time to Reflect, to my teenage Moms and Dads ONLY!

First and foremost, know that you are loved! And as a community, the adults are responsible for all of you! Rather you have a support system from your parents, relative, or friend. Consider this to be your social circle of support! An artist, by the name of 2Pac, who ya'll may be too young to know of, came out with a song called Brenda's got a baby back in the 90's! It had a very emotional video about a young teenage girl that had a baby on her bathroom floor. And it portrayed the struggle and backlash she received from her family, and child's father. I strongly advise you to watch that video if you haven't already seen it. As a community we all have to be accountable for the children, teenagers, and the youth! With that being said, I want you to be encouraged to stay strong and pursue all the things you said you wanted to do as a little boy or girl. Keep that dream near and dear to your heart! Of course, it's going to be extremely hard, but you can achieve it. And in the process, you can teach other young kids and teenagers that teenage pregnancy isn't the rout to go. Help create one less teen pregnancy, while still achieving all your goals. You are a beautiful young soul and God is with you. In this section I want you to make a list of everything that's hard for you to do right now. Rather it's taking care of the

baby, or getting homework done. Then I want you to make a list of what you want to achieve in life, like going to college, getting a career, owning a business, whatever it is that your heart desires. And finally, write down all the names of anyone you have as a support system. Once you've done this, analyze all your information, and put together a plan from your list that will include your support system helping you get over each obstacle. As well as helping you achieve each goal. And don't be afraid to reach out to your community! Some of the best support comes from strangers! You just have to ask!

Analyze

Review your answers from the questions related to you above. And I want you to ask yourself, "what now?" To the teenagers, or young adults, if you've had a negative experience from your parents growing up, what will you do with that? Meaning, will you allow it to stunt your growth as a person having a human experience? By wallowing in sadness and regret. Wishing your parents were everything you THINK you needed them to be to you? Or will you decide to find the missing pieces of your puzzle on your course of life? Trusting that everything will come together as it was designed to, for a greater purpose, bigger than yourself perhaps.

If you're a teenage parent, analyze the plan you've built, and ask yourself, "is it realistic for me?" You have to be honest about your resources and the options you have available, which may be even more limited now that you've got a baby. But don't let that discourage you! There are unlimited opportunities for you. If you stay consistent and take advantage of the resources you do have, each course of action you take will lead to more stability for you and your child.

And finally, to my adult parents. After reflecting on your responses, it's important for you to consider if your method of parenting has been healthy for you and your kids. Meaning have you aided

them in areas they needed you to. Or did you brush that off and aid them in what you thought they needed instead? Its important not to beat yourself up, because all of us as parents only know to do what we know! But in that same sense, as the old saying goes, when you know better, you'll do better! No matter what age your child is, young or an adult. You are always going to be Mom or Dad. And at no point is there ever a moment when you've done all that you can do! And never is there a point when your child, young or an adult, doesn't need you!

Time to Self-Reflect!

Time to Reflect, to my teenage Moms and Dads ONLY!

Analyze

SECTION I

Pain

1:3 Emotions

KJV Bible

Romans 12:2

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”



“In the words of a broken heart it’s just emotion taking me over. Caught up in sorrow, lost in my soul. But if you don’t come back, come home to me, darling. Don’t you know there’s nobody left in this world to hold me tight. Nobody left in this world to kiss goodnight...”

While this song is one of my favorites from Destiny’s Child! I can’t help but to get caught up in the lyrics! This tune sings a sweet melody, but the underlying tone of emotions and the many unstable feelings that come with it are all too real! I mean even the H-Town group from the 90’s, ironically named H-Town, said it best. Emotions make you cry sometimes! But most of all, they can make you fall in love!

We see a lot of emotional turmoil take place in Part 1 of the series Lessonz Learned. We are introduced to teenage Sasha who has a baby, and runs away from home as a result. She is feeling an array of different emotions. Which all range from feeling scared, to feeling lost, alone, and sad. A failed relationship with her high school boyfriend didn’t work out the way she thought it would. And now all of her plans for the future seems as if they were put on hold now that she is a teenage mother.

Interestingly, in Part 1, the story fast forwards to Sheila, Sasha’s daughter. And we are introduced to her at the end of her senior year in high school. Without giving you all the juicy details from the story. Its safe to say that Sheila felt a lot of resentment towards her parents for them not being there for her like they should have been. So now, we see how that lack of attention from her parents

has transpired into her looking for love in all the wrong places. Her first real boyfriend, who happens to gang bang and sell drugs, isn't the best choice in men. And Sheila begins to learn the hard way that things aren't always what they seem.

Emotions are a crazy thing! They can be subconsciously rooted in us from situations that happened years ago! We may think that we have conquered or healed from a matter. Only to find our emotional baggage too heavy to carry. As the bottom of the bag breaks and everything in it is scattered all over the floor. The sadness, misery, and suffering seems to be right where we left it, looking for some place to fit in within the new life we try to create for ourselves. Just as Sheila thought she would be everything her parents were not, including an emotionally stable being. She is in for a rude awakening as she is taken on a journey of betrayal from lovers that she thought would be there for her through it all.

The other crazy thing about Emotions is that they can cause you to act out of spite. Maybe someone betrayed your trust. Or maybe someone stole from you. In those instances, your natural reaction is to have a reaction. And that reaction consists of any emotion that fits the matter, according to you at least. In return, because you have a reaction that causes an emotion, if strong enough, that emotion can cause you to react out of vengeance. And we all know what happens when we look to get revenge. Somehow it always seems to come back to bite us where the sun doesn't shine.

Why do we allow our emotions to drive us into making decisions fueled from what we are feeling? And more than ever, today we live in an overly emotional unstable world! Look at the insane frenzy everyone had over the Popeyes chicken sandwiches. 2019 marks the year when people officially lost their cool and began to physically assault Popeyes employees because they ran out of chicken sandwiches! Yep, I wish I was making this up. But its just another example of how the majority of the world lets their emotions rule them. And 9 times out of 10, we make really stupid choices when our decisions are fueled from feelings.

We see the crazy TV shows about people murdering their significant other in a fit of jealous rage from finding out a partner was cheating. Or you may hear a news story about two people being in a heated argument and one person kills the other person, all over a small dispute. Its really a terrible thing to witness this day in age. There are people out here that actually feel like they can't live without another person. Rather the thought of being single brings about those emotional feelings of gloom, doom, and hopelessness. Emotions have made many emotionally unstable souls come to the conclusion that if they can't be with the person they want, then no one will have them. And well, I think you know how that tragic story always ends. Someone winds up in a body bag more than likely.

We all have to be accountable for our emotions and our actions! We feel all types of emotions throughout the course of just one day! I really think we are emotionally bi-polar, especially here in America. From happy to sad, mad to cheerful, disgust to shame. Then to fear which causes an anxiety attack. We go through all the motions of emotions! Your feelings almost act as a rollercoaster. Taking you up high, which is the best part. But before it all falls down, being on an emotional high can make you feel like you're in the clouds, and no one can bring you down. Then comes the drop. And how is it that the fall is always quicker than the ride up?

It's really no different than being in a relationship. We all know how it feels to be in love, or think we're in love, which is actually just lust most of the times. But in the beginning stages of any relationship, its like two people are almost inseparable. We want to spend all our time with our partner and get to know everything we can about them. The dopamine in your brain is pumping out an all time high of good feelings! And you think your partner is the best thing since sliced bread.

Then you get the dreaded phone call. Ladies, you've probably had a woman calling you at 3am questioning you asking why your number is in her man's phone. But wait, he was supposed to be your

man, right? Or fellas, you've been telling all your friends about this great girl you met, and how you think she could be the one. Only to have one of your boys tell you she's the same girl that's been dating his other friend for the past year now. Now everything we thought made us so happy makes us sick to our stomach. The person you thought you loved and wanted so much is now the knife that stabbed you in the back. Everything you thought you knew about this person, you've come to find out that it's all a lie. Your emotional rollercoaster has officially dropped.

Of course, it would be silly to limit emotions to relationship matters only. The death of a loved one, loosing a job, having a house go into foreclosure. All of these things burst our bubble of false security that we live in. And most of the time we're left scrambling to find some sense of protection, to put us back at ease. But I'll tell you, security and ease are things you should never put in the hands of another person to give you.

It all goes back to being accountable for our actions. So many things happen on a daily basis, from small to simple matters, that will always put your security at risk and make you uneasy. That guy that just merged over into your lane while driving without putting on his turn signal to give you a heads up, well my friend, he just put your security at risk. That person that just walked past you and bumped your shoulder without saying excuse me, that person has just made you uneasy. You see, only you can make sure you have a real sense of protection. You are the only person that can put yourself at ease. The man merging over into your lane, are you going to swerve to avoid him hitting you, or are you just going to take the hit. That person that just bumped you and kept going as if nothing happened, are you going to let that turn the good day you were having into a bad day?

One thing I can say is that no matter how nice you are, no matter how much you do for others, no matter how truthful you are, people are always going to do what they want to do. Neither me nor you can control that. We'd like to think that if we just do good then

good will come to us from everyone. In a perfect world I'm sure that would be an easy principle to live by. But in this screwed up place called life, the majority of people are out for themselves. And most people aren't turning around to see who they bum rushed in the process to get by and get what they wanted!

With that being said, you have to be ruler over your emotions! If you continue to let the things people do or say to you affect how you feel, then you're going to live a miserable life. Is it ok to let people walk all over you? Does this mean not to speak your mind when you are being mistreated? Absolutely not, but quite the opposite! It's important to express what bothers you, because if not people will always take advantage of you. The difference is expressing your feelings and letting go! Most of the times even after we've expressed ourselves, we still hold on to all the emotions that came with the initial offense. Use conversation in a healthy way to verbally unleash those feelings. Hey, I'm not telling you to curse someone out, that's only going to backfire and now the feeling of anger will rule the moment. When expressing yourself don't beat around the bush. Mean what you say and say what you mean. When that guy cuts you off in traffic, beep the horn at him. When someone bumps you, look at them and say excuse YOU. Not excuse ME, you didn't cause the offense, never be a push over! But say it in an appropriate manner of course. You don't want to fight fire with fire.

So many times we don't say what we feel! And as a result the feelings that we keep bottled up can turn to anger, aggression, and spite. And from there an unhealthy reaction stirred up from feelings kept inside and not being expressed. You are always going to have feelings about something! But the way to deal with them is to unleash them verbally. Say what hurt you, say what made you mad. Don't just act hurt, don't just act mad. Keeping feelings inside doesn't bring resolution. If left verbally unleashed in a healthy way it will always bring forward a dispute. Start dealing with your feelings beloved!

Time to Self-Reflect!

Do you consider yourself to be an overly emotional person? When expressing your opinion, or in conversation is it hard for you to keep a calm tone when someone doesn't agree with you? Have your emotions ever caused you to verbally or physically attack someone?

Now cut your losses!

What scenarios or situations from your past act as an emotional tool in the type of person you are today? Did something hurt you from your past and now it affects how you operate in that area of your life today? Examples would be how you treat others. Is your treatment of others a result of how you have been treated throughout the course of your life? Has it caused you to have trust issues?

Analyze

From this moment forward, you have a very imperative choice to make. Are you going to choose how you want to feel every day? We think that how we feel should be based on what someone has done to us or what was done to us. And that has no truth or substance at all! Right now, in this moment, I want you to decide how are you going to live your life as far as feelings are concerned. Are you going to let past hurts and pains dictate rather or not you make new relationships? You have to make the choice today rather or not you will let your mind keep reminding you of past feelings that mean no good for you or your life moving forward. Today, you have to ask yourself will people control how you feel, or do YOU control how you feel. The choice really is yours, its all up to you.

Time to Self-Reflect!

Now cut your losses!

Analyze

SECTION II

Relationships

2:1 Sex

KJV Bible

Ephesians 4:2:

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.”



Sex! It's everywhere! Television, internet, radio, movies. Its impossible to escape it, and if you haven't heard about it yet, it's sure to be coming to a home near you! Not only do we hear so much about sex, and see so many sexual images put before us daily. But we also feel

the pressures that come with the topic of sex! Who's doing it, how they're doing it, where they're doing it? Social media has helped to open the flood gates to giving you a more personal take on sex. And the majority of people today aren't afraid to invite you into their virtual sex room. But how has the experience of actually engaging in sex been for most of us? Some will say it's the next best feeling to being alive. Then you've got some on the other end of the spectrum saying that sex is overrated. And unfortunately, you have a percentage of people that have actually experienced sexual abuse. From rape to date rape, molestation, or just physically violating anyone in a sexual type of manner. Sex seems to fit under this huge umbrella of good and bad experiences!

Sheila has an interesting sexual journey. And Lessonz Learned dives straight into it in the first part of this 3-part series! We've been riding right along with Sheila to witness all of her huge sexual milestones so far. From her actually losing her virginity, and sadly to her being raped. Sex includes all of the topics we discussed in the previous sections. Abandonment, parenting, children, and emotions. Its insane that all of these topics can spiral from the one topic of sex! Sex is such an intertwined act. It's not something you should just do for fun. But it really affects every part of your life. From your sanity, to your mental health, and definitely your physical health. Sex is nothing to take lightly by far. But for some reason, a large percentage of people don't make the connections that sex has

on their everyday lives.

Sheila was practically heartbroken when she found out that Lawrence, the guy that took her virginity, wouldn't be the man she'd be with forever. And from that moment forward, it was almost like a good girl turned bad effect. She would be on a journey of sexual escapades. Looking to sex as the connector for all the scattered pieces in her life.

Men and women have a very different approach to sex, for the most part. While a lot of women today aren't so conventional in their thinking anymore when it comes to having a husband, family, and the white picket fence. Ironically many of them still look for the benefits that come from this conventional type of union. Like consistency, honesty, trust, and security. In other words, many women, and men, still have parameters put around sex when they are engaging in it, rather they know it or not. Some women like to think they are just having fun and treat sex as a recreational sport. But its impossible not to expect something from your partner as a woman after you've been intimate. Our chemical make-up just won't allow us not to. Maybe you think you're ok with just having sex with no commitment. Yet you still subconsciously are attached to this person rather you know it or not. Say you, as the woman, have a casual sex partner. And both of you are in agreement that you are only having sex, nothing more, nothing less. Well, what if you were to call your partner one night for sex, and they say they're not available because they're scheduled to have sex with someone else tonight. How would that make you feel? Does it mean you don't have any expectations from this person? Because technically your relationship is only based on sex, right? While it's a very minimal expectation, to you at least, its still an expectation. Even under the terms of saying you two are just having sex, isn't that some type of agreement? The two of you had to come to a verbal agreement, and the only expectations put on this relationship is to supply sex.

Now that you can't even get that from your sexual partner, it sends you on a quest. A quest to get what you want! So you call up the

next guy, maybe. What point am I trying to make you might ask? Well, hopefully now you realize, even if you are just having sex with a man, you're still expecting something from him. And most times we avoid relationships, thinking well, if its only sex then no one can expect anything from me I'm not willing to give. Well, sex is still an expectation in a sex only agreement, so what happens when we don't supply that sexual expectation? It's no different than not meeting a need in a committed relationship. When your needs aren't met, it can make you question a lot of things about yourself. Like why me, am I good enough, or I don't deserve this.

Men on the other hand, while it may be a little harder for them to initially get attached to someone. Their sex only agreement goes a lot deeper than they think. A huge percentage of men, if not most, are dealing with depression, and its not really spoken of too much when it comes to men. So many men have been sexually abused themselves. And they've never dealt with that pain, most haven't even told anyone about the offense. Society projects this image that men don't have weak moments, and that men can handle anything. Well, that's simply not true at all! And sadly, a lot of men don't know how to be vulnerable. More than likely it comes out in the bedroom for them. Men, when you're having sex, it's like an emotional escape from the trials and tribulations of the world. It's a moment when you feel you can unleash all that emotional toxic build up. And at that moment, the only thing that matters is the climax. You release, and it feels great, right? Well, it's great for the moment, only to be filled up again from a day of agonizing tasks at work, to a mind full of thoughts that have secretly given you PTSD that gets worse and worse by the day. So what do you do? Well, since it can be difficult for most men to express themselves, it may come out from an intense workout at the gym. Having some drinks at the bar with your friends. And oh yeah, getting together with that chick you made the sex only agreement with. No strings attached right?

Well let me ask you. What are you expecting from that woman during sex? You might say nothing at all. But that couldn't be any further from the truth! You're looking for her to give you that feel-

ing! That feeling that takes you away from the world! You're looking for that secret place she gives you to unleash all your stress from the day. While you unleash in her she receives all that energy, rather good or bad. And in return you both create subconscious expectations. You are the giver and she's the receiver. You're expected to give, and she's expected to receive. The law of nature works in a crazy way doesn't it?!

Now this woman that you have a sex only agreement with, isn't too thrilled to hear that you have plans with some other lucky woman you're in a sex only agreement with as well. How could she have the right to feel some type of way? Besides, you both discussed what it was from the beginning, right? She knew not to get her feelings involved because you didn't offer any emotional support, just sex. But what about the emotions that come from sex? Its hard to stick to the details of a contract when you're put in a situation where feelings are an automatic! It doesn't matter if you're a prostitute on the streets. That moment when you're sexually connected to someone, you are literally connecting to that person unknowingly. And while the emotions may dwindle away the further apart you are physically from that person, the connection still remains, unknowingly. In that moment, even a prostitute is looking for financial security, safety, and still pleasure most of the times even though it's a job for her. You see, it always goes back to the subconscious expectations that we have, even when we think we don't. Everyone is expecting something from everyone, no matter what title you put on the relationship. This world is built on the perspective of a give and receive mentality. And sex is definitely apart of that. Even when it comes to sex, you can't expect something for nothing. Ladies, sex shouldn't be something you use to gain financial and emotional security. And fellas, sex shouldn't be used as a tool to let off your daily stress, nor should it be fuel for your ever-thirsting sex drive. Sex should have a common ground for an act between two people wanting to supply each other with the same and or equal benefits. Long story short, there is no such thing as just sex my friends.

Time to Self-Reflect!

Are you still a virgin? If not, how old were you the first time you had sex? Was it consensual, or was your virginity forcefully taken from you? Did someone take advantage of your vulnerability and deceive you into having sex the first time? Did they promise to be someone that was actually there to protect you? Was your first-time having sex with someone you loved?

Now cut your losses!

The ideal situation most of us want is for sex to act as an action that brings about love, and maybe even a family! Unfortunately, many of us haven't been so fortunate to experience sex in that manner. Many of us have been sexually scarred and abused. From failed relationships, betrayal, and worst of all, having sex forced from us from a family member, friend, stranger, or adult in some type of authority position that we thought we could trust. Only to have them deceive us and take a part of us that we could never get back from them. If you fit any of these scenarios, how has the betrayals from sex caused you to act as a person. Do you expect to find true happiness one day with someone? Or has that dream dwindled away because of the sexual betrayal brought against you?

Analyze

This is a time when you HAVE to ask yourself a SERIOUS question. "What has sex done to me?" Has it made me a better man or woman? Have I used sex in the way that it was intended to be used, amongst two loving people who express their love for one another through the act of love making? Or, has sex been your downfall? Have you been using sex as a scapegoat from the many issues of life? Has someone convinced you that you're only good for sex and nothing else? Or do you use sex for monetary gain only, claiming to be emotionless and using sex only as a tool for financial gains?

Whatever scenario fits you, apply it to yourself and weigh it all out! With AIDS, other STDS, pregnancy, and date rape on the rise, we really have to put sex into its perspective category in our lives! Realizing that it's not a game, but another doorway to the physical and mental stability of our lives. Have sex with much caution! Once you give it away you can't get it back.

Time to Self-Reflect!

Now cut your losses!

Analyze

SECTION II

Relationships

2:2 Commitment

KJV Bible

Galatians 6:9

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”



Commitment - 1. The state or quality of being dedicated to a cause. 2. An engagement or obligation that restricts freedom of action. Synonyms: Responsibility, obligation, duty, burden, pressure.

Wow! When you just read the definition of what commitment means it can be intimidating to say the least! Clearly it takes a tremendous level of discipline and dedication to make a commitment to anything! I guess that's what makes a sex only agreement more desirable to some, right? What makes many of us incapable of being committed? And this doesn't apply to just relationships! We have daily commitments that require our time! Such as going to work, going to school, raising a child, or caring for a loved one. Showing commitment is the distinction between those who are willing and unwilling. It's the difference between those who do and those who don't. And many of the times, it's the divider between the have and the have nots!

Commitment is what makes the world operate in order! Without commitment, there would be no free market as we know it here in America! Because if no one was committed to doing the jobs, becoming the entrepreneurs, or creating technology that advances the world, then where would we be? Commitment is the glue that actually holds this thing called life together! It is a commitment between two parents to stay together for the love of their children that brings forth mentally healthy and stable adults into society. It is commitment from a business owner that puts in countless hours to create something that could employ hundreds and thousands of people, who in return are now able to feed their families. Commitment is what Dr. King had! Dr. King had a vision to unite people

based on their character instead of their skin color. And in return, his commitment has created a country that is unsegregated and has made a way for equal rights to the African American community.

In part 1 of Lessonz Learned, we quickly see how Sasha and Chauncey's lack of a commitment to their daughter Sheila has had an effect in her later life. Both of her parents had no serious commitment to raising and teaching her all the things she needed to know to achieve any success in life. Sheila now as an adult looks for that commitment in men that she never got from her parents. Although her grandparents raised her and did an awesome job, Sheila still feels a lack for something. It can be difficult when someone else has to take over your commitments because you were unable to. For whatever reason you were unable to deliver, you have now created a name for yourself. You're now known as the person who doesn't take anything serious, or the person that never finishes anything. Or more commonly, the person that doesn't commit to anything or anyone.

As we follow Sheila's journey through Lessonz Learned, we find out that it is hard for her to commit to things at times. She skips from college to college, and she has had multiple jobs. It seems like she's just trying to find this place of her own where she fits in. But in the midst, she's destroyed most of the opportunities she gets along the way, in search of the permanent fit. How many of us have done this over the course of our lives? We take on something, rather it's a new love interest, a new job, or a new project. Telling ourselves that this is the one, this is the opportunity for us. Only to find not even halfway through it that we're not up to the task anymore, so we throw the towel in early. Commitment has now become giving up. And now we've just added to the list of the many things we just gave up on.

Well, interestingly, the topic of commitment seems very fitting for the last topic of this workbook. We started off in the very opening of this workbook talking about truths! Ironically, we take on so many obligations without weighing it all out at first! 9 times out of

10 we haven't done a self-examination on ourselves. Therefore we don't even know who we are! We don't know what we're capable of, if we can ever be capable, and if it's something we're even interested in! It all goes back to not knowing our truths people! How can we make a commitment when we aren't even committed to getting to know ourselves and our strengths?

Interestingly, it seems as though Sasha easily gave up her commitment to Sheila. The daughter that she was supposed to mold and raise was something Sasha quickly discovered she wasn't capable of doing. She wasn't willing to commit to her daughter because by her own admission, she was still young and wanted to have fun. Many of us would be quick to judge Sasha on the outside looking in. As just a selfish person who has neglected her responsibility. But is that truly the case? I mean sure, your teenage years aren't at all a good time for any teenager to bring a baby into the world. You've got so much to attain and so many things to learn about the world. But at the very least, we can say Sasha knew some of her truths at least! At least she was honest with herself! She knew she didn't want to be a mother at 15 years old! Would it have been better if she knew this before getting pregnant, absolutely!

Thankfully Sasha had parents who were willing to take over and do the things she wasn't capable of doing, which was to raise Sheila! But most of the times in life, we don't always have someone in our corner to take over the things we were supposed to be obligated to. And unlike Sasha, most of us can't admit what we lack and what we're unable to do. We only want to SAY what we can do. But we won't ever admit what we can't or are UNABLE to do. We want to look like a good mom or dad, but behind closed doors we neglect our kids and they end up raising themselves. "Latch key" kids as I referenced it in the beginning of this workbook.

Or as men or women, we want to promise someone the moon and the stars. We tell them we will never leave them and that they're all we ever need. Only to find 3 months later that we've blocked their number from calling our phone, blocked them on all social media,

and didn't even have the guts to tell them we lied and really weren't up to the task of properly loving them.

Or how about we interview for a job, and we tell the hiring boss everything they want to hear. We over sell ourselves, may have even lied on an application to make us look better, just so we can get the job. Only to get the job and find out that we really can't deliver. And now you're in a world filled with stress because you can't continue to finesse your way through the job. So you quit, leaving your now previous employer to interview for your position all over again because you weren't truthful.

In order to be a committed person, there are many skills you have to possess in order to even be halfway committed to something! First off you have to be truthful, and most importantly be truthful with yourself! You have to take the time to figure out all your strengths and weaknesses. You need to admit what you're capable and incapable of! Next you have to be reliable! How can you commit yourself to anything without being someone people can depend on? And above all, you have to be willing! When you commit to something, it requires you to be WILLING to do the things that need to get done, even when you don't feel like it! Think of Dr. King again, if he was unwilling to do what needed to be done. If he was unwilling to sacrifice his own life and his families for that matter, where would the African American race be today? Think about your own life and the people in it who are most important to you. What if they didn't commit to raising you up and building you into the person you've grown to be? How would you have turned out?

Before we take on any type of commitments, we need to self-assess and be honest with what we are capable of doing. No longer should you operate out of selfishness, just wanting to get your needs met. In actuality we are all accountable for what we do to others, rather directly or indirectly. And thousands upon thousands of people are still scarred from the commitment that someone broke to them. Rather it was a parent who broke their obligation to raise their child. Or a company losing what they thought would be a huge

asset to their business. Or a lover, promising to be in a committed relationship to their significant other. But they cheat each and every chance they get.

As the old saying goes, you should treat others the way you want to be treated! And I can bet any amount of money that you wouldn't want anyone to break their commitment to you. What if your job called you today and just broke the commitment they made to be your employer? I mean, that would suck really bad, you'd probably want to take them to court over the matter because it seems something like that should be illegal, right? How could a job give you their word, promise to pay you x amount of dollars upon work completed. Only to have a change of heart and just fire you without any warning, or explanation. Well, that's exactly what many of us have done with our obligations! We just cut them off from our lives. Giving no explanation or no resolve for that matter. We spilled the milk and we didn't even cry over it or wipe it up.

I would advise that from this day forward you consider everything about yourself, both good and bad, before you make any type of commitment. Remember, if you're not committed to learning yourself you can never commit to anyone or anything else.

Time to Self-Reflect!

Has someone ever broken their commitment to you? Was it a parent or a lover? Have you been someone who has frequently broken their commitments to others?

Now cut your losses!

If someone broke a commitment to you, have you been able to move on from it? Or has it still been a hindrance in your life? If you are someone that breaks commitments, make a list of every commitment you've broken. What do they all have in common? What is the underlying reason that you gave up on each obligation? Are they all the same reasons for each scenario?

Analyze

Commitment is something that should be taken very seriously! And commitment is not for everyone, and that's ok! So many times, people in our society bash people for not wanting to be committed to something. But is that really a bad thing? A person that knows they don't want to be obligated to something is a beautiful thing! It means that person took the time to get to know themselves. And they know what they are or are not willing to do! We have a bad habit of projecting our wants and lifestyles onto others. And sometimes when we discover they don't want the same things as we do, it can cause us to feel like that's a bad person. But actually we are the bad person for not respecting that person's capabilities. And in return this is why the lies get started, because sometimes we only hear what we want to hear. Instead, learn to respect people for who they are and what they're able to do. Don't criticize someone for not wanting what you want, because now you've forced them to make up lies just to give you what you want. When in actuality they were never capable in the first place.

Time to Self-Reflect!

Now cut your losses!

Analyze

Conclusions

KJV Bible

Hebrews 11

1) Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

3) By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.

6) And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

It is quite the popular thing to hear someone say these days. “I’m living my truth!” I’ve heard this so many times that I’d be rich every time I got a single penny from someone saying it! But when we say “I’m living my truth” is that always a good thing? Or is it just a way to excuse all the screwed-up things in our lives that we don’t want to deal with, and just accept it as what is? There seems to be this unwritten rule that when you confess your truth and live in it, that’s a good thing. And while confession IS a good thing, and coming out and telling the truth IS a good thing. Truth and being GOOD are not synonymous with one another!

Just because you say you are living your truth, what does that mean? If you confess to the world that you are happily living your truth, but your truth is that you kill people when you’re angry, should we be happy that you’re living your truth? While it can be the hardest thing to do, confessing your truths that is. It’s even harder to admit that your truth can sometimes be toxic and wrong! This is where the real clean up comes into play! Admitting your truth is just the first part to mental stability! Now you need to discern through all of your truths! Make a list of all the pros and cons of your truths, and determine if they have been healthy or not.

The truth that you are claiming to live, does it hurt other people in the process? What type of influence does it have on others? We can all say that how one person lives doesn’t have any effect on us. But that is a lie! If influence had no affect, you wouldn’t have social media influencers today changing the world with their point of views! It definitely matters how you choose to live, and we all need to be accountable for how our truths we live out affect one another. This is a big world with millions of people in it. We are all connected in more ways than we could even imagine! If we stop and take the time to consider others, then this could really be a beautiful place, this world that is...

#Lessonz Learned- Live vicariously through one another for learning experiences, and the bettering of humanity. One Love



She 216