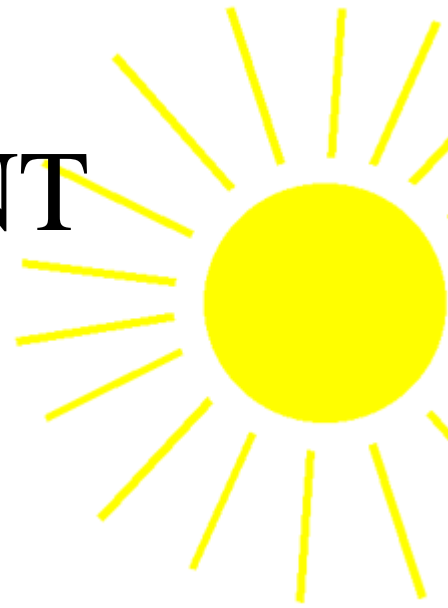


NIA STATEMENT

Inner Reinforcement–Guidance

Courtney Hubbard



MY VIDEO

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t4CRYJFcQVo>

HIAKU

POSITIVE GUIDANCE

The child grows older.

Positivity needed.

Thank You for guidance!



SPOKEN WORD

THE STATUS TO CHANGE

A background deemed low socio-economic

I'm considered *at-risk*.

Socially, economically

Dr. Joyce West Stevens *Smart and Sassy: the Strengths of Inner-City Black Girls* says it's one who

is exposed to “economic impoverishment, poor housing” (8).

Also Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory used by Donna Bryant and Craig Ramey:

A person that has environmental effects is someone from a “lower socio-economic status families with a lack of financial resources-healthy food and safe shelter” (34).

These different environmental risk factors contribute to later developmental delays, as seen by Psychologists, which is risky for a youth’s development.

My development.

Maladaptive behaviors and other problems can arise.

Growing up in stressful environmental situations with a single mother who has a high school diploma and some college,

I lived with days out of the month where I had to have cold showers and see with flashlights and candles.

But, I learned my support-

The church.

There I learned.

Leadership skills, interpersonal skills, communication skills

My Identity.

My religion, my belief, my culture as a Christian

The Cross.

From the church to the school

I applied what I learned.

IB student, stepper, youth leader, etc.



Then college.

The University of Florida!

Never thought.

My identity.

More of my identity.

My ethnicity, my culture as an African decent

My passion.

To aid.

Being a Resident Assistant in the halls, a mentor at the foster home, a tutor at the Reichert House,

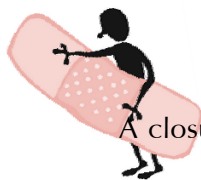
and many more experiences

Experiences that have helped shape my passion- leading “at-risk” adolescents into resiliency.

Positivity.

Confidence.

Better futures.



A closure in an observed gap.

To take one by the hand.

To develop a safe social network.

To be more than a Band-Aid to the broken arm (Thanks Dr. Evans)

Like Geoffrey Canada- to use my thoughts and ideas and turn them into action.

To see a change in the children who really need it.

To mutually recognize needs through interaction.

To Support and help make at least the imprint of change in the mind of a child.

PERSONAL STATEMENT

TEACH FOR AMERICA:

RESILIENT FOR BETTER FUTURES

Resources for Inner-City Children (RICH) reports that Washington, D.C. is known as a “dropout factory”, with 58 percent of youth graduating from high school and half of the dropouts becoming incarcerated. Arriving on a grand tour bus in front of a yard of dead grass in Washington, D.C., I spotted a dilapidated sign that read "Anacostia High School." I anxiously got off the bus, passed through metal detectors, and entered an auditorium where I sang gospel songs and conversed with students. I remember a heartfelt conversation with a student named Ryan who sheepishly shared with me his plans to “graduate from high school, move out of the ghetto, and get a job.” I enthusiastically replied: “You can do it.” He immediately grew tense, but smiled as he looked up at me with watery eyes. From this simple interaction, I saw the potential impact I could have in the life of another student. I supported Ryan while hundreds of miles away. We

conversed on the phone, and I provided him with tips on professional decorum, such as mock interviews that helped him become a member of the Job Corps.

This experience in Washington, D.C. has helped me realize the effects of educational difficulties that thousands of students face throughout the nation, particularly in urban areas. I desire to join Teach for America to carry out my zeal for empathizing and serving as an encouraging social asset for students who have been deterred from pursuing academic achievement due to environmental, psychological, and economic disparities. Like Ryan and other students, I grew up in a risky environment of crime and drugs, but did not get caught up as I focused on God, my strengths, and positive people in my life. I want to serve as a resource and social support that will guide other students to face this same resiliency.

As a member of AmeriCorps, I hope to diligently work to foster a community that promotes positive educational experiences. I agree with Tony Manson, editor of *How to Teach Children*, when he says that education is “an individual right and societal necessity.” In *Waiting for Superman* it is illustrated that this right and necessity has not been granted to everyone. In some cases a student’s educational experience is determined by a lottery as parents anxiously wait for their child’s name and number to be called. In spite of the drawing, I desire to help

students increase self-worth by applying concepts that have inspired me in my educational and social path.

As a corps member, my success would be determined by the observed and documented degree of change in the quality of education and support in the lives of students I would work with. From the increasing number of completed assigned tasks and higher exam grades, to changes of increased positivity in one's outlook on success, as a trained and dedicated teacher I would serve as a face of courage, wisdom, and hope toward a future of better opportunities.

EDUCATIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I've Got A Testimony by Reverend Clay Wright and the AARC Choir: Me

As I read this assignment, I automatically started answering my internal questions about my identity. What defines me: my personality, appearance, demographics, social status, or faith? I pondered about these questions and remembered the most important aspect of my life that has contributed the most to both whom and what I am today: my faith in God. As you read my educational autobiography, you will notice that the title and subtitles are songs from the genre of gospel or contemporary Christian music, which is one of the passions and motivational factors in my life.

Humanization-You're Beautiful by Phil Wickham

Courtney Tierra Hubbard is the name that identified me on April 20, 1989 in Orlando Regional Medical Hospital. I was born as a black female to Thomas Hubbard of Alabama and Carolyn Furlow of Georgia (they married in 2002). My parents completed high school, but only my mother attended college for a couple of weeks. My father became a self-employed carpenter. Because none of my parents completed college, I am considered a “first- generation” college student who is currently enrolled as an undergraduate senior at the University of Florida.

Being in school for higher education has taught me many self lessons. Almost everything I have learned in high school in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program has been obliterated. I was forced to learn the same way as my peers by reading and completing numerous projects and papers, but was not taught the value of education nor community service. However, I was aware that I had to write a 5,000 word paper for Theory of Knowledge, pass my IB exams with at least a score of four out of seven, and complete a certain number of community service hours in order to qualify for an IB diploma (which I missed the requirement by 1 point). After high school I reorganized my values and process of learning.

When I began my college years, I realized my efficiency in procrastinating under time constraints. I also learned that I comprehend better when through a kinesthetic style of teaching where I physically and mentally engage in lessons. All of these aspects of me were present before college, but they further developed in my classes that expected me to interact with people in my community while documenting and discussing my experiences in relevance to assigned readings.

Professors and teachers such as Dr. Stephanie Evans and doctoral student John Glenn, respectively, helped me strengthen my learning style and gain a passion for learning and application. These two individuals as well as my high school concert choir teachers, Trent Patterson and Andrew Minear, and voice teacher Heather Patterson serve as academic role models in my life. By liberating their passion for teaching students from low socio-economic status families like me, I have broken free from the self-fulfilling prophecy that has kept minorities mentally and emotionally captive in a European-oriented country. I have learned that ethnic minority women like me can enjoy learning in predominately white institutions without feeling like I am a participant of aberrant behavior. Because of these five individuals, I strive to obtain a career in teaching or counseling at-risk youth and adolescents.

Also, while in college I began to gain knowledge of my abilities, affiliation, and artifacts in life. I am tall and lean in stature with minimal physical strength, but am personably, mentally, and spiritually powerful. My strong belief in God has caused me to see life from a positive view point, which has caused struggles, such as eviction from home, to be an easy task for me to handle as a child. Because of my faith in God and my experiences with it, I decided to join extracurricular activities, such as the University Gospel Choir, that express my belief through my passion for singing and that also help me develop as an interpersonal leader. Other organizations have also helped further develop me as a leader and a person. They have also made my values in life more defined.

In school my educational field of work is psychology-a science. Because of definitive ideals, my faith and scientific teachings conflict with each other. In one of my psychology classes, I learned that the depth of spirituality and religion is viewed as a delusion or mental illness to scholarly figures in psychology and other areas of social science such as psychologist Carl Jung and biologist Richard Dawkins (Dawkins 213). I prefer to stand firm in my belief in God and follow ideologies in psychology that uplift the human spirit and heal the soul. Such

ideologies can be found in my favorite perspective of psychology: positive psychology through humanistic pathways.

Politically, I thought I had no relevance because I viewed politics as the face of well represented social and economic classes. However, attending college has changed this heuristic assumption as I flyered in student campaigns and attended forums about social justice and change. I became more knowledgeable of my role as a registered voter in America. When I voted for the first time, I was able to understand why I affiliated with the democrat party. It was not because of the social-economic class that my parents identified with or because of my demographics, but because of the necessities and benefits that related to me and the future generations in my family.

The artifacts in my life are still being developed, but as I continue being educated I make my identify known with symbols such as the cross, the Bible, the elevated clenched fist that yells “black power”, and with the plus sign. These symbols speak about my top values in life: spirituality and faith, religion, courage, strength, social consciousness and service, and an

optimistic outlook on life. I express my values through my life style in the way I carry myself and care for others.

Song and appearance are other ways in which I illustrate and share my values. I am blessed with the ability to sing, so I eagerly accept any opportunity that arises for me to vocally share what is important to me. My appearance also plays a role in my expressions. Sometimes I have an eccentric, but classy and respectable vintage and modern style. I stay tuned to the latest fashions, but refuse to indulge in meaningless name brands to prevent transforming into what Geoffrey Canada terms a “robotic consumer, buying without thinking...associating their self-worth with that they [wear]” (30). My self-worth is not tied to my appearance, but in my faith in God and in my applications of beneficial lessons from my education in my life and the life of other people.

Socialization-*Be Real* by Tonex

Society is a word that my high school teachers taught me to never use in scholarly papers. They told me to use the words “community” and “environment” instead. Ellen Swallow Richard, a chemist and ecologist quotes in *Words of Women Quotations for Success* that “The

environment people live in is the environment that they respond to and perpetuate. If the environment is good, so be it, but if it is poor so is the quality of life within it” (12). Joyce West Stevens argues against this notion as she explains in her person-process-context model that “despite environmental risk, some youth are resilient and protected by social assets such as friendships and memberships in formal/informal organizations, parental supervision, and monitoring” (37). Growing up, I have always lived in a neighborhood termed ghetto in the city of Orlando, Florida. Demographically I identified with my neighbors, but I did not consider my neighborhood to be my environment. From my view, my environment, or social assets included both my church and school. William Damon, the director of the Center on Adolescence at Stanford University declares in *What is Positive Youth Development* that “Every child has talents, strengths, and interests that offer the child potential for a bright future” (13). All three of these aspects were conceived and developed in me during my involvement in church and school in my childhood years. This resulted in an increase in self-efficacy and resiliency which helped me to overcome maladaptive behavioral patterns found in impoverished areas like mine. I was no

longer portrayed in a “constant negative fashion”, but instead as a “resource” to my community

(Damon 14-15).

Professionalization- *Order my Steps* by Glenn Bruleigh

As I study psychology, I am mostly interested in the lessons that specifically pertain to underrepresented populations like at-risk youth and adolescents. There is little research on this population, but in Kimberly Mahaffy's (of the Department of Sociology/ Anthropology of Millersville University) article it states that: Recent concerns over adolescent risk taking behaviors have rekindled an interest in the transition to adulthood because of the impact of these behaviors on the individual and society (Jessor 1998). I chose to study psychology with a goal in mind to apply any beneficial research to children living in Florida and in inner-cities of Maryland. Florida is my home state, and Maryland is the state where I had the privilege of positively influencing inner-city high school students by singing and ministering while on tour with the University Gospel Choir. Although these two states are the main areas I desire to work in, I would not mind impacting youth and adolescents elsewhere.

When I graduate in May, I aspire to become a member in the corps of Teach for America or a graduate student in a counseling psychology program via the department of psychology or education. Because I have learned the importance of aiding kids out of destruction and abusive communities, I strive to obtain a career in counseling youth and adolescents in schools, non-profit organizations, communities, and homes. With the grace of God and an altruistic mind set, I know I can do it. However, the current educational question is: What schools should I apply for?

Internationalization- *Save the World* by Yolanda Adams

As I say the world internalization, I think about my heritage and what role it plays in my life. This previous spring I enrolled in an Introduction to African American Studies class taught by third year Doctoral student John Glenn that heavily affected my position in this world. I read credible books and articles that dissected my international identity. For instance, in an article entitled *The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought* by Patricia Hill Collins I learned my identity as a female and as a black person. Her model- the “and/or orientation” made me aware of my state of double-consciousness (23). I could simultaneously be black and female or distinctively be black or female in an environment of “Eurocentric masculinity” I was able to have

three international identities and I chose to identify myself with whichever one I found appropriate at the time being.

While taking this class I also developed a personal theory about my global identity pertaining to my race and ethnicity. In order to be considered an African-American, one must have had ancestry in slavery and must have the ability to make African core values the center of a Europeanized colony (Karenga 7B). One must then experience the black experience of oppression and double-consciousness, and be able to identify with the lingo and experiences from famous black sitcoms such as *Family Matters*, *Everybody Hates Chris*, and others. This tenet of my international identity is still being further developed as I grow deeper into the erudition of my culture and heritage.

As I find out who I am on Earth, I also better define my purpose for existing and for studying psychology and standing firm in my belief in God. One day I want to travel and sow seeds of Christ's love in many lives over the world. Pastor Mike of First Assemblies of God states in a sermon that Coca-Cola is a universal language that has been where clean water has never been before (qtd. "Coca-Cola"). This shocking, but true observation helped me gain consciousness

of the fact that America is not the only piece of land existing in the world. As I sit in the classroom during my last year in Gainesville, Florida I must focus on the globe and how reading something as small as a ten page article can positively change the lives of children hundreds of thousands of miles away.

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