

FREE
ISSUE 2
JUNE 2019

Today's Widowed Woman

BOLD

BRAVE
beautiful

of color
MAGAZINE

**A Widower's
Heartbreak**

meet

international

EMPOWERED

WIDOWS

MALAWI

KENYA

Nigeria

Soul Search

**Your Widow's
Tribe That**

VIBES ↘

**Dear Lord, My
Husband Was
Murdered...**

By Jennifer Hayes

Cover: Amess Nttha
Lilongwe, Malawi

INTERNATIONAL WIDOWS' DAY

Nominations

Empowerment

For this issue, I wanted to focus on the International widow, meaning, widows who live outside of the United States. I wish I could acknowledge every one of you.

In my online group, we have several widows living abroad – some I have partnered with and others I know from referrals or they simply reached out. I decided to feature those widows who have also created safe spaces, open spaces and even new spaces for like-minded widows to gather so their voice could be heard. As I said, I wish I could feature you all but I have limited space however, I'll keep watching, learning and encouraging you along the way.

I don't claim to know what you go through because your journey is a different kind of journey that we here in America face, so I do hope to learn from you as you learn from us. Let's keep the charge flowing as we encourage one another.

Sabra Robinson
Founder/Editor

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Black Women Widows Empowered (BWWE)
Today's Widowed Woman of Color

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bar and page numbers



Today's Widowed Woman *of color* MAGAZINE



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and Road to Transplant – Dawn Martin

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Tips to Navigating Through the Grief
Terrain by Dr. Bob**

My 'O' Negative Kidney Donor Journey and Road to Transplant

I am a mother of two beautiful daughters and a "GiGi" (grandmother) to one very smart and handsome grandson.

Many people that know me know that I'm not one to openly share my private life, but recently I have come to realize that it is no longer realistic to do so. I need the help of others and I need my voice to be heard.

I was recently diagnosed with end-stage renal failure due to years of diabetes and high blood pressure. In December of 2018, I received the news from my Nephrologist that I could no longer put off starting dialysis.

On Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's my new normal consists of four long hours of dialysis to have my blood cleaned. Some days are better than others, but I try to remain positive and grateful for the life I currently have. I am on the active transplant list but have been told that the wait could be years. That is why I've decided to share my story and reach out for help in finding a donor.

I am in desperate need for a living donor kidney and am reaching out to my community for help in raising awareness. Please share my story and assist me in finding a match.

Please contact the Living Donor Office for more information about living donation and the Donor Champion Program at 704-355-3602 and ask for Yvonne.

Please share my Facebook page, A Kidney for Dawn "GiGi" Martin, and assist me in having my story heard and my prayers answered.

I sincerely appreciate your help, thoughts, and prayers.

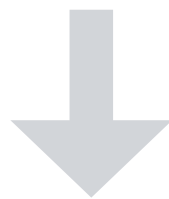
Dawn (GiGi) Martin



*Soul
Search*

your

WIDOW
tribe



that

VIBES





Get Your Vibe On,

Sabra Robinson



SIS

I'm sitting here watching NBC's Good Girls and before that, Netflix's Grace and Frankie. A few weeks ago, I was adjusting the surprisingly narrow heated seats in the movie theater watching Issa Rae's character adjust to her boss' mean girl personality, Regina Hall, in the movie, Little. Both tell the story of friendship, overcoming challenges, love, mischief, and aging. I'm hooked and I can't seem to miss an episode. I had to sit back and ask myself, "Sabra, what is so intriguing about these shows that make you glued to the television?"

Trust

If you're joining a group specifically to network, know what your strengths and weaknesses are when seeking a group to make friends with - those that have the same vibe.

Let's keep it real, if you're over 50 and have a young soul, you MAY be able to vibe with the younger widows. But if you've never hung out with women significantly younger, it may not be a good idea unless you want to take a risk and be adventurous - with a dash of spice! In this case, go for it but KNOW YOUR OWN VIBE. You don't want to be a Debbie Downer

Notice a widow who may have potential to vibe with you? Try these 3 things:

- 1) CHECK out her posts to see if what she writes grabs your attention.
- 2) INTERACT with her posts and make a comment.
- 3) FRIEND/follow her.

So now you're at the meetup. You made it. Congratulations!

Widowed, But Not Wounded

The Hustle & Flow
of 13 Resilient
Black Widowed
Women

[click here to
purchase](#)



SABRA ROBINSON et al
Foreword by Stafford Sutton, PhD

The Empowered Widow...

em·pow·er·ment

[əm'pəʊərmənt] 🔊

NOUN

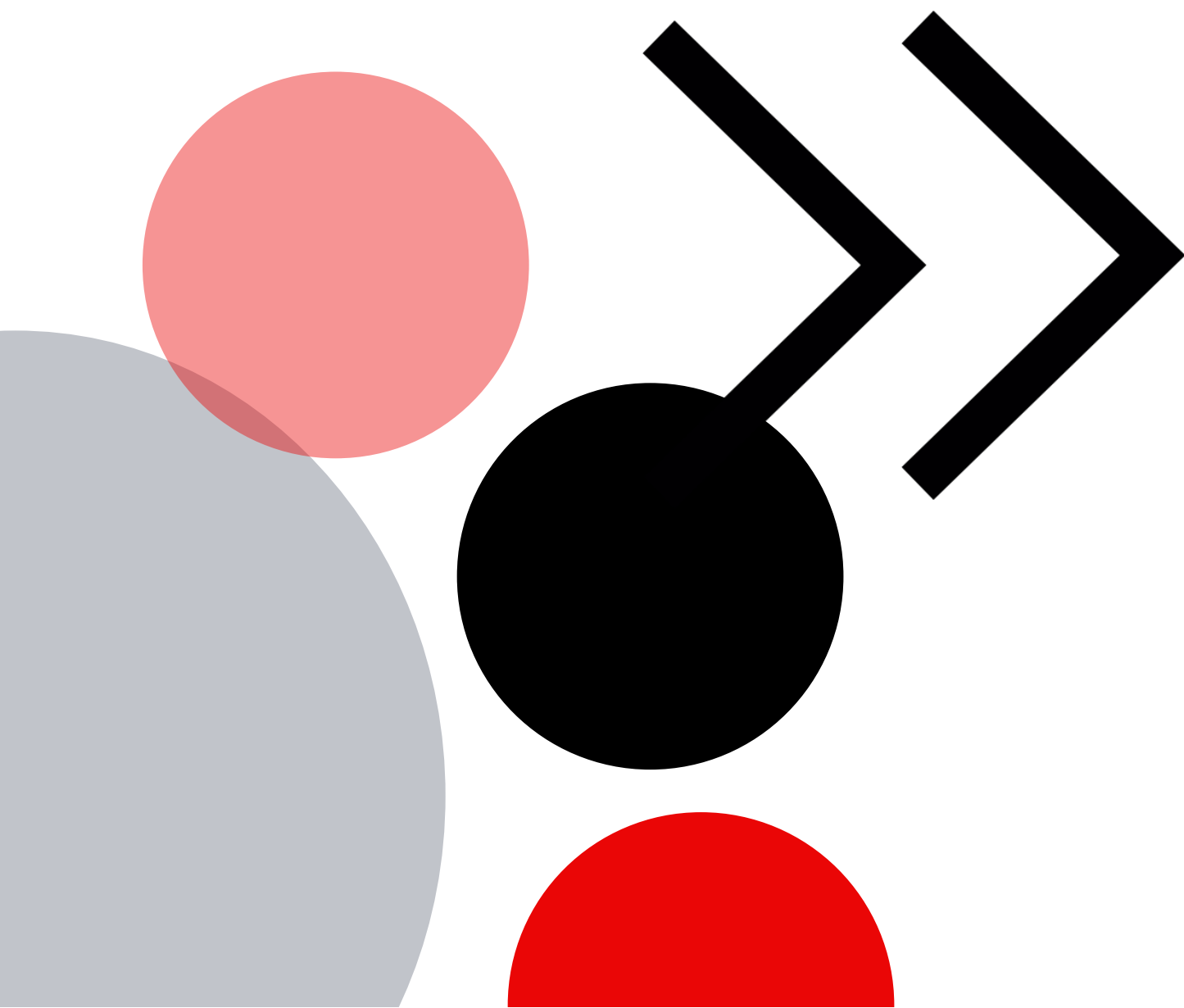
authority or power given to someone to do something.

"individuals are given empowerment to create their own dwellings"

- the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's rights.



Abroad



What Motivates You?

"Blessed be to God, even the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; Who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God"
2 Corinthians 1:3-4

“ Bible verse from 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 motivates me beyond my imagination.

I feel like God allows certain people to pass through hardships and turn those tribulations into a ministry. I always comfort others because I was comforted by God himself when I had no hope, when I felt like the world is unfair, or when I felt like God has forsaken me. So I use the same comfort to go out and tell other people, especially widows, that there is God in heaven who is the source of comfort.

So, in conclusion, I say Widowhood is a calling. Even if God gives me another chance to love again, I will continue serving widows.

I am the first born child in a family of six children. My parents divorced when I was seven years old. I suffered the spirit of rejection for so many years. I was physically abused by my stepmother and at the age of 14, I was accused of something I did not do. I married at the age of 19 but it was an unplanned marriage due to pregnancy.

We had our firstborn son in 2004, and our second child was born in 2007. In 2008, my husband was called by God to join the seminary. Although hesitant, I joined him but received backlash because I was as a pregnant student in class with men. My third child was born in 2009 during my first year and in 2010, my husband was diagnosed with Liver Cancer and died a year later. I was at crossroads where to go and where to start, but God is good. I continued with my education and finished my studies and graduated with a Degree in Theology.

In 2012 I started teaching Hebrew and Greek at the Seminary and in 2013 I started working at the orphanage and this where the passion of serving widows came in.

In 2017, I started a group called Hope for Widows. So, in conclusion, I say Widowhood is a calling. Even if God gives me another chance to love again, I will continue serving widows. Here I am today fearfully and faithfully serving widows. God allowed me to pass through hardships so that I may comfort others passing through the same.

Widowhood is a calling and I was called to serve widows.



amess nthala - malawi

Advice to Widows

"Avoid undue competition and rivalry"

My advice to widows is to take it one day at a time. Grieve but begin the work to heal. Remember, there's no "best griever award". It's an end with a beginning and you are in charge. Now that you are in charge, work with these:

My number one advice to widows in my culture is to reject the entitlement mentality. Cut your clothes to the size, readjust your lifestyle and have more than one source of income with one being a business that will bring daily income.



Moderate your life.

Streamline your friends.

Increase your income generating source by adding jobs, skills or open a business.

Don't expect sympathy. Widowhood is not a disease.

Avoid undue competition and rivalry.

While advising my widow sisters in States, I suggest connecting with those across the state and see how you can mentor each other. Such exercises help healing and growth



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Widowhood is Cumbersome

In this part of the world, the journey of widowhood is cumbersome. Widows are viewed at as weird beings.



I'm on my ninth year on this widowhood journey, I came to realize that healing is possible if we desire it, no one bargain to be a widow, no one like it but we find ourselves in it. In this part of the world, the journey of widowhood is cumbersome. Widows are viewed at as weird beings. They are looked upon as women who sniffed the life out of their husbands.

A lot of obnoxious rites are meted out to widows; most of them are disinherited of their late husband's properties. Some are forced to drink the water used in bathing the corpse of their late husband in order to prove that they are innocent of the death of their late husband.

Most widows are forced to shave off their hair and most times, these shaves were done by biased women which results in bruises because of the blunt razors intentionally used in order to bruise the scalp of the widows.

Some cultures in our part of the world would not allow the widow to take a bath for at least two weeks during their mourning. Some are forced to sit on mounds of old ashes, wear mourning clothes for much of the year and are compelled to wake up the neighborhood with bouts of cries in order to prove that they are grieving. During these mourning periods, the widow is not meant to be heard. If she were to visit the local market, she is considered to commit a big taboo.

The obnoxious widows rites are numerous to mention and because of this, it spurred me into action. I am the mouthpiece of my widows tribes.

In 2018, Chiagor Obineme founded the Widows Forum of Nigeria and Diaspora, Inc., an online network of widows interacting as like-minds on issues pertaining to widowhood. A native of Nawfia in Anambra state of Nigeria, she's a practicing lawyer and a front-line advocate of widow's rights and emancipation and represents widows free of charge. She is also the author of "Widow's Guide" - a handbook about widowhood. She's been widowed for 11 years.



The empowered widow

Widows Forum of Nigeria
Diaspora, Inc.,



chiagor obineme - nigeria

beatrice yesufu - nigeria



Healing is Gradual

In order to heal and encourage others to be healed, I must ensure that I prioritize my methods that are used to achieve my objectives



Healing is a gradual process.

Beatrice has a passion for empowering widows and is the founder of Christian Widows and Widowers Empowered - Nigeria, which held its first empowerment conference in 2018.

During her grief, she also became lonely until she stumbled upon several widow groups, domestic and abroad, as was blessed by Black Women Widows Empowered.

I'm on my ninth year on this widowhood journey, I came to realize that healing is possible if we desire it, no one bargain to be a widow, no one like it but we find ourselves in it.





dianah kamande - kenya

BWWE:

I've read the stories and watched plenty of interviews about you but many readers haven't. Can you tell our readers how Dianah Kamande and Come Together Widows and Orphans came to evolve?



My name is Dianah Wanjiku Kamande. I am 35 years old and was widowed in 2013. I am a mother of two beautiful girls, Praise Nyokabi and Cate Precious. I became a widow as a result of domestic violence when my husband of ten years came home and had planned to kill all of us in the family. When his attempts failed, he turned the knife on himself. I survived with several horrible injuries and was rushed to Guru Nanak hospital where head surgery was performed. I was fitted with five plastic nerves due to his injuries. After a week I underwent hand surgery and was fitted with multiple metal plates because he had broken my left hand. Finally, after the second week in the hospital, I underwent breast surgery because he had pierced my right breast. It was a tough time but it was at this time I realized so many of my visitors in the hospital were widows and survivors of past cases of violence who had chosen to keep quiet with their stories.

As I sat as a survivor on that hospital bed, I still went through widow abuse. My in-laws accused me of my husband's death, I was insulted and called a prostitute, and while in the hospital my property and even household items were taken away. Because my hand was plastered and unable to use the phone as I wanted, my brother assisted me as I googled to see if our Kenyan constitution (2010) clearly defined my rights as a widow and survivor of violence, but unfortunately, I found nothing. It was then that I requested to be given a notebook and pen. I began to draft a Widow's Bill.

After my discharge from the hospital, I invited a group of 15 widows to my home and 25 arrived. Word got around.

For my second meeting, 66 showed up. The third meeting, 337 arrived and for the fourth meeting, over 750 widows appeared at my door. I was shocked and I knew then that I had to roll up my sleeves and find out the total number of widows in Kenya. I started reaching out to widows through the media and as of September 14, 2013, my organization registered 14 million widows by June 23, 2016.

Since I married young and because of my desire to learn more, I decided to return to school. I'm a student at Nairobi University within the African Women's Studies Centre pursuing Constitution and Women in Leadership.

BWWE: What are the challenges that widows in Kenya face?

DK: The challenges around widowhood were too many and ignored due to continued cultural practices. I started condemning these practices in the media and my voice was heard by politicians as well as the State Department of Gender. It was then that I introduced a widow's hashtag, #WidowsRightsAreAlsoHumanRights.

I must continue to raise my voice and in doing so, I have introduced another hashtag, #BreakingTheCultureOfSilenceOnGenderBasedViolence. Since the inception of this social media awareness identification (and sharing my story and hospital photos), over 6000 women (and four men) have joined me for free seminars.

I traveled to all 47 counties in Kenya creating awareness on the plight of widows and championed for their rights. I also created support groups for widows such as Loss and Grief programs, Economic Empowerment Programs, beadwork, financial training, and free medical camps to ensure widows know their health status. I was able to turn all of the challenges Kenyan widows face into a Widowhood Bill. To me, my joy is serving God through others and not neglecting myself and my children.

BWWE: What advice would you give widows in America?

BWWE: You are one busy woman! What advice would you give widows in America?

DK: I have not known or heard about the abuse of widows in the States so my advice to widow leaders is to realize that leading widows is not a business, it's about service. It's all about the dedication of your time, money and other resources. It's about sacrificing everything for the sake of others. It's about lifting the load of your sisters and have a listening ear while turning the cell phone off. It's about being slow to speak, slow to get angry and slow to judge and this has helped me to press on.

As a widow read a lot. I personally research a lot on widowhood. I don't sleep much and I travel to visit and help other widows. I have no funding for the work I do but because I have a passion, God decided to set me apart.

Originally published on Black Women Widows Empowered Blog
June 23, 2017

BLACK *Widow* MAGIC™



Nominations are in!

Black Widow Magic is a feeling, an expression of accomplishment, and resilience for the black and brown widow who has decided that her past struggle will not define her current state. She has decided to move forward and empower others with renewed strength, zest, and faith. This woman is unstoppable and is consistent in empowering her widowed sistas. This woman is often considered a hidden gem - and does not receive the recognition that she truly deserves. Meet all of the nominees for this go-round of nominations.

As promised, nominees will be announced today, International Widows' Day for all widows living outside of the United States. The nominees will be eligible to be cast as Ms. Black Widow Magic January 2020.

Curious if you're on the list? Check out the next few pages for a listing of all of the nominees for this second round of the Black Widow Magic campaign. [Click here](#) for more details about this initiative.



COMMENCE YOUR **BLACK** *Widow* **MAGIC**

Deadline
6/14

NOMINATIONS TODAY! Announcements
made on
Int'l
Widows
Day
June 23



FAITH AUDU
LAGOS, NIGERIA
BWM BRAND AMBASSADOR
INTERNATIONAL

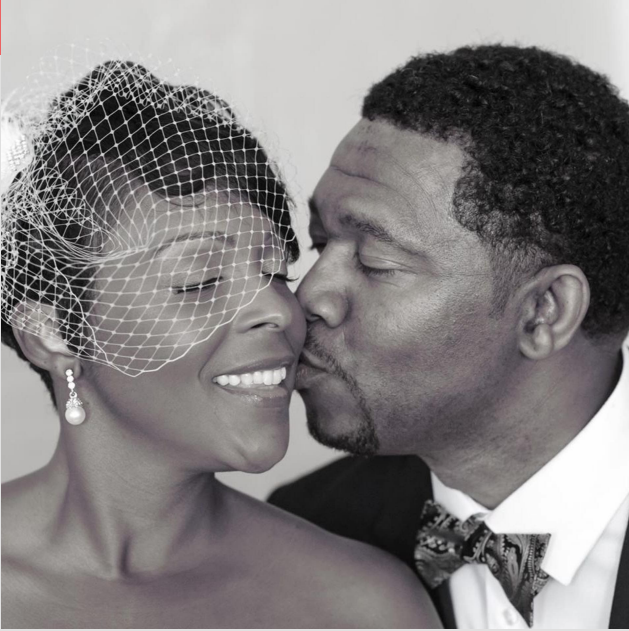


MELISSA PL PEOPLES
COLUMBUS, OHIO
BWM BRAND AMBASSADOR
USA

BLACK WIDOW MAGIC IS A FEELING, AN EXPRESSION OF ACCOMPLISHMENT, AND RESILIENCE FOR THE BLACK AND BROWN WIDOW WHO HAS DECIDED THAT HER PAST STRUGGLE WILL NOT DEFINE HER CURRENT STATE. SHE HAS DECIDED TO MOVE FORWARD AND EMPOWER OTHERS WITH RENEWED STRENGTH, ZEST, AND FAITH. THIS WOMAN IS UNSTOPPABLE AND IS CONSISTENT IN EMPOWERING HER WIDOWED SISTAS.

*BRAND AMBASSADORS ARE FOR CONTACT PURPOSES ONLY

malika williams



Malika is a walking example of perseverance and freely shares of herself with others who can benefit from hearing her story. After her loss, she took some time to grieve and figure out her next steps. When she was ready to move forward, she picked up the pieces and chose to honor her late husband by spearheading multiple endowments and scholarships in his name. She begin her support group, called Tissues2Triumph, as a way to continue to walk through her own grief while

simultaneously helping others navigate that difficult journey.

She also begin her etiquette business, Excuse Me, Please, LLC., where she influences youth and young adults to present themselves in the best light possible. All of these things show the various stages that Malika helps others walk through. When she speaks to widows, she speaks from experience of having picked herself up, moved forward and is thriving. Those experiences in themselves are inspirational to others because she lives her life as an example for others to learn and grow from.

Beyond her support group, she constantly receives phone calls from colleagues asking her to reach out to new widows and offer them words of encouragement. She does this without hesitation and often without recognition.



Hosting an annual event is difficult in many regards. With something so delicate, Malika understands that the meetings and events need to be meaningful and produce results for the widows to continue to grow from them. This pushes her creativity and innovation to new heights with every event. Malika is one that will always try to top her previous events, as she wants the events to be something the widows look forward to. Most recently, Malika decided to stray from the usual "sad" event and host a Day Party. This Day Party provided lunch, grief counselor, massage therapists, make-up artists, vendors, financial counselors and a balloon release to end the party.



Malika is very adamant about sharing truth regarding her process with grief. While she understands that everyone experiences loss differently, she is honest about high and low points that accompany the process. When sharing with widows, she ensures they know that she holds everything they discuss in confidence. This honesty and integrity is what draws widows to her, even those she has never met in person.

Dr

Omolola Anne

Famuyiwa-Omoteso



She has been fighting for the abuse and injustice to widows since the last 3 years and also feeding and empowering them an organizing different workshops for them as often as she can. And also being The voice on social media for the widows

She counsels the widows and has also taken it upon herself to use her own resources and also using her connections to join in this pursuit.

Omolola has many programs that inspire other people. Lola's life is about serving others and empowering people. Since I have known her, she has worked to help children, youth, singles, sickle cell patients and others. She works through philanthropy, counseling and education. After she lost her husband, Lola started working to empower widows by providing for them economically, and also using her counseling expertise to help. She worked with widows through Bola Memorial Watch where she advocated for them under three initiatives - Walk With Widows and Reform Probate Laws (to criminalize abuse of widows and ensure widows cannot be disenfranchised) and Loan Scheme for Widows.

faith audu



She is always happy and stays strong no matter how hard the situation.

She's is passionate about what she does.

She is very passionate about the work and is in various widow groups on social media advocating, inspiring, motivating widows to be strong and innovative because of the challenging times they face everyday

Through radio, she's been able to help many ladies and gents in this grieving journey to heal

This lady has helped me without her knowing it

Seeing her as an Uber driver is one thing... I know it is not easy for a female. But in all, she is still passionate about it and encourages other females to work for the company.

She is well recognized and respected in her church and in the society

Faith is resilient. She shares her stories, she is bold and courageous while talking about widowhood and how to move forward while grieving



**fatima
ali**



BWWE would like to nominate Fatima Ali for her willingness to write for our website.

Fatima Ali is a 34 year-old widow who began this journey at age 29. Fatima is a writer and teacher from Pakistan.

**You can reach Fatima on any of her Social Media handles:
fatimaparacha@gmail.com or
Instagram: @FatimaAleParacha**



jennifer hayes

BWWE would like to also nominate Jennifer Hayes for her willingness to write for our website.

Jennifer M. Hayes is a graduate of Howard University College of Pharmacy (B.S. 1991) and Howard University School of Law (J.D. 1994). Mrs. Hayes received a Master of Laws in Intellectual Property Law from The George Washington University Law School in May of 2002. She is a member of the Maryland State Bar, the District of Columbia Bar, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit and the United States Supreme Court. Mrs. Hayes is a registered patent attorney and specializes in pharmaceutical, chemical, and biotech patent prosecution. Prior to entering the area of patent law, Mrs.

Hayes was a registered pharmacist in the state of Maryland. Mrs. Hayes has been widowed since 2011 after 19 years of marriage to Graham E. Hayes, II. She is the mother of three children.

bummy olu

She is always putting others before herself; every widow and widower is her concern

She hates seeing other suffering

She is very passionate about the widow and widower

She is very happy doing what she knows how to do best. She is a wonderful woman



hope nwakwesi



Hope is a woman of action. A
woman of empowerment. A
woman of God.

Her radio show empowers
widows to move forward

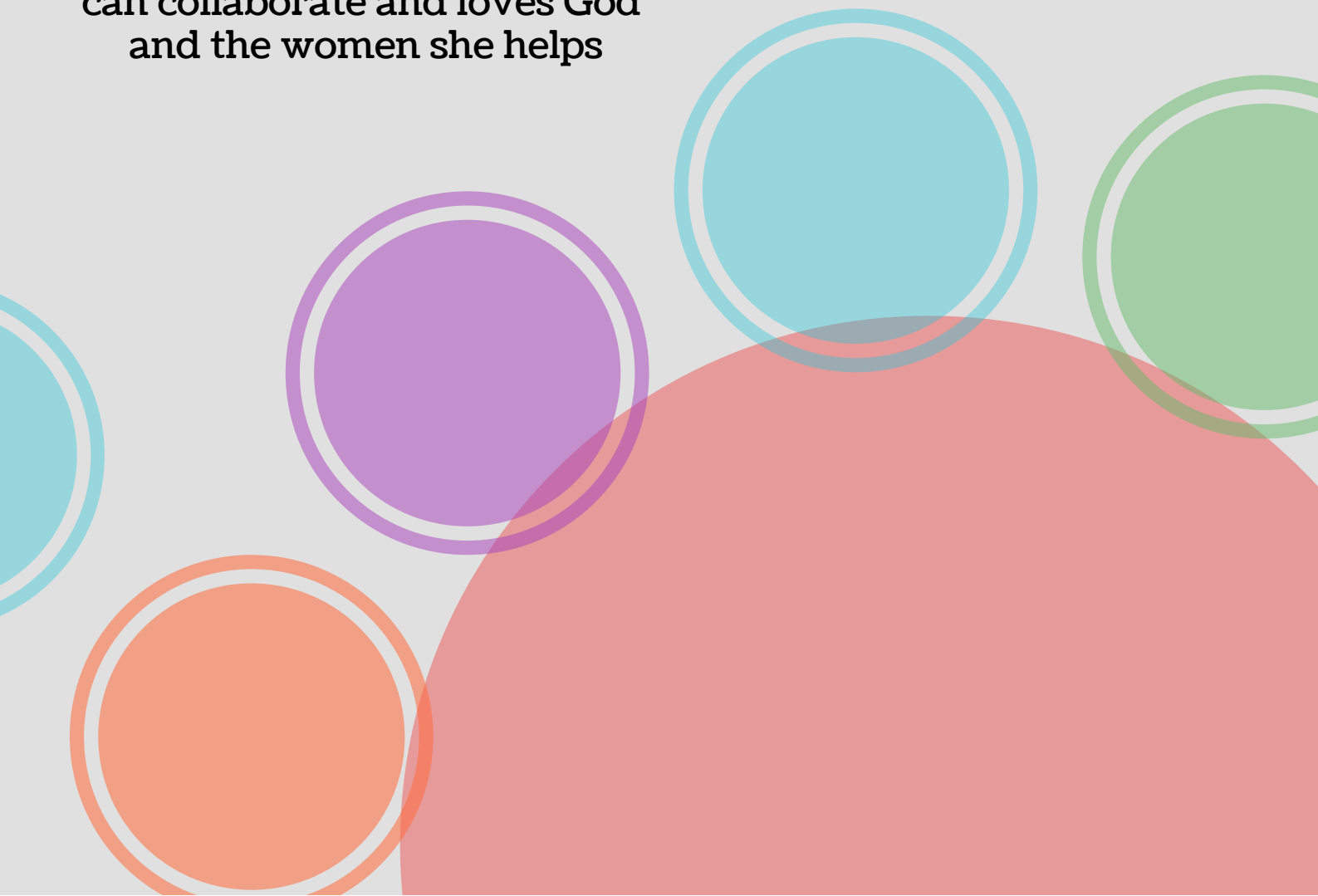
She's passionate about widows

She holds annual charity walks

She reaches out to see how she
can collaborate and loves God
and the women she helps

She's a mentor to many
women and helps them move
beyond themselves

Hope is a wonder woman!



Dear Lord, My Husband Was Murdered, But You Promised...

By Jennifer Hayes



Where Was He?

"Lord, You promised." This is what my mother said in a prayer the night I called her to tell her that I couldn't find my husband and something was very wrong. It was about 1:00 a.m. in the morning when I made that call. I didn't want to bother her, but I didn't know what else to do. I knew she would be up and that she would answer. I had told her that earlier that day, my husband was supposed to pick up our youngest daughter from home and take her to church to go to a youth event to step with the church youth step team, but he didn't show up or answer his phone. I had gotten off early so when my daughter told me he hadn't come to get her, I just figured he got tied up with something else and I'd pick her up since I was already on my way home. I texted my husband and I said, "Where are you?" Uncharacteristically, he didn't answer and I texted him again saying "WHERE ARE YOU?" (Yes, I used all caps to show I was getting annoyed). I then decided, uncharacteristically, that I wasn't going to fuss and I called my husband and left him a message telling him that I figured he must have gotten tied up, so I'd pick her up since I was on my way.

I picked up all of the children and headed to the church where the step team was performing. Still, there was no word at all from my husband, which was very unusual. I sat through the service, clapping, singing, praying, and praising, and not checking my phone, texting or calling my husband because, coincidentally, I was sitting next to my pastors on one side and the youth on the other side and I didn't want to be a bad example.

The Crime Scene

When it was over, we still had no word from my husband. We were going to go out to eat and we called to tell him where to meet us, but he still didn't answer. So we decided that we should find out where their father was since he still was not answering or replying to any of us. We went to look for him at home, but he wasn't there. I decided to go to his place of business and my daughters wanted to come with me. My son decided to stay home (I later found out that he tried to contact his father and left him messages telling him that he had me and the girls worried and that he was also beginning to worry). We didn't find my husband at his place of business, but what we did see led my youngest daughter to call 911 while I drove away to get us to a safer location. I wanted to go inside the building, but I was concerned about leaving my daughters in the car by themselves, and I was afraid to take them inside with me since I didn't know what we might be walking into.

I sat with my daughters in the car outside my husband's business waiting for police and an ambulance to respond to our calls ... not knowing what was going on, we waited and we prayed. The first responders eventually showed up, but they would not let me lead them back to where we saw a man laying on the ground ... for safety reasons. Eventually, there were several fire trucks, police cars, ambulances, and medical examiner vans. We sat and watched and we waited, and we prayed some more. After a few hours, which seemed like forever, it was suggested that I should take the girls home and they said they would let us know what was going on as soon as they could tell us something. Not knowing what had happened, I didn't want to leave, but thought it best for the children.

When I got home and the children settled in their rooms, I called my mother. After telling her all of this she started to pray. She began with, "Lord, You promised..." and when she was done, I believed everything was going to be all right.

But, it wasn't. Things did not turn out at all how I had hoped, expected or prayed that they would. Later, about 3:00 a.m., the doorbell rang. Two detectives arrived at my home and informed me that my husband was dead. He had been shot and killed by his employee; someone he spoke well of and trusted, who had in turn killed himself (that is who we saw laying on the ground). They didn't have a motive and asked me a few questions that I could not answer about him. Although I did not know where my husband was or what could have possibly happened that he would not have even contacted me, it never dawned on me that he could have been murdered, or that he could even be dead.

I had to tell our children that their father was dead - shot and killed by someone they knew and considered a friend. I had to tell my mother-in-law that her only son, her baby boy, was dead. I had to tell my husband's sisters and his best friends that their brother was dead. It was the most awful night of my life. And the days, months and years to follow have been more than challenging.

Superheroes are Not Supposed to Die

Death, although hard and painful to deal with under any circumstance, is natural. I am not a psychologist or a behavioral expert, or any kind of expert, but I submit that murder is not natural. Dealing with the death of a loved one is one thing, but dealing with the murder of a loved one is another. It's still very hard to believe that this could have happened to my husband and to us, to all of us who bear the burden of his loss. Unless it has happened to you, people really have no idea what it's like to try and cope and deal with living after such a tragedy occurs, much less trying to get justice at the same time. One minute life is fine, everything is good, and you are telling your husband, "Have a good day," or "See you later," or even, "Love you babe.". And the next thing you know, your whole world is turned upside down and you are trying to understand why he did not come home from work, what happened, why, and what to do next.

My faith took a big hit. I mean, I thought the Lord was my friend. Words of one of my favorite songs growing up kept coming to mind: "If you ever need a friend, that sticks closer than any brother, I recommend Jesus, because he's that kind of friend. He will never, never forsake even though he knows everything there is to know about you."

I was in a state of shock. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know what not to do. But, I had to do a lot. I had to make funeral arrangements and I had to make travel arrangements. I had to host people coming to my house to express their condolences. I had to care for my children. I had to get them through this.

Our son was 17 and just beginning his senior in high school; we have two daughters, the oldest was 15 and a sophomore in high school and the youngest was 12 and in the seventh grade at the time. We were all devastated. My husband was everybody's superhero. Superheroes are not supposed to die - not like that.

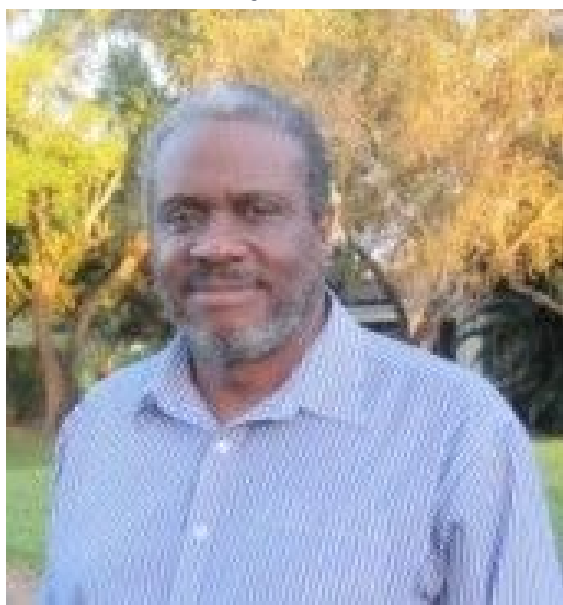
We were all so angry, hurt, and sad. But anger was the predominant emotion I think, and that anger was expressed in very different ways by each one of us. Raising children is challenging. Raising children as a single parent is hard. Raising children when your husband and their father has been taken away from this earth and everybody is struggling to cope, is extremely hard. People tend to take their anger and frustration out on the people closest to them and there was a heavy spirit of anger and frustration in our home.

Read the entire article on our blog. [Click here](#) to be directed to this gut-wrenching piece.

Jennifer M. Hayes is a graduate of Howard University College of Pharmacy (B.S. 1991) and Howard University School of Law (J.D. 1994).

Coping with Anniversary Grief When You Lose the Love of Your Life: 4 Tips to Navigating Through the Grief Terrain

by Dr. Robert Wright, Jr., Ph.D., COFT



Last summer, my beloved wife Christine passed away after a valiant battle with cancer. When you unexpectedly lose your beloved wife, your sense of loss, sorrow, despair, and disbelief, are simply immeasurable.

Heartbreak, numbness, and exhaustion beyond belief from many sleepless nights, only represent the tip of the iceberg of your personal grief experience.

I am fortunate in that I had done a lot of internal grief work prior to my wife's death, due to the fact that my mother died when I was only seven years old. All told, it took me over 40 years to fully recover and heal from that devastating loss.

To be honest, I was able to stabilize my everyday routines within several weeks of my wife's passing. But, I had greatly underestimated the powerful emotions that might well up inside of me, as each important anniversary celebration approached on the calendar.

Of course, I already knew that holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas might be tough, but the hardest part mentally and emotionally was realizing that at the end of the year, I faced a series of formerly happy anniversaries that we celebrated regularly as a happily married couple; but now, there was only the existential gap of sadness of being by myself-alone-without my best friend and one true love!

So, here was the sequence of date compressed anniversaries that really got me "down": Thanksgiving Day; Anniversary date of when we first met at the United Nations as volunteers; Christmas Day; New Year's Eve; New Year's Day; my wife's birthday; Valentine's Day (Ouchie).

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