

Be the Change You Want

--by Alisha Pearson



Me with my fiancé

*“You don’t always need a plan.
Sometimes you just have to breathe,
trust, let go,
and see what happens.”*

--Mandy Hale

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How it started . . .

This is not my first time attending MCC (Manchester Community College). This is my third time attending and by far the furthest I have come so far. Way to go me!

I started what feels like a million years ago, Spring of '07. As crazy as it sounds, I had finished my semester and found out I was 6 months pregnant. When I received the news, I stopped pursuing my degree and applied to as many jobs as I could. I took the first one offered to me. My priorities changed and my focus was to work and make sure I was able to provide for my daughter. About three years later, I thought I was in a stable enough position to start pursuing my degree again. Myself and a close friend of mine both decided to attend. We finished one semester together and then I slipped up and wanted to go hang out with friends and do things that were more entertaining. My focus on school was going down the drain and this time I started getting "comfortable" with my situation. Daughter, work, fun--rinse and repeat. I started getting the mindset of "I don't have time for school." I have a daughter to provide for. I made every excuse possible. I just was not able to balance everything with my current maturity level. I never took time for myself and as we all know that is not good for anyone's mental well-being.

As the years have flown by and the older that I continue to get, my mindset, maturity level and priorities continue to change. Things that I disliked have now become a passion with an end goal of bettering my life. I now have 2 beautiful amazing daughters. One starting her first year of high school and another attending middle school soon. If I continue to better myself then I will continue to better their lives while affording them the same opportunities I did not act upon.

How it is going . . .

My fiancé has been a true motivator in my life. He saw I was not happy at my job and I spoke about wanting to go back to school and without hesitation he told me to quit my job and get my degree. The same degree that has taken me what feels like a million years to get as far as I have. I want to show my girls that even though it may take years to accomplish certain things you set out for, no matter how many obstacles are placed in your way you can still accomplish anything if you set your mind to it.

My fiancé and my girls are my biggest supporters. When my kids see me getting frazzled about school assignments, they always ask me what the outcome of that assignment was. If I do not obtain the grade I wanted after all the studying, they tell me that it is okay, brush it off and attack it harder next time. My fiancé has been extremely patient with me. I get a little frustrated with him now being the "bread winner" and I am home all the time focusing on school and maintaining the household. I am used to being

independent but he is affording me the opportunity to focus on school. When I have a bunch to get done around the house and I do not get it all complete, after he has a long day at work he will pick up where I left off so I can make sure I focus on what needs to be complete for class.

I take time to look at my "what if's" page from time to time and I must say I am shocked. Not every class taken has counted as credit towards my degree but from where I started to where I currently am I have made it to the halfway line. I used to be one of those individuals who used to start something and then get bored or discouraged and walk away. If I can give some advice to people who may be hesitant, surround yourself with people who ultimately have the same desire, passion and goal to get the job done.

I am blessed to have surrounded myself with so many loving and caring people who keep me motivated, give me a little push when I am down and allow me to remove the tunnel vision and see the big picture and the end goal. I have gotten loads of help from great people at MCC. Michelle Nickerson always checks in to make sure I am doing ok. I have an academic coach and as much as I dislike sitting on the phone for over 45 minutes talking, she has helped me in ways I did not know were possible, especially after finding out my degree choice was changed on me without myself making that change.

I plan to continue my journey to the end. I plan on walking across that stage following my mother's footsteps obtaining a Bachelor's degree in her early 30's. I plan on seeing the excitement and joy from my family. I plan to hug my Fiancé who has been working tirelessly so that I can accomplish my dream.

Final thoughts . . .

Be the change you want. Follow your heart and your Dreams. Do not take no for an answer. Make your way to the light at the end of the tunnel. Anyone can accomplish their dreams with the right mindset.



Me with my daughters