

WHAT ARE YOU READING?

finding healing, self-worth, and joy

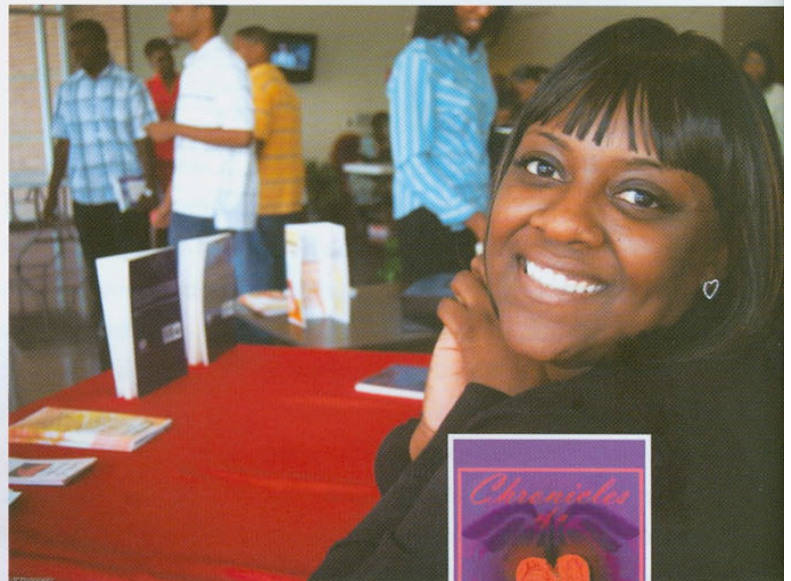
“Chronicles of a Mended Heart” is a book of poetry and much more. Ujima Magazine sat down with Ms. McGregor to find out more about who she is and about her book of poetry. She sat down, with her dog Cheeky laying under her chair, to tell us about her journey.

UM: Where were you born and raised?

SM: I was born and raised in east Austin.

UM: What inspires you to write? Where do you get your inspiration?

SM: I began to write in my journal when my mother passed away. But before I purchased my first journal, I wrote on napkins, notebook papers, etc. I remember my first diary, which was Green that I bought at Walgreens. I wrote about my mother passing away and how upset was. I kept writing and when I had extra money I would buy notebook tablets. In 1999, I discovered I was writing poetry because I shared some of my writing with a friend and she asked me if I wrote poetry, I responded “I don’t know.” But from that conversation I realized I have been since I was 10 years old. Writing became a way to help me heal from my mother’s passing. I had a lot to write about surrounding not only my mother’s death, but other people in my family who had passed away. I didn’t talk much but I realized there was a connection between me, the paper and the pen. I wrote journal entries about my emotions and how I felt and other times I would write



SHAMETRA MCGREGOR, AUTHOR OF “CHRONICLES OF A MENDED HEART,” AT A BOOK SIGNING.



things down and it would rhyme.

Over the years, I wrote about, when I was delivered, when I got saved, about God, and his love and people, peace, etc. “My writing is kinda like counseling for me.” To refrain from using my tongue I would race home and write it down in my journal to get it out. It is very therapeutic. I feel ok, once I have gotten it down on paper.

UM: Where did the inspiration for Chronicles of a Mended Heart come from?

SM: My inspiration came from my mom, Christ and my grandpa and my best friends. My mom lead me to Christ and God had to work in me to take care of some anger issues that I had towards him for taking my mom away

from me at a young age. People say how can I say that? Well, God is God too and I can tell him I'm mad at him just like I'm talking to you I can say God I'm mad at you=2 0for taking away my mama. In 2001, I decided to re-dedicate my life back to Christ and decided to forgive and not hold grudges. So any experience I have been through, God loved me enough to see me through. He never left me despite

Any experience I have been through, God loved me enough to see me through. He never left me despite my anger.

my anger. I write about different things. I'm easily inspired. I wrote a poem called "I Waited." It's hard being a single Christian woman without kids. At the time, I started my walk with Christ, I wasn't struggling with being alone but I was praying asking God where is my husband? Then I had an accident in my dream car. With the exception of the wheels, the whole front end of my car was crumbled. I walked away from that wreck with only a bruised chest wall. Friends, family and the emergency personnel that responded to the wreck couldn't believe I walked away. Because looking at the wreckage, I should have died. So in my poem "I Waited" I talk about how I wait for my king and how he has to find God before he finds me and the miracle of walking away from the accident.

UM: Have you thought about doing a fiction novel based on some of the things that has happened to you?

SM: I know that I want to write another book, but I am unsure at this time. I said that once I finished school, I was going to release my second book. Because I

sacrificed a lot to pursue my book, I ended up sitting out this semester since things were moving fast with the book. Once I finish at ACC I want to drop my second book when I graduate. I have an idea that I would like to write something like letters to sisters. In this age, men are so close, but for sisters it is so hard. It's hard for us to love one another and for us not to be haters of one another. As Black women we should be able to accept each other's uniqueness and love each other in truth.

UM: What advice would you give to someone who wants to pursue writing?

SM: You need to do your research. Research publishers, and start putting yourself out there. When a poem would pop in my head, I would type it up. I emailed "I Waited" and one of my brothers in Christ emailed me back "Wow!" He said he felt it in his spirit. I just write them but I don't realize how powerful they are and then release them. So, do your research and write a little at a time.

UM: Where can someone purchase your book?

SM: They can go to Nellsreflection.com, authorhouse.com, barnesandnobles.com and target.com.

Ujima enjoyed meeting Ms. McGregor and reading her poems. Please take some time to read and enjoy the poems written by McGregor. They are filled with love, hope and God's presence. I will leave you with one of my favorites.

Words

Something that you can't ever take back.

Once spoken.

Things that make you feel good, and things that hurt.

Comes from the soul.

Lead by the spirit within you.

Created with pure thoughts.



CONTINUED ON P23