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C.O.B.S

CIRCLE OF  
Boss SISTERS

*Fashion Corner*

**RÛT WOOLRIDGE**

FOUNDER/CEO OF RÛTTEES APPAREL

*Queen's Court*

**KRYSTAL SMITH**

Founder/CEO of Buttered Brown Sugar

*Women Werk*

**TYRA MOORE**

Founder/CEO of A Girl Like Me Inc.

*Women Innovator*

**LASHONDA S. ROBISON**

Owner & Artist of Scott Robinson Design Inc.

*Authors Corner*

**MALIK LEROW**

The 6 Figure Prisoner

*Kim Bric*

FOUNDER/OWNER OF SOLSEI & CO.

# PAIN AND PURPOSE



WRITTEN BY: DR. TREVI BOOKER PERSHAY

Happy New Years and Welcome 2023.

I've decided to start 2023 with motivational content to inspire the BOSS in you. Even CEOs need encouragement to keep striving through disappointments and obstacles.

I am a firm believer that if your vision, dreams, and goals are under attack that means there is something to be gained (SUCCESS)! Remember that saying "No Pain No Gain"? There is a correlative connection between PAIN and PURPOSE. I've learned something through my many trials:

1. View your obstacles are opportunities
2. Pain works for your good (pause) (breathe) as painful as it may be – **TRUST THE PROCESS!!!!**
3. Remember PAIN will not last always, however, there is no avoiding what must be birthed out of you. What's inside of you must come out or it will die inside of you.
4. Stay connected to motivators do not connect with gossipers
5. Watch what you eat – not what goes in your mouth but what you take in your spirit.

Listen, we must recognize that our purpose is hidden in our pain. What didn't destroy you only made you stronger. When I'm dealing with pain (not physically but emotionally) I try to find out what to do in my pain – what is my next move because I refuse to wallow in hurt. I would rather own up to my pain than suffer in it. That is self-torture, and I am not about to do that to myself. I realize that I discovered my purpose in life when I stopped running away from my pain. Pain teaches us lessons and reveals who we are from the pain. Have you ever been hurt by an experience and refused to repeat that cycle? I call that process training pain.

As a Christian, I use to be so terrified of trials because of the trauma caused by previous trials. You know that saying the bigger the trail the bigger the blessings. I never wanted bigger trials. I would rather be content, but God just kept putting me through some serious trials. I've learned how to embrace being stretched by God even when it hurts. I realized that I could handle the pain, the problem was I didn't want to handle it. Eventually, I learned how to walk with Pain and face them when it hurts. Pain taught me how to fight back, embrace it even if it stings like hell, and it stretched me to a place where I was introduced to my purpose. The pain helped me produce my first book, movies, plays, music, and a greater prayer life that helps me find God through it all.

Be of good courage and embrace your pain.

*Dr. Trevi Pershay*

Dr. Trevi Booker Pershay



HAPPY NEW YEAR

[www.cobscircleofbossisters.com](http://www.cobscircleofbossisters.com)

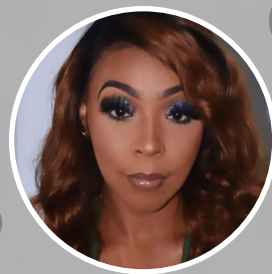
# MEET THE C.O.B.S. TEAM



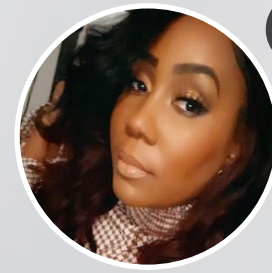
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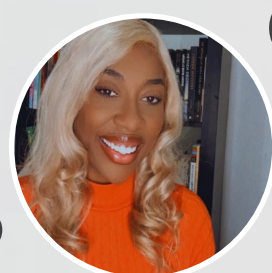
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## SPEAKS TO WOMEN

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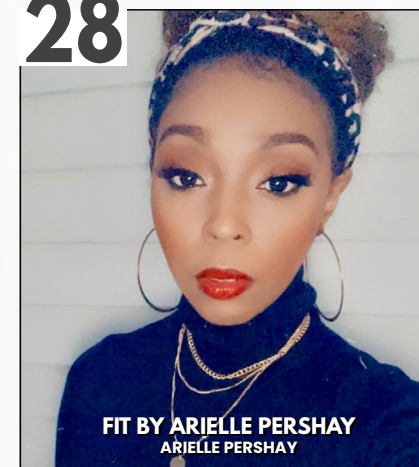
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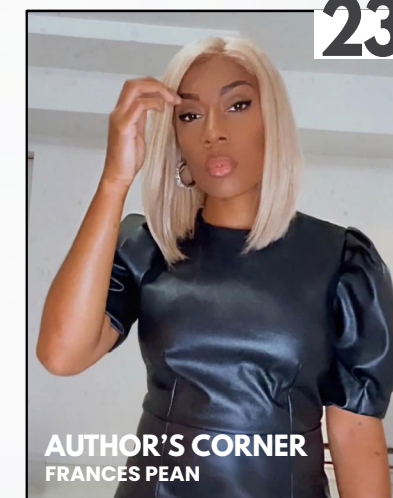
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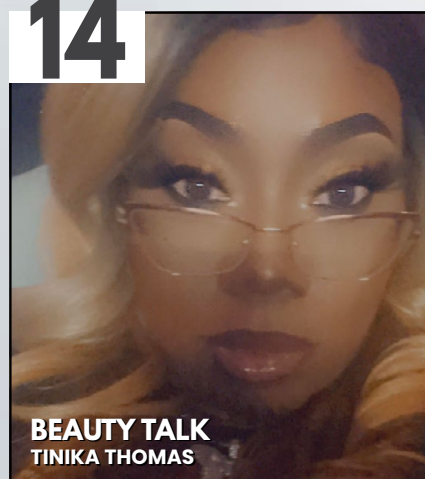
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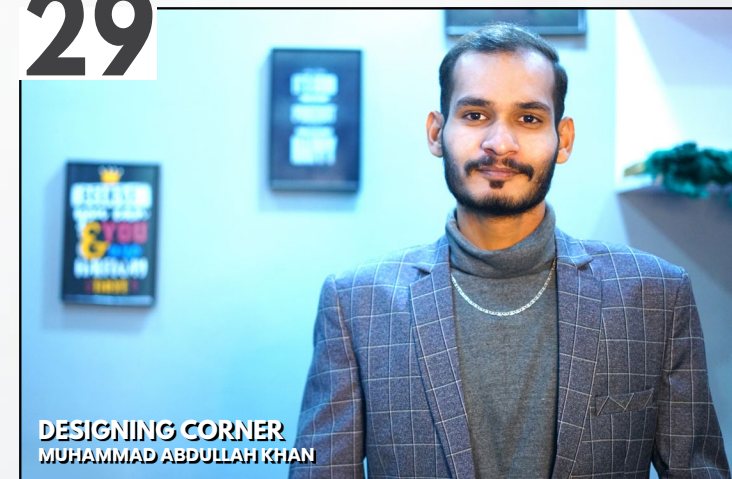
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# KIM BRIO

MEET FOUNDER/OWNER OF SOLSEI & CO

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Welcome to C.O.B.S. Magazine. We are super excited to be speaking to brand builder, media personality, entrepreneur, and survivors advocate Kim Brio. Kim is a strong believer that black women have the power to change things to better themselves. Kim, can you briefly walk us through your backstory before entrepreneurship?

## KIM BRIO:

Thank you so much to COBS Magazine; Trevi, Tinika, and the rest of the team for allowing me to grace your pages! Like so many of my fellow black women, my go-getter spirit has been instilled in me for as long as I can remember. In the early days when I was in elementary school, I started off selling beaded jewelry to my mother and her co-workers. By high school, I had taught myself how to code during the infancy of the internet. I had a business building websites and doing graphic design, and I also had a small clothing line. I can't remember a time in my life without entrepreneurship — my enterprising spirit has always been present, it just continued to grow and flourish right along with my life.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Can you tell us about your business Solsei & Co? Where did the name come from? What stimulated you to step into the world of brand building? What sets you apart from other companies like yours?

## KIM BRIO:

Solsei & Co is a playoff of the words soul and says, and our tagline is What does your Soul Say? Solsei is important to me because it's the first time in my professional life that I've put all of my endeavors under one roof... and that's major! At Solsei, we create media and events/campaigns from top-tier talent that aim to have hard conversations to evoke emotion and facilitate societal growth. Whether we're producing one of our podcasts like Dr. Shirlyn Speaks, a live stream show like Black Quarantine Report, hosting an event like Brand Bites Live, or promoting a campaign like Black Lady Boss Alliance, we're always aiming to make a difference. An extremely unique thing about Solsei & Co is our Brand Development sector, which houses 2 distinct sides; brand management (for select, elite talent) & our Dope Legacy Academy DIY Branding tools and resources for entrepreneurs, content creators, coaches, and just about anyone looking to build a brand of any kind. Additionally, a little over a year and a half ago, we launched a radio station under our umbrella. NuSol Radio WSOL-DB Chicago plays Neo-Soul and R&B from the 2000s to now, and boasts over 15,000 Mobile App downloads in the Google Play and Apple App Store. Most recently, we expanded to our

NuSolRadio

physical location, where we have a podcast recording studio available for rent in the southwest suburban Chicago area. Solsei has grown a lot since its creation in 2019, and our multidimensional projects and services are only the tip of the iceberg.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How does an individual know they have a solid brand? Once they know what are some of the steps they need to follow?

## KIM BRIO:

There are so many ideas floating around about what a brand is, so let me start where the majority of my fellow branding professionals begin — let's talk about what a brand is NOT. A brand is NOT your logo, your website, or your social media graphics... your brand is the totality of those things plus so much more. A brand is the achieved perception based on the total characteristics communicated about an individual, business, or campaign; including visuals, messaging, reviews and reputation, and so much more. The reality is that a strong brand can't be built overnight. A solid brand has strategically and consciously planned every aspect that's front-facing. By front-facing, I mean any aspect of the brand that is experienced by the public. So, of course, this includes your logo and website, but it also includes your messaging, tone, and so much more. Now once you've taken the time to strategically build out those aspects of your brand, that's when you begin to develop your marketing strategy. Branding and marketing are NOT the same things, but they work hand in hand to get the job done of achieving success.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Once an individual understands they have a solid brand what are some of your myths that would stop them from actually starting their business?

## KIM BRIO:

I usually find that it goes the other way around, the myths stop them from even beginning the tedious process of building a solid brand! I talk about the myths that are stopping people ALL the time to remove the fear of following their dreams. If you're reading this, and you have a business or brand within you that you're just NOT working on, I'd bet you that one (or more) of these 5 myths are the reason why:

1. Its too expensive
2. I don't have time
3. I don't know what I'm doing
4. I won't be successful
5. I'm not ready.

If any of these excuses resonate with you (it's ok, we won't tell anyone,) then it's time to get out of your head and your way. I have a great piece on [kimbrio.com](http://kimbrio.com) that goes into more detail regarding these myths.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Are there specific criteria that you look for in a client?



## KIM BRIO:

Yes, and if you're reading this, you should too! Not all services and service providers are created the same, however, if you're like me in the sense that you become invested in your clients and their success, you've got to be selective about who that ideal client is for you. Don't ever feel like you need to accept what's there simply because you need the money that comes from a lack of mindset. Determine who your ideal client is and then believe that you'll find your people and your people will find you. As for me, my specific criteria rests on a few different factors. First and foremost, our communication styles must align. Also, my clients need to come from a realistic place of understanding that they have work to do too. For me to understand, strategize, and build an authentic brand, there will be assignments and activities that the client will be responsible for. Lastly, my clients need to have a proven track record of excellence. Some people in the world always give their best, no matter what they're doing. It could be as simple as tying their shoes, but they're going to learn how to do it efficiently, effectively, and with a standard of excellence. It doesn't matter that it's "just" tying their shoes. Those are my people.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Every entrepreneur has a secret to their success. Can you give me three ingredients that have helped with your success? How important does the role of leadership play when trying to achieve long-term success?

## KIM BRIO:

It's taken me some time to find my secret ingredients to success, and it must be said that everyone's ingredients are different because everyone's strengths, weaknesses, and goals are different. After many years, and after redefining what I identified as success in my life, three integral ingredients for me were authenticity, self-love, and perspective. Yes, of course, some of the key ingredients that most success-based content discusses had an effect; hard work, dedication, and that inner hustle, but for me, I had to dig deeper to

find what I needed. I had to allow myself to be presented in the world as I truly am, not as I want to be. I had to learn how to love and accept myself and all of my decisions in business, regardless of what others thought. I had to love myself, even when there are things that I could have done differently. Most importantly, I had to truly see the realities of multiple perspectives and not just my own. These are the things that have developed me into a more effective leader because leadership is essential to achieving long-term success. On a very basic level, you can't do it all on your own. You have to have people around you that understand you, understand the vision and are invested in its growth. To find those people, you've got to be able to LEAD those people. Inspire those people. Listen to and understand those people. Learn to communicate with those people in ways that work for them. I truly believe that leadership is an ever-evolving process, there's always room for improvement, but it's essential to your success and needs to consistently be honed and polished.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

You are also a media personality known as the "The Black Lady Boss". Can you tell us about your show and some of the topics that you have discussed? What was your purpose for creating this platform?

## KIM BRIO:

Speaking is so close to my heart. In high school, I was an active member of the speech team all 4 years and loved every minute of reading the morning announcements. So, when it was time to choose a college major I was automatically drawn to broadcasting, and we've been in a true love affair ever since. After years of working at smaller stations around my area and even helping develop a few, I leaped and launched my radio station (NuSol Radio,) where I took the time to develop my most recent show, Life Gems with Kim Brio, which also has episodes uploaded as podcasts on all major platforms. Life Gems, or Gems & Jams as you'll hear me refer to it on the show from time to time, is all about dropping small gems to better one's life. Whether we're talking about branding, societal issues, dating, or simply just dropping motivation through hearing others' stories, it's all about leaving better than you came.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Fear is the one thing that can hold any individual behind or remain stuck. When you took your leap into entrepreneurship full time what were your fears? Looking back would you have done anything differently?

## KIM BRIO:

To say I was afraid is an understatement, simply because I leaped several times! Throughout my adult life, I would jump in and out of full-



time entrepreneurship, always shuffling back to the safety of a "day job" that inevitably just wasn't for me. No matter what industry I'd hop into it wouldn't ever stick because it wasn't in my heart... and I tried so many, from selling cars to leasing apartments, college recruiting, data analysis, technical support, you name it. The most recent job that I left in 2018 was an eye-opener because I found myself wearing so many hats for so little money, understanding that I had everything within me all ready to run that business elsewhere on my own. So I left, understanding that no matter what job I got, I'd always end up leaving until I gave my dreams a fair shot. That's what I would have done differently. I would have given myself a fair shot and not run back to what I perceived as safe. At the end of the day, the only thing that prolonged my success was me.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Are there moments when you want to throw in the towel? What keeps you motivated and what or who sustains your drive?

## KIM BRIO:

Yes! Yes! Yes! Sometimes I get to a point of overwhelm and I feel like I don't know if I can pull this off. Thing is, I've learned to hate quitting, so I inevitably push through whatever activity or project, etc. that I'm on... and I end up pulling it off. Every time. What sustains me is my love and belief in not just myself, but the vision. This isn't just for me, matter of fact at the end of the day it's not for me at all. It's for the people on my team who have found their voices and rejuvenated energy for their passions. It's for their listeners. It's for the woman reading this right now who feels inspired enough to take the next step. It's not for me. And when I think about it like that, giving up just doesn't feel like an option. I may need to take a day or re-evaluate a strategy, but I just can't quit. I'm way too far in the water to turn back now.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Most individuals capitalize during the pandemic to birth ideas that they felt they had no time for prior. You said something so profound in one of the interviews, "It wasn't a matter of getting back to normal, and it was a matter of creating a new normal." Can you elaborate on this statement from an entrepreneur's point of view?

## KIM BRIO:

Absolutely, and I love touching on this! Now that we're on the back end of the pandemic, I'm hoping that people can see things a bit differently. So many of us were waiting to get back to normal, meaning doing things the way that we were used to doing them. The gag was, that was never going to happen. What many people failed to understand was that the pandemic, as traumatic and devastating as it was, created a natural evolution. Things shifted. They grew and changed. People and companies tried things that they never would have tried before, only to find out that they liked it better this way. On the other side, we can see with clarity how things changed. An intuitive entrepreneur during those times understood that shifts were happening, and was working to be on the cutting edge of those shifts. To be among the first, top, or best to do those new things. Others sat and allowed their businesses to grow stagnant as they refused to flow with the natural evolution that was happening. Now, in 2023, we can see who grew, and who waited for a normal that simply didn't return.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

As an entrepreneur what adjustments have you made to your personal and professional life to juggle your roles? What advice can you offer to other entrepreneurs ready to jump into the world of entrepreneurship?

## KIM BRIO:

I have to be transparent, balance is something that I continuously work on. Most entrepreneurs know that it can be a struggle to balance their personal and professional lives. I had to make a huge adjustment in my personal life to live with family, but that sacrifice had to be made to feed into the business. For any entrepreneurs ready to jump into this new world, I would simply ask what are you willing to sacrifice? What are you willing to change? We all know that nothing worth having comes easy, and this is NOT an easy journey, I don't care how glamorous we make it look online. Know what you're willing to put on the table to really and truly get the work done.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What direction do you hope to see your company going in the next five years?

## KIM BRIO:

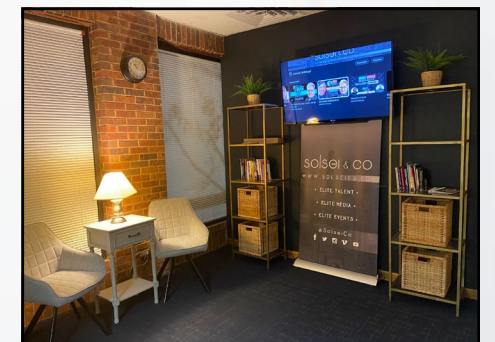
In the next 5 years, I want Solsei to speak to the souls of the people. I could lay out a bunch of numbers or specific projections, but at the end of the day, I simply want Solsei to reach and touch the people. We'll continue to do this by helping further develop voices to be spread to the masses, ensuring those messages are spread and having all of the tools needed for anyone to follow their brand-building dreams and have their effect on the world.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Here at COBS Magazine, we love to share daily affirmations. What is the daily affirmation? Can you please share your company website and your social media platforms for us to continue to follow? COBS Magazine wishes you continuous success.

## KIM BRIO:

I love affirmations and they've made a huge impact on my self-discovery and self-love journey, which in turn have directly impacted my business and that of my clients. What I tell myself daily is simple: "I am uniquely positioned to win," and I carry it throughout my day. For anyone interested in learning more about Solsei & Co, visit [www.solseico.com](http://www.solseico.com) and follow us on all of the socials @solseico if you happen to be a lover of Neo-Soul music, change your life and download our NuSol Radio app on the Google Play or Apple App Stores. Lastly, be sure to follow me on socials, they're all linked on my website [www.kimbrio.com](http://www.kimbrio.com).



# FAVOUR OLUMA

MEET CEO OF RETYREDGLA

## TURNING WASTE INTO ART

Written by: Dr. Trevi Booker Pershay

I was searching through the internet looking for something different to write about. I wanted to write about women who are not stuck in a box and for sure one who steps outside of the box. After two days of intense research, I stumbled upon an article about a remarkable young black woman who was turning recycled tires into a work of art. Wait a minute, I thought to myself, ugly black tires can be turned into furniture? To my surprise yes, meet Favour Oluma a young woman that resides in Nigeria who has recycled old tires into art furniture.

Favour Oluma is 25 years of age and attends the Federal University of Technology in Minna, Nigeria. She is a 400-level student and is studying Soy Science and Land Management. Favour mentioned during her YouTube interview that during the COVID lockdown she was bored and there was nothing to do. Favour shared that there



were some old tires in her neighborhood, and her passion was to turn all tires in Nigeria into useful products, and the benefit of mankind (Cleantech News, 2021). When discussing her designs Favour says that she creates affordable, adorable, quality, flashy and comfortable interiors out of tires for use in homes, hotels corporate offices, and other outdoor infrastructures.

Favour said she had received a lot of support from her dad, and he did not get the opportunity to watch her business take off due to his sudden death. Favour's family members are very supportive in

helping her build her brand as an interior designer. Her family and friends provide the assistance she needs because she does not have the money to hire staff. When Favour posted her first designs on social media people were blown away and they started ordering her tire furniture. She said she had to deal with people who didn't believe that she made the tire furniture, therefore, to prove them wrong she posted a recorded tutorial showing her step-by-step process. After that posted video and clientele grew even more and it shut down her skeptical viewers.



Favour mentioned as her business is taking off one of the challenges, she faces is not having a workshop, finances, transportation to her clients outside of her city, and shipping furniture to her international clients. She also mentioned that in five years she will see her designs in countries all over the world. Favour is such an inspiration, a breath of fresh air, and her

determination to never quit despite the obstacles she faces is so uplifting.

Favour message for young people is to keep doing what you love doing, find joy in your passion, and don't quit. Favour focus is on empowering both women and youth while transforming waste into furniture as well as to hope one day

to create jobs (CleanTech News, 2021). I am truly inspired by Favour and we hope that our readers are inspired as well. You can contact Favor by:

<https://www.instagram.com/retyredglam/>  
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/favour-oluma-73b8211b4/>

### REFERENCES

<https://cleantechnica.com/2021/10/31/turning-waste-into-wealth-the-story-of-favour-oluma-who-makes-furniture-from-used-tires/>



# KRYSTAL SMITH

MEET FOUNDER/CEO OF BUTTERED BROWN SUGAR

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

In this month's section of the Queen's court we have the pleasure of speaking to Atlanta-based entrepreneur Krystal Smith. We will discuss her baking journey from then to now. Can you please give us an overview of your background growing up?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

My love for baking started in childhood. My baking journey began as a preteen in middle school. It was an activity that was relaxing and stimulating. I began baking after the birth of my daughter. I was influenced by my aunts that would make Jamaican Black Cake and the joy others had while eating the cake inspired me. I would bring my desserts to work and people love them and began making requests. I knew then, I could create a profitable business. I wanted to be able to spread joy.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Can you tell us about your company Buttered Brown Sugar? What are your specialties? What is your most requested dessert and why?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

Before I established Buttered Brown Sugar, I researched and practiced various recipes before I created my recipes. The process allowed me to learn the appropriate textures and rises for cookies and cakes. Buttered Brown Sugar Bakery was created because my Double Chocolate Chip Cookies and Pumpkin Bread were always in high demand from family, friends, and colleagues. Baking for

them encouraged me to expand and form a business around my passion for baking. Buttered Brown Sugar Bakery desserts are perfect for parties, baby showers, weddings, dessert tables, and teacher appreciation gifts. Every dessert I create is freshly baked to order. I only use the highest quality ingredients which are locally sourced when possible. Buttered Brown Sugar Bakery creates a kitchen that isn't nut free. I am very mindful and ensure that there isn't cross-contamination from nuts, I can't guarantee it but I try my best. I always tell my customers to be please be mindful when placing their orders. I am currently working with a few real estate agents on creating Welcome Home Cookies Boxes and Cake Boxes for their clients who have recently closed on their homes.

My most requested desserts are my German Chocolate Pound Cake and my Rum and Brown Sugar Cookies. I think the Rum and Brown Sugar speak for themselves once you taste it. It is made with high-quality Jamaican Rum and Organic Brown Sugar. The Chocolate Pound Cake is simply a classic. The luscious coconut frosting with pecans layered on the moist chocolate cake is divine.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Can you talk about your style of baking and what makes your work unique? Where do you source inspiration regularly to create new recipes or dessert ideas?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

My style of baking is methodical. I have a routine that I have never wavered from or changed. It starts with a clean kitchen, measuring my ingredients, and organizing them to ensure a smooth process.



Buttered Brown Sugar Bakery is unique because each Artisan Dessert is hand-crafted with top-of-the-line ingredients.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

How did you put together your initial funds to start your own business? There is no how-to-manual, therefore, can you share what are the dos and don'ts that you have learned during this journey?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

My business was funded by myself as well as donations from family and friends. I would encourage anyone starting a business to have a solid business plan and search for grants rather than fund entirely from their income.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What was the worst baking disaster you ever had, that you still have a hard time getting over?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

Buttered Brown Sugar Bakery was listed on Door Dash and I remember having a major oven malfunction. This forced me to cancel several orders and I had a major delay on my already existing orders. The whole situation was just devastating and a nightmare.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

As much as you love baking have you ever considered other realms of the food industry?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

Considering other realms of the food industry isn't an option for me. I know how to cook but, I don't enjoy cooking at all.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What has been your greatest accomplishment to date? Which project has meant the most to you that you have the pleasure of being part of?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

I get the most pleasure when I'm crafting desserts for birthdays, weddings, and life celebration services. It is always an honor to be selected to cater milestone events because it just gives me that special feeling.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What marketing tools do you use to advertise your company?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

I primarily offer my desserts on my website, but I often vend at local farmers' markets. I'm currently considering advertising in more local newspapers and magazines as well. I'm started using Canva to help me create graphics that I use on my Instagram and Facebook platforms.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

As an entrepreneur how do you equally prioritize the demands of your career and the demands of your personal life? What do the



hardest days look like? What do the easiest days look like?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

Balancing motherhood, my career, entrepreneurship, and my personal life takes planning and patience. I've learned the importance of self-care and creating a balance that works for myself and my daughter. As a single mother, I must carve out time with my daughter. We often bond together by baking ourselves cookies and eating them while watching our favorite movies. I also carve out "me time" as well because I think as parents sometimes, we forget that our solo time is important. There is a schedule for everything because it helps balance the many hats that I wear.

My hardest days have been when I had several orders that coincided with prior engagements or when I running out of time to get orders out on time. My easiest days are when I tap into my support system because it helps me balance and keep me on track.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What did you learn from the pandemic as a business owner?

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

I used the pandemic to practice and perfect my recipes. The pandemic era taught me the importance of using time and resources efficiently.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Can you offer a piece of advice that someone shared with you when you launched your



businesses? What goals would like to accomplish for yourself and your company in the next few years? Can you please share your website and social media handles for our readers to continue to follow you? Continuous success on your journey.

**KRYSTAL SMITH:**

One piece of advice I was given in the beginning is "focus on your goals for the business and your target audience" and "don't take anything personally". It may sound cliché but for me, it was practical advice. In five years, I foresee myself having multiple brand partnerships and expanding Buttered Brown Sugar Bakery, LLC. Please visit my website at Hello@butteredbrownsugar.com or via phone at (678) - 364-2212. You follow me on Facebook and Instagram @butteredbrownsugarbakery. Thank you for the opportunity.



# TINIKA THOMAS

Inside tips for everyday make-up routine regardless if you are a newbie or experienced in the makeup world.

## TOP MAKEUP PRODUCTS THAT LAUNCHED IN 2023

Happy New Year. Wow, I can't believe that we are in 2023. With a New Year comes new beauty trends. I want to make sure you are well-prepared for the New Year. We will be looking into what is hitting the shelves of beauty counters this year.



### 1. BRUSHED-UP GEL BROWS WILL BE ON THE FRONTLINE

Brows are a huge part of most makeup routines whether you are doing daytime or nighttime glam. The new trend is brushed-up gel eyebrows. Glossier's best-selling Boy Brow and Benefit Cosmetics 24-hour Brow Setter Clear Brow Gel are my top choices.

### 2. TINTED SUNSCREEN IS GOING TO BE YOUR NEW BEST FRIEND FOR 2023

The New Year is tapping into simpler makeup. You are going to see less layering of makeup and there will be less focus on heavy glam on the skin. Tinted sunscreen not only provides you with a light layer of coverage but also provides sunscreen protection which is needed in any season. IT Color Correcting Full Coverage Cream + Anti-Aging + Broad Spectrum and Saie Slip Tint are my top choices.



### 3. YOU GOING TO SEE MORE LOOSE POWDER VERSUS PRESSED POWDER

The makeup world is reviving the powder puffs. As a makeup artist I prefer to you more of a loose powder under your eyes and in your T zone area does better than your regular press powder. If you have never tried a loose powder don't be afraid. You will find that that loose powder settles into the skin better for a more flawless look.



### 4. CURLED LASHES ARE SOMETHING YOU GOING TO SEE MORE AND MORE

Not a fan of wearing false lashes that is okay that trend is not for everyone. You can still get an ultra-curl to your lashes two things; a good eyelash curler and mascara that provides full volume. You can have your natural eyelashes look like you have extensions. The Shiseido Eyelash Curler and L'Oréal Paris Lash Paradise Mascara are my top picks.

### 5. CREAM BLUSHES AND STICK BLUSHES WILL CARRY OVER YEAR AFTER YEAR

Cream and stick blushes can you a glowy and slightly dewy flush that most traditional powder blushes can't. Depending on your skin type these two types of blushes give you a smooth finish versus having a cakeier look. Makeup by Mario Soft Pop Blush stick and Rare Beauty by Selena Gomez Stay Vulnerable Melting Cream Blush are my top picks.



### 6. THE DUO OF A GOOD LIP LINER AND LIP BALMS IS WHAT YOU CALL A PERFECT COMBINATION

You begin to see a lot of individuals copy the tones of their natural lips and pairing with a moisturizing lip balm. Not straying away from using lipstick but you will find more lasting power with lips liners as well as a product that is keeping your lips moisturized especially in the winter months. Charlotte Tilbury Pillow Talk Lip Kit and Laneige Lip Glow Balm are my top two choices.



# LASHONDA S. ROBINSON

MEET OWNER AND ARTIST OF SCOTT ROBINSON DESIGN INC.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Welcome to C.O.B.S. Women's Innovator. We are delighted to be speaking to Lashonda S. Robinson who believes that it is her responsibility to unite souls by illustrating shared honest emotions through body language. We are excited to hear about the women behind the brand. Can you give us a little background about yourself before becoming an artist and owner?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

Thank you so much for this opportunity! I successfully obtained my BA in Communications. I also majored in Advertising along with a minor in English. I worked as a graphic artist for almost 16 years. After 16 years I decided to retire to work as a visual artist full-time.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How long have you been painting, and how did you get into it?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

I have been drawing since I was a child. I remember telling him that I wanted to paint like JJ from Good Times. I will never forget when my boyfriend at the time (but now my husband) gave me a watercolor set for Christmas and at the time I was nineteen. That watercolor set I received that day started giving me a watercolor set for Christmas at nineteen. I told him I wanted to be painted like JJ on Good Times. That watercolor set started it all for me.



## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Can you tell us about your company Scott Robinson Design Inc.? What makes your artwork differ from other artwork? What is the message you like to portray through your artwork?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

In 2002, my motor skills were affected by Multiple Sclerosis (MS). Although I could not write my ability to paint was not affected. I remember sharing my experiences with my mother and she told me this was a testimony that I need to share it. Before my bout with MS, I did not share my artwork with anyone because I felt like it was too personal. After having a conversation with my mom and the constant encouragement from my husband I decided to start Scott Robinson Designs, Inc. I created my company as a venue to share my story and my art designs with the world. The message I wanted to convey is that there is

strength in vulnerability. I love to paint the moments of truth, especially that honesty you feel in your gut. It can be a positive or a negative truth but it is right before the defensiveness, the denial, and the lying begin.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How do you decide the subjects of your paintings? Are there any techniques that you keep in mind while working with watercolors?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

My personal experiences and interests inspire my work. I am a self-taught artist so, I have created my watercolor style. The deep and dark colors I love because it brings out the richness of the oil paintings. I am inspired by the works of Rembrandt, Caravaggio, and Ernie Barnes.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What are three ingredients you feel an

entrepreneur or small business needs to succeed?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

The three ingredients that I feel an entrepreneur or any small business needs are stellar work, ethics, determination, and faith.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What were some of the challenges you have faced throughout your entrepreneurial journey? How do you continue to endure those tough moments?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

My biggest challenge has been getting exposure. That is why I am so happy about this opportunity! Sometimes people see my work and want to label it explicit or pornographic. My reaction is always "What!" This issue has caused me to get kicked off social media a lot. This is also due to the fact of they say my work violates the decency guidelines.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Do you feel art has healing abilities and do you feel art is important to society?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

Yes! Art is very healing. I believe it is my responsibility as an artist to unite souls by illustrating shared honest emotions that, as black women, we usually suppress.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What is one of your favorite paintings? What was your inspiration behind that painting?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

My favorite painting at this point is My Pain. It was my first experience painting with my heart and not my eyes. When I got married, our son was seven months old, I was a sophomore

in college and our marriage was turbulent. The task of balancing work, marriage, motherhood, and college was taking its toll. One night I was extremely overwhelmed and I wanted to cry. But, for some reason, the tears would not come. I had suppressed my emotions for so long they had forsaken me in my time of need. I looked at myself in the mirror and I thought how can I get this pain out of me? My soul whispered to me to paint it. I took the watercolor set out of the closet and began to paint. I painted with my heart and not my eyes. All the emotions I had suppressed came to the surface. The canvas cried the tears my eyes refused to shed. My tears took on the form of a female figure which was faceless yet full of raw emotions. That is the night I found my artistic voice.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

How do you create a healthy balance between your personal and business lifestyles?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

It is hard to create that balance especially when you work from home but I believe that I do my best. When you work from home the cliché is always that individuals think you are not working at all. Which is often far from the truth. I am home I do try to separate my two lives by having a home office space and an art studio space. My husband understands that when I am in the home office I am working. If I am in any other part of the house he knows that it is okay to interrupt me.

## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

Sometimes as individuals we struggle with finding support to help us through our journeys. What support or mentoring have you received along

the way? What piece of advice would like to offer to someone pursuing a career as a watercolor artist?

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

I have been blessed to have the support of my husband who gave me my first watercolor set. He always encouraged me to exhibit and sell my artwork. I would advise artists to surround themselves with people who believe in them. Also, positive people who are happy in the pursuit of their dreams. Avoid people who don't believe in themselves because they will never believe in you.

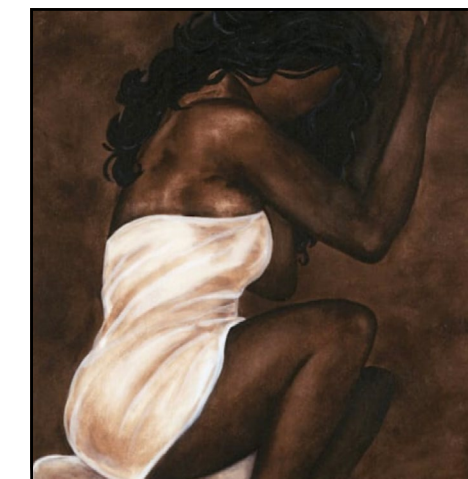
## C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:

What is Lashonda looking forward to for the 2023 year? Can you share where is artwork is exhibited, your company website, and your social media platforms? We wish you continuous success.

## LASHONDA S. ROBINSON:

I am so excited about the New Year!

I hope to get my artwork in front of more people. Two of my paintings, Loungin' and Ruby, will be used as set decorations for Season 2 of Your Honor on Showtime. I am excited about that! Also, please check out my website <https://www.lashondascottrobinson.com>. You can also check me out on Instagram @lashondathesoulfulartist. I encourage everyone who likes my artwork to sign up for updates on my website because a sista is forever getting banned on social media! LOL! Again, thank you so much for this opportunity!



# TYRA MOORE

MEET FOUNDER/CEO OF A GIRL LIKE ME INC.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Welcome to C.O.B.S. Women's Werk. We are delighted to be speaking to Detroit native Tyra Moore. A mom at the age of 14 Tyra Moore wants to help other girls and young women in similar situations that she found herself becoming a mom at the age of 14. Tyra is helping build confidence, improve health, and transform futures in underserved communities across the world. We are excited to hear about the women behind the brand. Can you give us some history on your background?

**TYRA MOORE:**

Thank you all so much for this opportunity! Hello, my name is Tyra Moore and I am 31 years old. I am married with three biological children and one bonus son. I grew up on the west side of Detroit. I lived with my mom, sister and grandparents. I was a chubby girl that was bullied because of the way I looked. I always dreamed of being taken away from the life I lived and being placed where people loved and cared for me without judgment.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Can you please tell us about your non-profit organization A Girl Like Me? What was your initial vision when you started your organization?

**TYRA MOORE:**

A Girl Like Me Inc. is a nonprofit organization that helps Girls, Teens, and Young Moms up to the age of 25 years old. I started this organization because at the age of 14 years old I became a teen mom. No one knew I was pregnant they just assumed I was fat. My mom found out on a Tuesday night and that same week on Friday morning I gave birth. I didn't have anything for my baby. I remember my mom crying while talking to family, friends, and our community at the hospital for help. The day I was released from the hospital and went home we

couldn't even get in the house because of the overflow of baby items going up the stairs and inside the house. Just seeing all the gifts made me feel better. I was a 14-year-old child who just had a baby. From that day on I knew I wanted to one day pay it forward. At A Girl Like Me Inc. we provide free baby items, resources, and more to teens as well as young moms. We also provide a mentoring program for girls and teens ages 11 to 17.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

You have first-hand experience with becoming a teen mom with the stereotypes, the blame, and the shame of becoming a teen mom. How do you get these girls and young women to continue to feel encouraged in such unfamiliar territories?

**TYRA MOORE:**

Yes, I was faced with so many challenges and wanted to die so many times. The closes people to me kept telling me how much life was over. Somehow I kept the faith and believed it won't always be like this. I wanted to come out with my story to instill something in these young girls and young moms that is okay to talk to someone but, most importantly never give up. My story has helped so many other young girls come forward to share their stories. It makes them feel better knowing they are not the ones in the world going through what they are experiencing. They are realizing that they can get through any and everything.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Do you feel that social media gives young people the wrong impression of teenage pregnancy through shows like "16 and pregnant or Teen Mom"? What are your thoughts on shows like this?

**TYRA MOORE:**

Omg I always say this. I grew up with my baby watching these types of shows and I would say to myself they need to give me a show so I can show the truth about being a teen mom. I feel like Teen Mom and 16 and Pregnant are filled with drama, having more kids, and more drama. The shows now and then will portray them pursuing their education or careers which I feel is not so true because they are paid to do the show anyway. I wish these shows will focus on giving back to the community, starting organizations to help teen moms, and preventing other teenagers from being in their shoes.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Do you feel communities offer teenage parents enough support to help them get



out of poverty and provide their children with a more stable upbringing? In your opinion what can communities do to help more with teenage pregnancy or the prevention of it?

**TYRA MOORE:**

Well I believe there should be more support because a lot of organizations still shame these young parents. We all know they did something they weren't supposed to do but the child here now. Instead of shaming let's rally around these teen parents so it won't happen again. Provide them with resources that will help them keep going, that will help them not to give up, and most importantly not feel like life is over. Even though my community offers a lot of services I still feel like more can be done. We need to be more in the schools to give more accessible resources and places for the teens to go to for help.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

If you could give a percentage, how many of the fathers are involved as well as supporting their partners? If they are not how devastating can this be for the situation?

**TYRA MOORE:**

So far of the families I've been working with approximately about 75% of the fathers are helping the moms and/ or providing for the child. It's really sad though because a lot of the time the father leaves and the teen or young mom is left with the weight on her shoulders, trying to finish school and deal with life is very hard.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What were some of the challenges you have faced throughout your entrepreneurial journey? How do you continue to endure those tough moments?

**TYRA MOORE:**

Oh wow I have faced not having enough funding with running the business on my own. I have been lucky to get some great volunteers. Lacking all the tools and supplies to help all the families that reach out to me is frustrating. Being so tired that I am unable to do anything with my husband and kids. My health going downhill because all my focus and time is just on the business. Not enough support. I continue to endure by just praying to God, telling him what I need, and helping many families a week as I can. Making time for myself and my family. And most of all believing it won't be this way always.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What has been your most victorious moment or success story thus so far?

**TYRA MOORE:**

Wow! I've had so many moments. Coming out of the pandemic I begin receiving so much attention from the media for helping as many families as I have. Hearing the stories from the families that moved to Detroit and how I can provide them with everything they needed. The grand gesture was being selected out of 48 states to be flown down to Essence Festival where I was awarded a grant from Essence for

\$10,000.00. I was treated like a VIP the whole weekend and was able to meet so many celebrities.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Funding an organization takes a lot of blood, sweat, and tears, especially as a non-profit organization. How much of a role does self-financing play? How difficult is the process to continue to generate funding to handle the overhead? Does your organization depend on outside funding?

**TYRA MOORE:**

Yes that is so true. When I started my husband and I managed to save \$10,000 and that went quickly. I have managed to win a lot of grants during the past 3 years. It's a hard process because the competition is hard and being still new is hard. You start thinking I have filled out so many grants but because I am new that is why I keep getting denied. It's very difficult bringing funding in because of the huge competition. I have and still take from my family savings but I am stopping because what will I have for my family's future if something happens? A Girl Like Me Inc. relies on funding from fundraising, donations, and grants because that helps our organization to keep going.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

How do you create a healthy work-life-balance between your personal and business lifestyles?

**TYRA MOORE:**

To be honest I don't. But one of my goals coming into 2023 is to have balance and to put it in place. The reality is if I'm not good how will I be able to be good for the families I serve? I have let myself go because I am tired from working on A Girl Like Me Inc. 24/7 without having any help. My health has been acting crazy, and my family has been sad because they are used to a different version of Tyra but I've been so focused on making sure that everything A Girl Like Me is good that I'm leaving out my family myself that matters as well.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Your organization has been recognized for its accomplishments. Can you share some

of those recognitions with our readers?

**TYRA MOORE:**

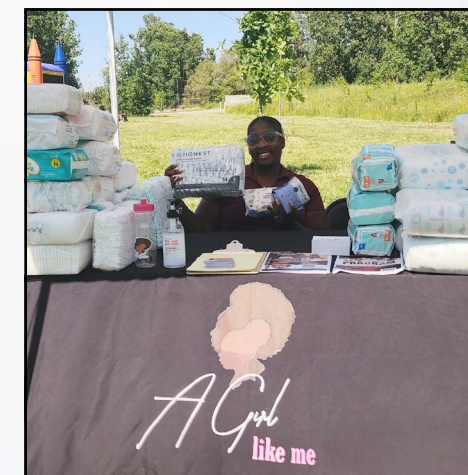
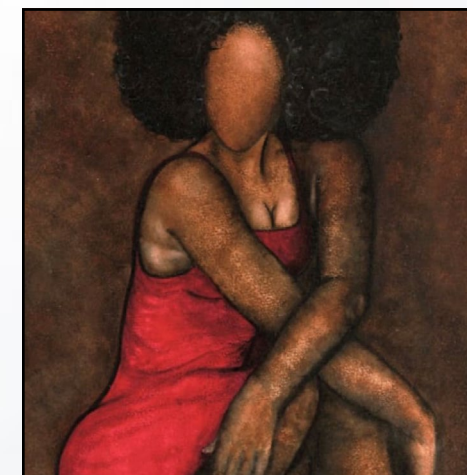
Yes. I've received the Spirit of Detroit Award, numerous magazine appearances, new segments, my grant, and recognition from Essence Magazine and Pine Sol. I've won Best Nonprofit for 2021 and 2022. I won a UK award for best Nonprofit on the East Coast, The Carolyn Kennedy Anderson Award and so many more I can't even name lol.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What is next for Tyra Moore in the next three years? Can you share a piece of sound advice that has benefited you from teenage motherhood through adulthood? Can you please share your website information and your social media platforms with us to continue to follow your journey? We wish you continuous success.

**TYRA MOORE:**

In the next three years the goal is to have more hubs with free baby items and feminine products all over the world where girls, teens, and moms can go every two weeks to get free needed items. Apartment buildings to house homeless teens and young moms, have jobs available on site, a daycare, assistance with school, learning a trade, and so much more. The advice I would give is first sex can wait. Just know it takes one time because my first time having sex I got pregnant. Continue being a child and a teen, enjoy your family, and friends, and finish school. Focus on your goals and the things you want to accomplish. To my teens and young moms, I want you all to know I'm here, keep going and don't let the world place doubt on you or make you feel like your life is over because you have a child. Everything you want to do in your life goes for it, finish school, go to college or take a trade, and make your life the best life for you and your child just never give up on yourself. Just remember you are a teen mom but your child only sees you as Mom and they are the only ones that matter. Our website is <https://agirllikemeinc.org/> Facebook and Instagram AGirlLikeMeInc Thank you so much for this opportunity.



# RÜT WOOLRIDGE

MEET FOUNDER/CEO OF RÜTTEES APPAREL

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Welcome to COBS Magazine Fashion Corner. We are delighted to be speaking to fashion designer Rüt Woolridge. Rüt Woolridge is a self-professed Positivity Pusher. Rüt believes in supporting you in unlocking your personal power with positive affirmations. We will be discussing her journey to becoming the accomplished designer that she is today. Can you give our readers a backstory about yourself?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

Hello! I am a creative soul born and raised in Fort Worth, TX. I grew up an introverted kid with an older brother and an uncle, who was three years older, so basically, he was my other big brother. Growing up the only girl, who had to be tough, I challenged my mother over the things like ribbons, lace socks, and flowered dresses. I was determined to design my style of being “girly” which included more sneakers, shorts, and t-shirts. I have always been a person of few words, but even at a young age, people knew I was always good at saying something positive, sharing wisdom, and finding humor in almost any situation. Funny fact, I perfected being very low-key while making other people laugh out loud in class, church, and/or other events. I would crack the joke, but they would draw attention (Lol!). I grew up, but those traits have not changed. I feel that I am blessed with the gift of “sharing light”. I strive daily to utilize that gift in my work as a Pastor, Photographer, and apparel designer.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

How did you end up becoming a designer of t-shirts?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

At an early age I found a unique friendship with t-shirts that could express the uniqueness of my personality. Somewhat shy and somewhat quirky, I laughed a lot but never had much to say. Oddly, it all began with me finding one of my Father’s t-shirts in a pile of clothes that I thought was so funny. It read, “If you sprinkle

when you tinkle is a sweetie and wipe the seatie.” I stashed the t-shirt in my backpack and wore it to school the next day. I received smiles and chuckles from teachers and classmates that brought me an internal joy that I wanted to continue. Of course, in time more t-shirts that my father had were “borrowed” and people began to look forward to seeing what I would come up with next. My story as an apparel designer came forth after losing the life I built. I believe my first love of t-shirts found and saved me. After surviving an abusive relationship, divorce, lay-off, and loss of everything I had worked so hard to get, I labeled myself as a failure. Years later from the very bedroom that I grew up in at my parents’ house I found restorative healing in a spiritual journey of true self-discovery which oddly involved me tapping back into my creativity and designing t-shirts for local churches, non-profit organizations, and small businesses.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Can you please tell us about your clothing line Rüttees Apparel? What was the inspiration behind your designs? Who is your targeted audience? What is the statement you want your clothes to make to the average consumer? What makes your designs different?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

Focusing on positivity and building a positive mindset has been a healing balm for my life. From my spiritual journey and “life reset” I received a new name Rüt (pronounced “Root”). In 2018, I decided to believe in the power within me and launched a clothing brand after my new name called Rüttees Apparel. With my collections of apparel, my objective is to share with others the true empowerment I found through positivity and self-validation. Rüttees is a brand specifically designed to be a force to counteract negativity through fashion. Inspiration embodies positive thinking and awareness of possibilities. I make it a mindful practice to see the beauty in the things around me. To me, creativity is life and living is art! Therefore, I am inundated with inspirations that I include in my apparel designs. My mind matches words, colors, and patterns that I formulate into images. So, I can be in conversation with a friend or family member, see shapes or colors while on a walk, or even be reading a poem or listening to



music and discovering inspiration for a design. In business I understand to be most effective it is important to have a target audience. As it relates to demographics, middle-aged women were my most active customers and my focus. In 2020 the whole world was “shaken up”. Holding on to hope and clinging to the positive things was the light that saw many of us through. A lot of differentiating lines that divided us into categories were removed. I observed people reaching out in so many creative ways to help each other stay encouraged. From that time my perspective opened, and my focus is not as much on “targeted demographics” as it is on “targeted tribe”. Rüttees is dedicated to “tribe” and “vibe” with like-minded people; specifically, those who want to believe in positive things and are interested in pushing positivity! There is nothing like a positive word; it can make you smile, shout, cry and renew strength! Rüttees has turned that positive word and self-validation into your favorite t-shirt, bag, and pair of shoes. When someone wears Rüttees I want our customers to be an embodiment of the positivity message that they and the people they encounter can embrace, own, live, and share. “When the label is Rüttees the lifestyle is positivity.” The Ü you see in the Rüttees designs are based on the self-discovery and belief that everyone has the power within to achieve any vision or dream. I consider Rüttees to be more than a brand; it is a ministry and a mission. The ministry of my designs is to promote personal power with positive affirmations to believe in the power within. The mission is to be infectious with positivity to speak back

to all the voices internally and externally that are negative and limiting.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

How would you describe your approach to your designs? What would you say is your strongest skill and how have you honed that skill over the years?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

My approach to all my designs is to make positivity as an everyday outfit. I’ve learned to be bolder and more energetic with my designs. I have evolved to use more vibrant and multiple colors to supercharge the mental association with the message of Rüttees. I consider my strongest skill to be visual communication. Over the years I have taken continuing education courses to enhance my knowledge and understanding of visual communication in various mediums like print, digital, and broadcast.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Words have power. Their meanings crystallize perceptions that shape our beliefs, drive our behavior, and ultimately create our world. Do you feel one single word can impact a person’s life?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

Yes, words are technology! Technology is defined as the application of knowledge to reach practical goals in a specifiable and reproducible way. That means one word can be a catalyst for life-change for the positive or negative. Words can impact all six dimensions of a person’s life—mental, physical, emotional, relational, spiritual, and financial. That is power; a power that each individual has in their control. That responsibility increases as we mature and take positions in life as leaders, parents, teachers, and citizens. I have a personal story that demonstrates the power of words. I always had an artistic inclination that I was unfortunately discouraged to pursue. Despite winning various hand-drawing class art contests, I received information from a High School Career Counselor that, “There is no money in the Art field”. I believed that negative perspective. So, I continued to college and graduated from Texas Wesleyan University with a Bachelor’s in Mass Communications. The art in me deferred

but wasn’t denied. It took me 20+ years to come back to the place where I always felt I belonged, expressing myself artistically.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

It’s been a turmoil two years for a lot of us, especially those in the creative industry. With inflation looming how do you stay motivated, encouraged, and creative during such difficult times?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

In life, there are always going to be ups and downs. Each of us is gifted with “response-ability” to deal with these changes. The life response I chose is to be positive! I keep my creativity as a flame to encourage myself. Of course, selling my apparel is my goal, but I also find great joy in bringing my creations to life and wearing them myself. I am also learning to “celebrate learning” as I work to build my brand. As I discover new technologies and learn trade secrets and business tips I realize that I am yet winning even when sales are low.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

On your journey what have been your greatest challenges? What have been your greatest victorious moments? What have you learned from those moments that continuously help you today?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

On my journey in the apparel industry my greatest challenges have become some of my greatest victories. Namely finding quality and trusted manufacturers to produce my designs. Also learning how to build a website that is functional, attractive, and user-friendly. These have been some of my major hurdles and learning curves. In the process, I have learned to be tenacious and patient while I grind for what I need/want for my business.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Out of all your apparel designs which one is your favorite piece and why?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

That is a difficult question for me to answer because I put a little piece of myself in every design. They all are an expres-

sion of a part of my personality: funny, sassy, smooth, and classy. If I was forced to choose, I would select the “Positively Ü” design. I like the design because it is a word cloud of affirmations. The design is meant to be an eye-catcher that even if you have a negative occurrence in a day you could walk by a mirror and be quickly reminded to power back up!

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Where would you like to see Rüttees Apparel in the next couple of years?

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

I have the vision to expand Rüttees into a lifestyle brand that offers products for all. I would love to have a line for infants/children and as we grow with our tribe increase to candles, décor, and stationary items for home and office. My ultimate vision is to open a gift shop at DFW Airport and then expand to other airports.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Do you have any words of encouragement or advice for people who are wanting to start a brand or work in the fashion industry? Lastly, can you please share your clothing website and all your social media platforms for our readers to connect with you? We wish you continued success in your future endeavors.

**RÜT WOOLRIDGE:**

The best encouragement and advice I would share is a 4-part principle, “Believe in yourself as an Artist.” A particular idea or concept may fail, but that failure does not reflect on you as an Artist. Second, “Don’t be afraid to do it alone.” A partnership is wonderful, but until you find that support in partnership don’t be afraid to walk alone. Third, “Protect your vision.” Be diligent to watch over your vision and protect it like a garden. Don’t skip the foundational steps. Lastly, “Perfection is not on the resume of any successful person.” That statement is self-explanatory (smile).

Website: ruttees.com  
Facebook: @heyuruttees  
Instagram: heyuruttees  
Thank you for this opportunity!



# NISHA PERSHAY

Nisha's Hair lover ultimate gift guide Pt. 2

As a continuation of gifts for the holidays, I am providing you with some new products to bring into 2023. These products work for all hair types or various styles for the future. You can use these for yourself or give them as a stocking stuffer and the amazing part men add these products to their grooming list too!

**Jamaican Black Castor Oil Hair Grease Styling Conditioner, - Great for Strengthening - Mega Hair!** Castor oil has been a part of hair care regimen for centuries and using Jamaican black castor oil for hair growth can give you visible results. This oil is rich in beneficial compounds like antioxidants, fatty acids, and vitamins. In addition, it may help reduce hair loss, frizz and improve hair texture to keep it soft and manageable.

How to use Jamaican Black Castor Oil for Hair Growth? Gently massage the oil onto your hair roots with your fingertips. Apply it to your hair strands, leave it on overnight and shampoo your hair the next day. This should be done twice a week.



**Pantene Gold Series Hair Mask, Anti-Breakage Combing Crème, Overnight Repair Serum, and Cleansing Conditioner, with Biotin & Kukui Nut, for Natural, Curly, and Coil textured hair.** Gold Series Hair Repair Collection from Gold Series allows helps you to restore and rebuild damaged hair from within while improving your overall hair health in a few easy steps.

The biotin and kukui nut oil-infused formula strengthens and provides deep moisture leaving your hair healthy, shiny, and strong. Reduces breakage by 50% for 2X stronger hair. The Gold Series Hair Repair Anti-Breakage Combing Crème provides deep moisture for easy combing and detangling for 69% less breakage.

How to use the gold series collection? Best to use on damp or dry hair, apply it to palms, emulsify and distribute through hair. While using a wide tooth comb to detangle hair and then it is ready to style as usual.

**MIELLE Sea Moss - Anti-Shedding Hair Loss Prevention Collection** - Shampoo, Conditioner, Curl Pudding, Hair Masque, Leave-in Conditioner 5 PCS Bundle Set. Mielle Sea Moss Anti-Shedding Hair Loss Prevention Collection Shampoo, Conditioner, Curl Pudding, Hair Masque, Leave-in Conditioner 5 PCS Bundle Set This collection is formulated specifically for individuals experiencing daily or seasonal hair loss.

Restores to increase sebum to keep the scalp moisturized and it removes toxins from the scalp. Mineral and vitamin-deficient hair is equally fed with aloe, receiving nourishment and moisturization for strength, shine, and thickness



**Carol's Daughter Black Vanilla Moisture and Shine Hair Smoothie** - To instantly fix dry, dull, brittle hair so it can have all the manageability, softness, and shine you want, takes a deep moisture-balancing treatment.

Consistently using this intensely will rehydrate hair for a smooth finish that can add a blend of Cocoa and Shea Butters and Pro-vitamin B5 to rescue and deeply condition your hair. It has a healthy texture with a natural shine, which does quickly absorb into your hair and adds a beautiful, finished result.

**CHI Strengthen and Revive on The Go Styling Kit Unisex 2oz Keratin Shampoo, 2oz Keratin Conditioner, 2oz Keratin Leave-In Conditioner** - Promotes long-lasting, healthier hair, adds shine and elasticity helps prevent future breakage. It Helps eliminates frizz and flyaway from any style and is suitable for all hair types.

It gently cleanses and reconstructs damaged hair by replenishing natural keratin levels, while strengthening and sealing the cuticle, helping to protect against future damage!



# NEW BEGINNING

WRITTEN BY LADY GENESIS



Sunrises and sunsets  
 Are constant reminders  
 That there's next  
 No matter what came and went  
 We've been presented with another chance  
 Let your gaze be fixed  
 Upon what's now and not what's been  
 Blessed with another 365  
 So let's not walk in disguise  
 Even when circumstances began  
 to look identical  
 Remember they're just a tool  
 For the masters' use  
 Bringing forth A better you  
 Don't anticipate rain  
 Just let the son shine  
 As his rays of truth encompass you  
 All things have been made new  
 This harvest will be plentiful  
 And you're a laborer that apart of the few  
 So let's prepare to gather the spoils  
 And spill new oil  
 For this is the hour of triumph Not toil  
 2023 let our focus be the trinity  
 A constant reminder that after  
 Every death there is a New Beginning



# MALIK IBN LEROW

MEET AUTHOR OF THE 6 FIGURE PRISONER

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Welcome to the Author's Corner of COBS Magazine. It is our pleasure to be speaking to Atlanta-based native Malik Ibn Lerow. We will discuss his journey as an author while incarcerated. Can you give us some background on your upbringing?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

Yes. I was raised to be a competitive go-getter by my grandmother and the various masculine men that were influenced in my life. I was an athlete and honor student before becoming a teenage street player.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

When did you begin your writing career, and what prompted you to do so? Did writing come naturally to you?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

I began my writing career with rap music after being taught how to count bars by music by executive Russell Spencer who is with Block Ent. I started off writing songs and had some good momentum until I went to prison in 2007. During that time is when my writing skills transferred to legal arguments and briefs in court fighting to obtain my freedom. I'd say writing came naturally as I've always had a bright and creative mind.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Can you tell us about your book? What inspired you to write this book? What was the message you wanted to share with your readers?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

My book "The 6 Figure Prisoner" is a self-help book for convicts and their loved ones. I was inspired to write this book after returning to prison for a parole violation in 2020. I saw that many people in prison were unaware and not taking advantage of the opportunities to get ahead while incarcerated. With all the free time to study and learn high-value skills the message I have for my readers is, "Apply Yourself".

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

How does your identity shape your writing? Do you think there is such a thing as "the writer's identity"?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

My identity shapes everything about my writing. I write about my life experiences to help others understand that all obstacles should be looked at as opportunities. I want to inspire people to know that they can make it even in difficult situations. As I grow mentally as a black man my identity gets stronger, therefore, it inspires the writer in me. The definition of identity means the fact of being who or what a person is. Therefore, I am a writer with a purpose.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

How much research did you have to do before writing this book?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

I did a lot of research before writing this book, particularly when I was looking for positive examples of blacks who achieved a high level in finance and business against strong

opposition.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

You served over a decade behind prison walls why is it so important to you to share your experiences with other convicts and at-risk youth?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

The young people are the next generation of leaders. We all make mistakes, and no one is perfect. My goal is to inspire the ones who messed up and understand that the bars do not stop the dreams. If any youth is serving time my point is to read books to empower your mind while you're serving time. The fact that I've served over a decade behind bars with no stains on my name makes me capable of reaching them. I'm a real OG so I can relate to this demographic of troubled youth. I believe my assignment is to inspire troubled youth to become great and to know that it's never too late.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

You are not only a writer of one book, but you have written a second book as well. Can you tell us about your second book? What inspired you to write another book and how are the books different?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

My second book Prison Fans is a short memoir from different prisoners detailing their experience with lust and romance behind bars. The memoirs are an inside look at untold sexual desires shared by the inmates. I also share in my book what goes on behind prison walls. It also piggybacks off the first book because some of the stories are about how you can get money from an incarcerated online adult entertainer.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Can you explain the process of getting your book published while incarcerated? Can you tell us about a piece of writing that has influenced you that our readers might not know about?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

So, you may or may not know that officers will bring you whatever you want if you can pay for it, so I got a cellphone. Once I got the phone I recorded my book, had it transcribed, edited my transcript, sent my edit to an editor on fiver, had it formatted on fiver, got my book cover designed on fiver, and then published globally with Amazon KDP. A piece of writing that influenced me is "Outwitting the Devil." The author Napoleon Hill

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

Your bio mentions that you are a fitness model with a fitness business can you tell our readers about your business? How do you run your business behind bars?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

Yes, so I started my fitness business when I first got out of prison in 2018. I've made upgrades to my website and app while incarcerated but it has been kind of difficult to manage in prison so it's on pause right now. I provide online



training, nutrition, and supplements due to current circumstances things are on hold. The name of my business is Slick Chisel Fitness and Chisel'd Supplements. We're currently having a trademark issue for Chisel'd, therefore, the supplement brand is subject to change in the future.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What has been the greatest challenge that you had to overcome? What have you learned from those experiences that you can share with others?

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

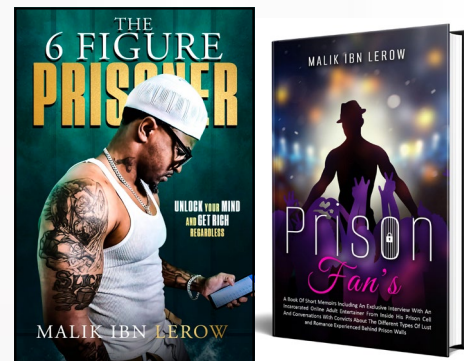
The greatest challenge for me is being able to accept that everything isn't going to go my way or on my time. I've learned in these experiences to pay more attention to what God is telling me to do instead of what I want to do.

**C.O.B.S. MAGAZINE:**

What are you looking to achieve in 2023? Can you share where your books are available for purchase, and your social media platforms for our readers to continue to follow? We wish you continuous success!

**MALIK IBN LEROW:**

In 2023 I'm looking to make major moves and further my education by attending a university to obtain my bachelor's degree. My books are available wherever books are sold in paperback and eBook format. My Instagram is alphacon\_model, TikTok is alpha convict, and my website is www.slickchiselfit.com Thank you C.O.B.S Magazine for this opportunity to show my books some love. Best wishes and thanks for bringing me on.



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# A FEW FOOD TRADITIONS THAT WILL BRING YOU GOOD LUCK IN 2023....

HAPPY NEW YEAR! We have put together a few traditional dishes for you to try with your family and friend. Happy cooking everyone.

## 1. COLLARD GREENS

Collard Greens are the go to food for the New Year because it resemble money.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2 pounds collard greens
- 3 bacon strips, chopped
- 1 small red onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2-1/2 cups water
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1 can (15 ounces) pinto beans, rinsed and drained

### DIRECTIONS

1. Remove and discard center ribs and stems from collard greens. Cut leaves into 1-in. pieces. In a Dutch oven, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp, stirring occasionally.
2. Add onion and garlic to bacon and drippings; cook and stir 2 minutes. Add collard greens; cook and stir until they begin to wilt. Stir in water, brown sugar, vinegar, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, 55-65 minutes or until greens are tender, adding beans during the last 15 minutes.



## 2. BUTTERY CORNBREAD

There is saying that goes Peas for pennies, greens for dollars, and cornbread for gold.

### INGREDIENTS

- 2/3 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 large eggs, room temperature
- 1-2/3 cups 2% milk
- 2-1/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 4-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy, 5-7 minutes. Combine eggs and milk. Combine flour, cornmeal, baking powder and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with egg mixture.
2. Pour into a greased 13x9-in. baking pan. Bake 22-27 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cut into squares; serve warm.



## 3. ORANGE GLAZED PORK LOIN

Pork is considered to be the symbol of prosperity.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 to 3 fresh thyme sprigs or 1/4 teaspoon dried thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 boneless pork loin roast (5 pounds)

### GLAZE

- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1/3 cup cold water
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Combine the first 5 ingredients; rub over roast. Place fat side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, for 1 hour.
2. Meanwhile, in a saucepan over medium heat, combine orange juice, brown sugar and mustard. In a small bowl, mix water and cornstarch until smooth. Add to orange juice mixture. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 2 minutes. Reserve 1 cup glaze for serving; brush half of remaining glaze over roast.
3. Bake until a thermometer reads 145°, 20-40 minutes longer, brushing occasionally with remaining glaze. Let stand 10 minutes before slicing. Reheat reserved glaze; serve with roast.



## 4. GINGER WALNUT TUBE CAKE

Round cakes are the symbol of coming full circle. In Greek tradition you found a hidden coin that was baked in your slice you would have good luck for the year.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup hot brewed coffee
- 1 cup canola oil
- 1 cup light molasses
- 1/4 cup sour cream
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 3-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 5 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2-1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup chopped walnuts, toasted
- 1/4 cup chopped crystallized ginger

### GLAZE

- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
- 3 to 4 tablespoons lemon juice
- Additional chopped crystallized ginger

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and flour a 10-in. fluted tube pan. In a large bowl, beat brown sugar, coffee, oil, molasses and sour cream. Add eggs; beat until well blended. In another bowl, whisk flour, ground ginger, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; gradually beat into molasses mixture. Stir in walnuts and crystallized ginger.
2. Transfer batter to prepared pan. Bake until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 40-50 minutes. Cool in pan 10 minutes before removing to a wire rack to cool completely.
3. For glaze, in a small bowl, mix confectioners' sugar, lemon zest and enough lemon juice to reach a drizzling consistency. Drizzle over cake; sprinkle with additional crystallized ginger.



## 5. LEMON PARSLEY BAKED COD

Fish represent progress because they fish forward. Fish also represents coins because of the shape of their scales.

### INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon lemon-pepper seasoning
- 4 cod fillets (6 ounces each)
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 400°. In a shallow bowl, mix lemon juice and butter. In a separate shallow bowl, mix flour and seasonings. Dip fillets in lemon juice mixture, then in flour mixture to coat both sides; shake off excess.
2. Place in a 13x9-in. baking dish coated with cooking spray. Drizzle with remaining lemon juice mixture. Bake 12-15 minutes or until fish just begins to flake easily with a fork. Mix parsley and lemon zest; sprinkle over fish.



## 6. CHEWY SOFT PRETZELS

It is believed eating one of these soft pretzels bring you good luck throughout the New Year.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast
- 1-1/2 cups warm water (110° to 115°)
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 4 to 4-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 8 cups water
- 1/2 cup baking soda
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- Optional toppings: Kosher salt, sesame seeds, poppy seeds and grated Parmesan cheese

### DIRECTIONS

1. Dissolve yeast in warm water. In a large bowl, combine sugar, salt, yeast mixture and 2 cups flour; beat on medium speed until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a stiff dough.
2. Turn dough onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 5 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.
3. Punch down dough; divide and shape into 12 balls. Roll each into a 22-in. rope; shape into a pretzel.
4. Preheat oven to 425°. Place water and baking soda in a large saucepan; bring to a boil. Place pretzels, 1 at a time, in boiling water for 30 seconds. Remove; drain on paper towels that have been lightly coated with cooking spray.
5. Place on greased baking sheets. Brush with egg; top as desired. Bake until golden brown, 12-14 minutes. Remove from pans to wire racks; serve warm.



REFERENCES: <https://www.rd.com/list/7-lucky-new-years-foods/>

# ARIELLE PERSHAY

## TIPS & TRICKS TO STAY FIT BY ARIELLE

3,2,1, Happy New Year! Hello, my beautiful people, I am excited to start your journey with some tips and tricks to stay fit.

The great thing I love about coming into a new year is a new start, new mindset, new journey, everything new. I have some new challenges for you to try. These challenges are for toning your body/weight loss and of course eating differently.

Eating differently does not mean eating salads only or eating one time a day. Please do not do that. It is important to fuel the engine with the great nutrients we get from food.

Are you ready to get fit and do the challenges right in the confront from your home? Okay, let's go!

### BELOW ARE 6 EXERCISES TO LOSE WEIGHT/ GET TONED AT HOME!

#### AEROBIC EXERCISES:

This is a cardiovascular exercise/cardio that gets your heart pumping. Your blood pumps quickly throughout your body, and your lungs take in more oxygen. (Fun fact from google aerobic means with oxygen)



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#### SKIPPING/JUMPING ROPE/WALKING:

The greatest benefit of all three is you can burn more calories in a shorter amount of time while toning your upper body, lower body, your core, and lastly the booty.



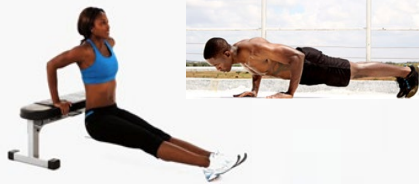
#### PLANKS:

Strengthens your spine, your rhomboids, trapezius, and your abdominal muscles. Another benefit is you're working out everything with one move. It also gives you a natural result in strong posture.



#### PUSH-UPS AND PULL-UPS:

Work the triceps, pectoral muscles, and shoulders. If you are doing it correctly it can also strengthen the lower back and the core. I would suggest watching a step-by-step tutorial on how to do the exercise for great results. You can also work with a professional trainer.



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#### SQUATS/LOUNGES:

Works the muscles in your legs and core. Core Strengths are important for general well-being, and for improving performance and strength. I want to add that this workout helps a lot with weight loss, better spinal health, and minimizes the risk of injury.



#### YOGA:

Benefits stress management, mental health, mindfulness, healthy eating, weight loss, and quality sleep. I encourage you to try to incorporate yoga into your journey to staying healthy. According to the National Institutes of Health, scientific evidence shows yoga has all the great qualities.



Before you try any of these wonderful exercises confirm with your physician first. I could promise you if you have one or even all these exercises in your schedule you will see the results. The exercise can be done in the comfort of your home. Remember you are already beautiful; we just want to make sure our inside matches our outside in a healthy way

Love you all! Happy New Year, Happy New You, Happy new great thing that will come your way!



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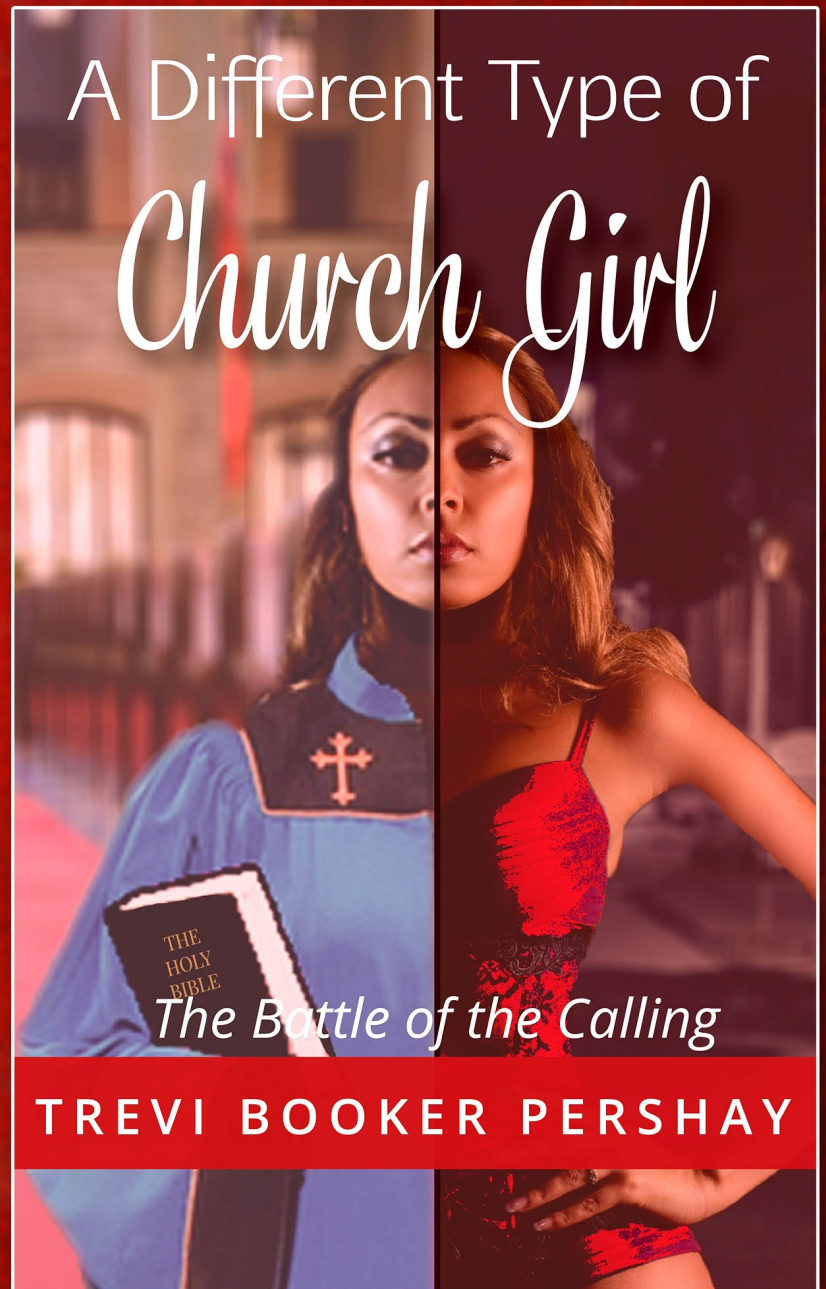
**TENNIELLE JONES**

*"THIS BOOK IS ABSOLUTELY POWERFUL!  
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ON ANY LEVEL ! JAW DROPPING AND YOU  
WONT WANT TO PUT THE BOOK DOWN  
OR FOR IT TO END!! A MUST READ"*

**RACHEL BALDWIN**

*"I read this book in one sitting...that's how  
good it was! I just could not put it down! It  
was more of a short story to me....but it was  
soooo full!  
I loved everything about this book, but most  
of all I loved the JESUS in this book!!!! Awe-  
some job! U knocked it out the park! Will  
definitely be on the lookout for more books  
by this author!"*

”



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