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Suggested Interview Questions with Answers

1. What inspired you to write this book?

My inspiration to write this book came from my life experiences. I didn't plan to be a teen mom, but I didn't make the best choices to prevent it from happening. It was important to me to share my story with others in hopes of providing inspiration and encouragement as they face life's trials.

2. Can you tell me about the book?

Rising Above Statistics: Success Against All Odds is for anyone struggling right now to meet the demands of life. Whether a teen mom, young mom, woman, or a person who may be feeling overwhelmed and tired of life as usual. I use my story of teen motherhood as the backdrop to empower others to rise above their situations and pursue their dreams and goals.

3. Why is this topic important to you, personally?

This topic is important to me because I know what it is like to have people doubt you because of your situation or circumstance. When I became a teen mom, I had a lot of support but I also had many doubters. Many people wondering what would happen with my life. For a moment in my life, I was lost, caught up in my situation and lost sight of my goals and in reality lost sight of life. That is a feeling I never want to experience again. It was important for me to tell my story to let others know they can make it out of their situation. It will take hard work, but it is definitely possible.

4. What does the title mean?

The title Rising Above Statistics: Success Against All Odds means to have a determined mindset. We all have encountered some sort of statistics, stereotypes, and opinions from others that may have caused us to doubt ourselves. The title serves to encourage others that no matter rise above whatever false message you have heard and achieve your goals and dreams.

5. What did the subject(s) of the book think of it?

I am the main subject of this book and I love it. I do incorporate some of my family in the backdrop and everyone included has been supportive throughout the whole process.

6. What are the subjects(s) doing now?

I am living my dream right now. Spreading messages of encouragement, hope, and love in a world seemingly full of hatred and judgment. My son whom I had as a teen is an honor student preparing to graduate from high school and attend college next year.

7. What were your goals and intentions in this book, and how well do you feel you achieved them?

My goals were to inspire others with this book. I always said, "if one person reads my book and takes away something of good use, then my job is done". I have received positive feedback from many people letting me know how the book has helped and inspired them so I feel I have reached my main goal.

8. How will reading your book change the minds/hearts/lives of readers?

I hope by reading my book those facing difficult times will find hope and come up with a plan to help them move forward and start living life instead of existing. I hope others who may not be facing trying times are able to spread this message of hope on to someone who needs a little encouragement. I also want others to remember how their words and judgments can affect others. Sometimes we need to be mindful of the things we say and the way we treat people who are different from us.

9. What was the hardest part of writing this book?

The hardest part of writing this book was re-living some experiences of my past. I wanted to tell an authentic story so I literally had to put my thoughts back into certain situations to deliver my story effectively. I think re-living the moment where I contemplated suicide was specifically the hardest part of this book for me.

10. How did you get to where you are in life today?

I got to where I am in life today through hard work, determination, and of course God. I am a strong believer in God and know that I would not be where I am today, had He not been there with me. I sit back and think about my life experiences. I try to explain certain things to people and struggle to come up with concrete answers. Usually, when someone asks me "How?" the only answer I have is God. God got me to where I am today and I am forever grateful.

11. What made you decide to self-publish?

I decided to self-publish because I wanted complete creative control over my book. I wanted to flexibility to deliver my story where, when, and how I

wanted. I felt I had enough knowledge and conducted enough research that I could deliver a top quality product on my own.

12. How do you write?

I mainly use my computer to write. I used to write in notebooks and journals but found the process of copying my work to a computer to mundane. However, if I don't have my computer readily available, I will use the notes app in my phone, or revert to the old-fashioned pen and paper method.

13. When do you write?

I write anytime, anywhere, any place. Many times ideas come to me while in the car, so I use the voice recorder on my phone to capture my ideas so I don't lose them. If I can squeeze in a few minutes of writing at different times during the day I will. I get most of my writing done late night or early morning while I have some alone time.

14. How do you find or make time to write?

I think this question goes with the one above. I take advantage of every free moment I have in the busy life of wife/mom/woman to write. Even if it's only for a few minutes, I will jot ideas down. I try to dedicate times on Saturday and/or Sundays to write as well.

15. Where do your ideas come from?

My ideas come from life as well as my creative brain. For as long as I can remember, I have always expressed myself through writing. I used to write poems and short stories all of the time when I was kid. Now I draw on life experiences to help me write my books. I also have a few ideas and plots for fiction stories that I hope to publish one day.

16. Do you have another project in the works? If so, what is it?

Right now, I am finalizing ideas on another project. This project is one I actually started working on before my current project. I am still finalizing the details so I do not want to give too much information out right now.

17. What do your plans for future projects include?

I have various different projects I want to release in the future. I hope to release fiction novels and perhaps some poetry, but for now I am simply living my dream and enjoying them moment.

18. What do you like to do in your free time

What free time? LOL! I like spending time with my family and making memories. I love the days when I have down time and I can curl up with my blanket and read a good book.

19. What is one piece of advice you would give to someone looking to write a book?

Start. My one piece of advice is to start. Stop saying you are waiting for the perfect time or now isn't the right time. In reality there will never be a "right" time, you just have to start. Once you start, you will be amazed at how you find the time to keep going. The good thing about self-publishing is you don't have to rush to meet any deadlines or feel pressure to have works completed at a certain time. It took me four years to fully complete and release this book, but imagine where I would be if I never started. Just start.

20. What is one piece of advice you would give to your younger self?

I would tell my younger self to love yourself first, and cherish what you have. You have a life full of love. You don't have to feel incomplete or feel the need for certain attention. Find wholeness in yourself and accept yourself for who you are. You are beautiful just the way you are. Enjoy being young, enjoy being a kid; you have the rest of your life to be an adult.