

PRAISE FOR
“BEING SINGLE: A STATE FOR THE FRAGILE HEART”

Being Single: A State For The Fragile Heart, A Guide to Self-love, Finding You and Purposeful Living is relevant to those seeking their own well-being and happiness, owning their truth, ending toxic relationships, letting go of painful pasts and moving on. The book is a push for us to step outside our comfort zone and embrace the flaws that make us stand out and be different. I recommend it as an insightful read for both men and women. It serves as a guide to a healthier and purposeful lifestyle.

—Paul Carrick Brunson

Being Single: A State For The Fragile Heart, A Guide to Self-love, Finding You and Purposeful Living is a must read! It will help you confront things that you have ignored for so long. Kemi shares a blueprint that will teach you how to find yourself, experience self-love and live purposefully.

—Jerone Davison,
Former NFL Player, Oakland Raiders

BEING SINGLE

A STATE FOR THE FRAGILE HEART

A Guide to Self-Love, Finding You and Purposeful Living

KEMI SOGUNLE

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to my love, my life and my miracle, Tobi. Giving birth to you has been one of the best things (if not the best) I have done in my life. Thank you for always speaking life to me when I need it most. I pray you read this book and let it all sink in so that you find the wisdom to live a purposeful life, just as I continue to drop the nuggets of wisdom in you daily. You are indeed a shoulder to lean on. Thank you for making me the best mom ever. I love you always.

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I could not have written this book without the grace and love of God that keeps me going on a daily basis. I give Him all the glory for keeping me alive to this very day. Without Him, I am nothing, nothing at all. I have learned to tune in to hear Him speak to me more than ever before.

I thank my life and relationship clients who allow me to use my gifts to be a blessing to them while supporting them. To my late friend, Ademola Fasina-Thomas, and his family, thank you for letting use my life-coaching skills to support you during your difficult days. To his wife, Rita Fasina-Thomas, I gained a sister whose love will never grow weary but together we will build a bond of sisterhood in His love.

To everyone I have met through life's journey that continue to encourage me, thank you. To everyone reading this book, I pray that your life will be transformed and that you will come to embrace the truth, knowing that the life you deserve already exists but you have to connect with it and truly live.

To my family, I thank you for letting me realize during my most difficult times that it is not family that I need, but God. Connecting to God, not man, led me to my purpose and gave me the opportunity to learn to love myself irrespective of what life brings. That is what life is all about: Purpose.

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INTRODUCTION

Have you ever felt rejected, carried a pain from your past, had your heart broken? We all have had to face a form of pain from either our childhood, a relationship we thought would last, a parent who died at an early stage of life or someone who was always there for us.

Having the fear of rejection or dealing with rejection itself can be challenging. Experiencing a painful childhood, a broken heart, or losing a parent or loved one may lead us to seek for answers and love.

You may end up seeking love in others and settling for less than you're worth. You may be looking for acceptance and affection to unburden your heart of the pain you are carrying. It is about seeking for answers, and it becomes obvious when we're teenagers that there is a need, a longing, a yearning, a desire to find a way out of the pain, yet it

appears that you are locked up in a world you do not understand. You have friends you cannot really talk to about this, and finally, you find a boy or girl interested in you. This person seems to care about you more than you have ever felt before. You start to put your trust in them and it may lead to you dating, feeling like this will help to ease the pain. It may lead to sex (even though the other person may not necessarily care for you) and it serves as a listening ear, which is better than not having one.

Some of those you meet may not really care about values or self-worth, not to mention self-love. Sex seems to sell more than having real relationships. There are friend-zoning, "situationships," "sexationships," and friends with benefits, to mention a few. You actually have more options to choose from depending on what type of situation you are looking to get yourself in. However, there are those who still prefer traditional dating.

Back in the day, relationships usually started right from high school or in the same neighborhood and some of our parents ended up marrying each other. They knew from high school that they would be spending the rest of their lives together. Nowadays, very few people hold on to that tradition/value. This is because there is no solid foundation set to help the individual understand what relationships are all about, let alone love. It can be mind-boggling at times to see that the value of being in good relationships can be hard to find. Everything seems to be for convenience these days, or should I call it casual dating? (This is not really dating.) If only the foundations were laid with talks that would help, you would understand

as a teenager what relationships are about or what love really means.

You may have read romantic novels, but those may no longer be applicable in the present world. There is also reality TV, which may lead you to believe in fantasizing. Someone may have hurt you in the past and now you might think everyone you meet is controlling, abusive or manipulative.

You may have created that long list and decided to stick to it without the willingness to change your mindset and let go, freeing yourself from all that you have been taught and know.

(Note: Not everyone will experience this, but I encourage everyone to take a seat and read on. You may someday share this with your children to help them understand why being single is a state for the fragile heart.)



THE VERY BEGINNING...

For me, growing up was quite interesting. I remember my mom and my aunt (her sister) teaching us about what it was hanging around boys after we the girls started having our menstrual cycle. The talks made you cringe at the site of a boy hanging around you. It was more of a scary feeling to want to hug a boy at that time. I later on started hanging out with my brothers and realized that there was so much more to learn from being around them.

Having attended an all-girls school also helped me learn things, especially from the older girls in the class. Some of them already had boyfriends, so it was easy to sit down and eavesdrop on their conversations. Some of them shared their escapades amongst each other and I just listened. I often wondered how they managed to do all that and still attend classes at the same time.

THE NAÏVE YOU

Whether boys or girls, most of us are naïve in high school. For many, it is a time of exploration. Puberty has kicked in; the girls are becoming emotional due to hormonal changes, and are attracted to the boys they used to drive away. Both boys and girls start to develop sexual attraction towards each other. The boys want to date for the first time and the girls are often afraid to make attempts, but some give in due to peer pressure. Friends that have experienced it pressure the boys to sleep with a girl for the first time, and most give in to remain in the clique. Many take risks without thinking or using protection, and some girls become pregnant in the process. The teachings in Biology class also contribute towards boys and girls having the urge to explore what the discussions in anatomy and physiology are all about.

In this naïve state, no one thinks of the consequences of what is about to be done or what has been done.

The thought process may not be active due to lively hormones, which contribute to the decision-making process. Poor choices are often made at this stage. Boys and girls have not discovered who they really are and often yield to peer pressure. It is always about what the norm is, what is trendy, and picking who to follow rather than fly solo. The main and sub-groups of friends begin to form.

Friends can have great influence on each other at this stage. Some have advanced experiences while some are just beginners in the dating process. Allowing others to influence you negatively when you are naïve may contribute to the beginning of downward slopes in your journey in life.

*The naïve state is a fragile one,
especially when you are just beginning
to find your ground and have
no idea who you are.*

It is often more about going with the flow without thoroughly thinking, and having others suggest what to do as well as what steps to take.

I call this state “the exploration state.” You have the notion to try something you have never done before. For example, you may try a cigarette, venture into having sex, explore lesbianism or “gayness” and so on. If you are in any way connected to your spirituality, you may hear your inner voice (the Spirit of God in you) tell you not to act on these urges, but because you are curious in this state, you are tempted to dive into adventuring and this may be the very beginning of your painful journey in life.

YOUR FIRST ATTEMPT

Juggling schoolwork and social life in high school can be tough. You have to deal with the teachers and the assignments. Some of the male teachers cannot even take their

eyes off you and you began to struggle with coping in class. If you attend an all girls' school, you may not have exposure to so much of the opposite sex. The boys often come around after school hours, and hang out in front of the all-girls schools in order to check out girls and start a relationship with them (if they can finally do the convincing). A girl's friends influence her to go on a date with the boy in the picture. That is where it all begins. The boy's friends, on the other hand, influence him to give up his virginity and convince the girl to do the same.

Most boys know how to organize the parties that lead to the girls giving up their virginity, all in the name of what they think is love. One of them volunteers to hold the party at his place while his parents are at work or out of town. They may also find a club to hang out at, or it may be at the mall. Nowadays, things happen in awkward places. People have sex in the bathrooms, in the parking lot, at the park or at the library. If at the house, these children organize easily. They usually have someone watching the door and driveway for parents, while those involved in sex take to the room. If, as a parent, you have not had the sex talk with your child yet, it may be too late as they may be starting to discover what sex is all about.

Sometimes sex happens this way, while others give up and walk away, showing that they are not ready to explore sex. There were several attempts made by John to be with Leslie, but she kept resisting due to the morals she grew up with. Every time they held hands, her mother's voice would echo in her heart and she would quickly excuse herself and return home from school. John had made a bet

with his friends that he could convince Leslie to have sex with him, but she never gave in. At some point, he forced himself on her by kissing her and grabbing hold of her breast. She resisted and pushed him off. That was the last time they were with each other. Leslie decided she was going to stick to the morals her mother had imbued in her. She was committed to saving herself until she got married.

Not many girls can be as brave as Leslie was, due to peer pressure and the eagerness to explore something they had never experienced before. They listened to stories friends told and made their decisions based on someone else's lifestyle and choice, which came with consequences.

Not knowing who you truly are and what your purpose is during the exploration phase may lead you to become inquisitive and to experiment sexually. It may also be the beginning of looking for love in the wrong places.

LOOKING FOR LOVE IN THE WRONG PLACES

Helen had watched her parents fight day after day and night after night. Sometimes her dad would leave and not return until a day or two later. She watched the neighbor console her mom occasionally. He would kiss her on the forehead and tell her, "Everything will be all right with time." She never experienced what love was all about,

growing up with her parents. She had just graduated from high school and was admitted into the college of her choice; it was her first time away from home. It was not as if she was sheltered, but she was an introvert. She kept mostly to herself due to the family situation. She did not want her friends to know anything about what was happening with her parents. She never invited her friends to hang out at her home. She preferred to meet up at their respective homes and spend time with them there. Sometimes, it ended up in sleepovers.

Helen had just moved to her own apartment, which she shared with two friends off-campus. It was the first weekend in her new environment. She had no plans to go home to visit her parents and grandmother. She wanted to experience what it was like living alone. Some of the boys in her faculty had invited her to a party, and she was not sure about attending. After deliberating for about two hours, she finally decided to go. It was her first party as a college student. She had no idea what to expect. A handsome, tall man who she'd stared at all night introduced himself. He handed her a glass of wine and sat her down at a table in the far right corner of the hall. They chatted for a while and in between, he refilled her glass of wine. She got intoxicated without thinking about the number of glasses she drank. Enchanted by this "prince charming," who seemed to be delighted to spend the evening with her, she thought, *This cannot not be happening*. Could it be love at first sight? In truth, she had no idea who she was with that night. The party ended and the man, Joel, escorted her back to her apartment. She offered to help her get in since she was

tipsy. He assisted her with opening the door and helped get her into her bedroom. The apartment was empty and her friends were not around. Joel seized the opportunity of being alone with Helen, kissing her and caressing her. Helen was drunk, the kiss took her, and she felt good at that moment. Before she knew what was going on, they had sex. It happened spontaneously, but it was due to her being intoxicated. Joel used the opportunity of serving her several glasses of wine to get into Helen's space and rob her of her virginity. She also made herself vulnerable by allowing herself to be taken in by his looks and words without paying attention to his actions.

Helen woke up in the morning to find herself undressed and under the comforter. She could not remember what happened the previous night but found a note from Joel on her nightstand, thanking her for their time together. She tried to recall how she'd gotten herself into the situation. She had not planned to sleep with Joel. All she wanted was have a good time, not to lose her virginity. She felt disappointed in herself. She could not believe she allowed it to happen by getting drunk. She was looking for love at the wrong place and time.

She got up to freshen up, sat down, and started to think in order to recall what exactly had happened. She did not have Joel's number or any other information. There was no way to get in touch with him. She had compromised who she was for the looks she saw, and thought she fell in love in that moment. Where would she start? She had no idea Joel was not a student on campus. She called around to ask the people who invited her to the party if they knew Joel,

but no one seemed to be able to help her. Torn as she was, inside out, she cried her eyes out after she got back to her apartment. Her co-occupants had gone home for the weekend. She was alone and did not have anyone to discuss the situation with. She decided she could not let anyone hear about what had happened to her.

She kept her head up to attend lectures, but broke down every time she returned to her room at the apartment. Day after day, night after night, Helen would stay up crying and wondering what resulted in her compromising and getting drunk. She lived with regrets from that very night. She was not sure if he had used protection. She decided to get herself checked out by her doctor in order to ensure she had not gotten pregnant. As she waited for the results of her test, her heart raced with anxiety and kept her up all night.

Being an introvert helped Helen keep the situation under control. Her roommates had no idea anything had happened to her. She visited her parents but never talked to them about what had happened at the party. Early one day, Helen got up to visit her doctor in order to obtain the pregnancy test result. Her pregnancy test turned out negative. She felt relieved and continued living her life while keeping silent about what she had experienced. Everything seemed to be going okay in her final year in college, until she fell ill prior to completing her thesis and rushed to the hospital. She was experiencing chronic stomach pain, was always fatigued and had noticed her eyes suddenly became yellow. Little did Helen know that she had actually contracted Hepatitis B the night she slept with Joel. She'd had

no symptoms whatsoever until a year and a half after the incident, but the virus had begun to damage her liver.

How could this be happening? This was not what she'd planned. This was not how she envisaged her life would turn out. She had felt unloved as a child; her parents fought and she watched quietly, which tore her apart, but she never spoke about it. She'd bottled up a lot until she met Joel. That night, he'd listened to her and gave her all the attention she had been missing.

Helen had let her guard down and gave in into drinking with him, entangled by his sweet, manipulative words. She did not realize they would end up sleeping with each other, or that she'd never know who he really was and may never cross paths again. Here she was, lying in a hospital bed with a disease gradually taking a toll on her life and eating her up.

Some of us today, like Helen, do not take the time to think about what we are getting into during our teenage years. We think of things as trends: it is in vogue, it is the norm so we have to participate. We allow society and culture define how we should live. We hold on to the thought of, "Everyone is doing it, so why can't I?" This is how you start looking for love in the wrong places.

We forget about who we are, why God created us, our purpose/mission and lose ourselves in the exploration process in our journey.

THE EXPLORATION PHASE

The exploration phase of our journey allows us to start to discover who we are, but most of the time, we are not aware of this; hence, the reason why most of us get lost in the process. This stage, as a teenager, is where you start to become aware of yourself, your hormonal changes, and body changes. Attraction towards the opposite sex and interest in sex develop at this time.

The exploration phase is where all the desires, ego, fear, pretense and so on begin to come to the surface. At this phase, each individual begins to crave to experience things that have not yet been explored. The need to fit in with society in order to be accepted begins to creep in. You start wanting to dress up like them and act like everyone else around you without realizing that you were created and designed for a unique purpose by God.

The ability to connect to your spirituality at an early age can make a huge difference during the exploration phase. On the other hand, when you do not connect to God or have not developed a personal relationship with Him, you will continue your journey in the exploration phase, which may lead to easy or painful paths depending on how much of yourself you truly know at this stage. Fitting into society, culture, tradition, yielding to peer pressure or trying to impress and please others, oftentimes more than not, results in getting lost further. The ability to reason on your own while weighing all your options will help you decide if you want to conform to the worldly standards and accept what society is offering, or decide on

your own which way to go. The decisions you make will have a great impact on the life you live.

The exploration phase is also where you may start to make friends and develop associations that can either help shape or break you during the teenage years. Association is always because of the desire to belong to a well-known group or trying to fit into a particular group in order to gain recognition.

Seeking recognition due to fear of being rejected by others often results in losing oneself a step further during the exploration phase.
