I Can Do This Thing!
Abby Catoe
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
November 2017

In September 2017, the NBA Incubate Initiative hosted the 2017 SENT Seminar: Equipping Social ENTrepreneurs for Leadership and Change, in Leavenworth, Kansas. Designed for Disciples and their leadership teams who are starting new health and social services ministries, the SENT Seminar covers the basics of nonprofit ministry startups, as well as skills for leadership and change in our global and faith communities. Abby Catoe attended the 2017 SENT Seminar with her ministry Annie’s Hope Center for Growth and Healing, a home that provides support and housing for women survivors of domestic violence.

I am so very grateful to have participated in this wonderful learning and inspiring gathering. Meeting all the others from various parts of North America, with totally different backgrounds and different stories, I was overwhelmed by our similar desire to make real changes in the world for the good of others. When you have a vision that seems out of reach and you’re not sure how you will bring that vision to fruition, but then encounter others who have visions as well and who are struggling along with you on how to fulfill those visions, it is so assuring to know that you are not alone after all!

Hearing the words of others, that come from the inspiration of God upon their hearts, confirmed my faith and trust that what I am doing is indeed a ministry in the work of God’s kingdom here on Earth. I, along with all of those in attendance, have been gifted with a mission from God. The speakers who shared pertinent information for how to implement our tasks were all on point. From the perspectives of marketing, legal and financial issues, as well as the leadership training by Greg Turk, I gained not only a tremendous amount of knowledge, but I also came away with a heart-felt belief that I can do this thing! I am setting goals to accomplish and am actually doing them.
I am also so fortunate to have met such great people with whom I continue to have relationships via social media. We are a special group who will work with one another to encourage and support each other’s visions. The fact that we are all working hand-in-hand with God in our endeavors gives us an even greater connection through the bonds of the Spirit.

The most surprising thing that occurred with this experience is the vision of the dinner church I received while there. It was totally unexpected, but it really helped me to make sense of why God wanted me to be ordained. I never thought I would want to lead a “church” and have wondered for the last three years why I needed to be ordained. Now I know. I cannot say whether or not this would have ever happened had I not attended the seminar. I tend to believe God had a hand in all of this, as God does in my life in most everything, as I follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. This new vision will not diminish the vision for the women’s center I hope to open one day, rather it will enhance the completion.

Thank you to all those who helped to make this possible for me. It forever impacted my purpose and direction in life.

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I’m All In Now
Cynthia Marshall
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
November 2017

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I was blessed with the opportunity to attend the 2017 NBA Incubate Initiative SENT Seminar, convened in Leavenworth, Kansas. The Seminar was held at the Sisters of Charity Marillac Center. This setting gave me permission to “unplug,” as the only electronic devices in the rooms were the ones we brought with us. I took advantage of this opportunity by spending time in thought and/or prayer about the “what’s next for G&me.”

The vision I was given, approximately ten years ago, was to establish G&me Enrichment Institute (G&me). G&me equips youth, young adults, and their families with the knowledge and tools necessary to become responsible decision makers. The program’s focus is on health awareness and social development. This has been ten years in the making, primarily because I didn’t know how to apply what was in my head and heart into actual organizational development. This, as I learned, is a “limiting belief”.

Through the SENT Seminar, I realized I am more than capable of making this happen. The workshops that were convened provided me insight into what I am capable of. It’s not about knowing it all, but knowing how to access the tools and resources needed to make it happen. (Ah… A “liberating belief!”)
The workshop facilitators conveyed a genuine interest in seeing the participants succeed and their presentations were transparent. Although the participants were at different stages of developing their organizations, the workshops were presented in such a way that everyone could glean something from them.

The bonding that was forged during these sessions was invaluable. Time was allotted for the participants to share with, and learn from, each other. I have desired to find a mentor to help show me the ropes of organizational development. I now not only have one, but at least 20, including the facilitators and the NBA Incubate Initiative Staff, that I can call on for assistance and support. Go GOD!!!

On our last day, during the Closing Worship, I found myself feeling extremely full, to the extent that I started crying. To say this was a surprise to me is an understatement! However, as I allowed myself to stay in the moment, each tear shed came to be a release from all of my doubt, fear, anxiety and apprehension about establishing G&me. I experienced such a sense of peace. I’m all in now!!!

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One of the beautiful takeaways from our participation in the National Benevolent Association SENT seminar, was the fact that our struggle was heard by loving people who are in ministries that love to help the marginalized, just like us. It was great to see how everyone shared their passionate stories that helped us relate to our stories.

Working with a nonprofit organization can sometimes feel like a daunting task, especially when you have limited resources and staff, but when everyone comes together to share their ideas of how you can become better, running a nonprofit organization doesn’t seem impossible after all. Even today, our nonprofit “Lilies of the Valley,” has SENT Participants asking how they can lend a helping hand. Networking!! We are grateful to God for this opportunity to network with friends that aren’t competing to see whose organization can be better, but instead come seeking how can we be of better service to our community.

It’s wonderful to see how the love of our neighbor can create organizations that vary from helping abused and neglected women, to helping the incarcerated, to helping the elderly who have been forgotten in their homes. All these leaders bring an awareness to situations that you might never have thought existed. Sometimes you know what or who you want to help in your community, but you don’t know how to begin or how to organize, and it still warms our heart to see that NBA takes the time to equip us with resources that can help us get the jumpstart we need.

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The entire time my mother and I were attending, we kept talking about how our future plans seem to get brighter now that we have all this information to take back home, and how we could not wait to get started. We’ve sat down and reviewed our notes on everything that was shared by our workshop leaders, and we couldn’t help but get excited about how we could see our organization come this far with the help of God.

Ultimately, we are grateful for all the people who took that step of faith and attended this seminar. We are grateful for their stories, lives, passion, and hearts. We are forever grateful for their offers of help with prayer and encouragement. It’s a blessing to know that we are not alone. We are a team of achievers and servants. We are a team of compassionate and loving individuals that seek to value others. We are a team that shoots for the stars and dreams big. We are a team that takes chances and works to become better. We are a team that lifts each other and prays for one another. We are grateful for all the opportunities that have come from being a part of this seminar. We are grateful for everyone who put this event together and shared their talents to show us that we are not alone, but that we’re in this together…

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There is a Balm in Gilead
Joanne Flowers
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
November 2017

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Public health has been my passion since I first discovered it as a member of the WAC (Women’s Army Corps), almost forty years ago. Since that time, I have worked in public health in the military, as well as in state and local governments. I am convinced that Ralph Waldo Emerson stated accurately, “the first wealth is health.”

I was called into ministry about 15 years ago. I was working as a public health college professor, and needless to say, this was quite unexpected. I was very unsure of what the future would hold in ministry and I certainly did not know how I could the church. Nevertheless, I enrolled in seminary and I served on several short-term mission trips and little by little, I began to understand what God was calling me to do.

At a research symposium held at Duke University’s Center for Spirituality, Theology, and Health, my vision became a little clearer. Attendees reviewed and discussed a wealth of research studies which examined the relationship between Christian spirituality and health and wellness, such as the role of prayer and healing. In one study, religiosity was found to be an important predictor of positive health outcomes. In another, religiosity was important for not only the well-being of the patient, but the caregiver as well. Others found the church to be an important source of social capital for healthy living.
While these findings are probably not a surprise for most Christians, they welded immeasurable power in changing the attitudes of many in the health professional about the role of religion in health. Though research establishing the role of faith and health is ongoing, it occurred to me, does the church have a role in health and wellness? Sure, many churches have health fairs or lectures, but many churches do not. Some churches have health ministries consisting of parish nurses or similarly trained health care professionals. Unfortunately, others do not, and they are usually those serving communities who may benefit the most.

In the United States, health care is not available to everyone. When there are limited funds to pay for health services, an emphasis is placed on diagnosis and treatment, with minimal time and money placed on educating the patient. Moreover, with a large proportion of our population that is aging, the church should prepare itself to provide supplemental support services whenever possible.

*Is there no balm in Gilead? Is there no physician here? (Jeremiah 8:22)*

The words of an African American spiritual answer this question:

*There is a balm in Gilead to make the wounded whole.*

“Flowers Ministries” has evolved from a vision to be, for as many as possible, that balm in Gilead. We are dedicated to (1) disseminating health information; (2) eliminating health disparities whenever possible through health education and health promotion; and (3) encouraging healthy lifestyles. We have, and plan to continue to make, presentations in churches, at conferences, or workshops, as requested. We also plan to develop curricula for an even wider distribution of information.

Teaching in kindness and love, this ministry will empower people with knowledge so they can make informed decisions about their health. This is the manner in which I hope to serve others and serve God.

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The day begins as any other typical day. The snooze button is punched several times, and the chaos of the morning routine is off and running. Shoes are all located, and hopefully paired up correctly and on the correct feet. Backpacks are zipped, coats are bundled, and the school bus is at the end of the driveway. Many of us can relate to these mornings, right?

However, for my family there are other morning routines that are vital. Three little sippy cups containing the exact amount of drink that can mask the horrific taste of a plethora of crushed and liquid medications are all lined up. Epi-pens are checked and double checked and placed in each backpack, my purse, and the car glove box. Breathing meds are dispensed by nebulizer to a frustrated child who doesn’t like the mask, and the portable nebulizer and meds are placed in the backpack. Snatching yet another child, as they are struggling to regulate sensory input and is currently running screaming through the house, I wrestle just long enough for seizure medication to be placed under the tongue and pray the pills dissolve quickly. Meanwhile, from out the entryway window, I can see vague flashing of red lights informing me that the school bus has arrived, and I realize that the third child has decided to strip himself of all clothing because this morning it was too much stimulation.
There are families, just like mine, throughout our communities and nestled within our churches. Yet, for so many of us, we never see them. Drippings of Grace Ministries seeks to advocate for those that have been stripped of their voice, offer support for care providers and help to meet the gaps in services. Regarding the church, it is our desire to help create authentic bodies of Christ, that proclaims to this world a complete gospel!

A major turning point for our church was when our paths crossed with the National Benevolent Association and attending the SENT Seminar. I don’t think that I can even put into words the vitality that was breathed into me throughout that weekend by all the leaders, as well as other attendees. However, God whispered continuously in my ears, trace the footprints. This is the understanding that we can be innovators and visionaries without having to recreate the wheel constantly. The NBA provided exceptional individuals to serve as guides along our leadership journey, being both encouraging and authentic. I live in the reality where I must advocate continuously for basic rights for my children and for my calling as a woman to be recognized in ministry. My soul craved for a safe place to encounter God to develop into who and what God needs me to be. I have found that with NBA, and for that I will be eternally thankful!

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If you are a very strong entity or church, but you don’t invest your time, talent, and fiscal and spiritual resources in people, what does it matter? For me, diversity is not how many people we know from different cultures, genders, religions, or races, but rather how much time, talent, energy, money, and love we invest in the least of God’s people - and that’s all of us. What kind of relationship are we building with all of God’s people? Does our care transcend our witty words, and our pretentious thoughts and feelings? How do we develop and model this care in pastoral care?

The “Wealth Think Bank” gives us one, of many, clues. We care about people and their quality of life, and their right to earn and receive decent wages from their place of employment. We believe that there is a direct correlation between the lack of wealth and the rate of crime in American inner cities. I believe that wealth, not greed or being rich, is a human right. This means having more than enough to live a life of quality in America, as well as in our Global Society. Typically, as wealth increases within an individual household or a neighborhood, crime tends to decrease. At “Wealth Think Bank,” our aim is to target those who have no money, those who have a lack of money, and those who have less knowledge about how to acquire, manage and sustain their lifestyle, and to educate them on financial literacy. Our goals are to help people develop the acquisition and management of wealth, as well as to help them start, operate, and sustain a business effectively and with a quality standard level of competence.
We are targeting persons with new entrepreneurial spirits, visions, and goals of living and making the world a better place for all of humanity.

I participated in the SENT Seminar to rise out of the ashes of limiting beliefs and hopefully allow my mind to flip the switch. By this I mean, replace and change the thoughts that may limit me in developing and providing a spiritual and professional tool to assist God’s people through the Disciples of Christ ministries.

Many of the people who will be trained and assisted by the “Wealth Think Bank” will also know that NBA cares, that SENT cares about God’s people through partnerships, experiences, and QBR (Quality Business Relationships). Through these partnerships and business relationships we can also build QBN (Quality Business Networking)—always sharing resources, knowledge, spirit, and joy with all.

I am grateful for the experience and the community that I shared at SENT. I look forward to further opportunities that lie ahead of the potential partnership between the NBA and the “Wealth Think Bank.” I will use this partnership to assist persons in creating a quality of life, both spiritually and financially, for their family, children, community and their church.

I am sure that I don’t have to be limited in working, providing, and sharing both the good news and wealth with God’s children within the inner cities, who are just as worthy Disciples as anyone.

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A Flower Blooms
Serena Satori
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
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Oh, the ebb and tide of emotions, they run deeper and deeper with every encounter… the reminders of yesterday, the feeling of loneliness, of hurt and of pain create a wall for the possibility of tender love. Sweet succulent love… the embrace of sweet innocence like the nectar of a flower freshly opened in the morn wet with dew drops awaiting the sun’s warmth.

Morning brings a cloudy day; cloudy thoughts and the pedals fell to open as the rain moves in feeding the vitality of life that exist within the flower. The flower withdraws its pedals to keep from drowning as the wetness purifies her, refreshes her, and brings her the anticipation of a new day. A day to start anew, another day of hope as the clean refreshing rain washes away the remnants of yesterday’s chaotic encounter.

The chaotic nature of the elements which surrounds her is a challenge to overcome, the past repeats itself as the flower remembers yesterday; she grows, overcoming the obstacles with grace; she blossoms, giving back the nourishment she has received from the rain and the sun to the surrounding environment. The harsh elements have been transformed into life giving sustenance.

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The Church Must Learn to Be the Church in a New Way
Susan Bernauer
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
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I have been part of many traditional style churches. You know, with buildings and steeples, and with all the people inside. And throughout the years, the cry of these churches has been that the number of people inside is dwindling. “What can we do to get people back and re-create the days when Sunday morning worship was packed and our Sunday schools were full?”

We tried changing the type of music, we projected words on the wall, brought in drums, changed the time and days of worship, and even brought coffee to our seats. Still, our churches remained poorly attended - which hurt, because the bills were not being paid. If the bills aren't paid, we reasoned, the church can’t remain open, and ministry can’t be done.

Then emerged the radical idea that we were taught as children: “the church is more than a building, it’s the people.” Ministry is the activity of believers, regardless of where they choose to worship. And those of us who understood that, felt denominational standards should be challenged, to ordain ministers to serve ‘valid ministries’ of the church, in places other than the pulpit. In short, to be faithful to the call of Christ in this world, “the Church must learn to be the Church in a new way.” Those who tried to serve in non-traditional ministries found resistance from the traditional church.
When NBA said they wanted to help new ministries and to provide not only resources, but also a place where new creative ministries could find a “home,” I knew I had found new hope. I attended a SENT Seminar at NBA’s encouragement, and on their ‘dime.’ There, I found, gathered around a common love for Christ, people of a like mind and a wide variety of creative responses to God’s calling on their lives. Each one of us, in our own vastly different settings, had heard and responded to the call “to be the Church in a ‘new’ way:” to go to people where they were, rather than requiring them to fit our mold and come into our space; to celebrate diversity and make inclusiveness a common part of our worshiping and serving together; and to see Christ’s church among the marginalized, who want to know the hope that is in Christ, and who want to worship and serve like any other Christian.

In the Marillac Center, where the Seminar was held, there were several beautifully carved statues. There is one of Christ bringing back a lamb that was “lost,” and it reflects for me the purpose of SENT, and the call on the lives of those of us gathered at the SENT seminar. There are plenty of lambs needing Christ to find them where they are, and bring them back into the safety of his fold. Thanks to NBA and their SENT program, those of us who have heard the call to go out into the world and “be the Church in a new way,” now have an opportunity to be able to go forth with God’s word of HOPE.

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Hope Changes Everything
Syvoskia Pope
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
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Before attending the SENT Seminar, I had no idea what impact it would have on turning my dream into a living project. I was so impressed at how the whole structure, from arrival to departure, was a joy leaping inside of me that said, “they care about what you have envisioned.” The workshops were well thought out and planned. I really enjoyed the hands-on exercise of setting up my social media page before I left. I am such a taskmaster, and checking that one off the list felt good.

The seminar’s location was the most beautiful place that I have had the opportunity to visit and sleep. It was a peaceful experience for me. The NBA staff were so incredible and professional in how they met with all the attendees. I felt that my dream was shared in a safe place, and it gave me time to reflect on what it could become. After the determination of where the “Empower Hope Centre” would fit in the model discussed, I gained insight of how our model for mission was today.

We currently have three projects/ministry that will currently operate out of the “NCF Empower Hope Center:”

1. Leadership Institute
2. Half-way House/Kristy Love Foundation
3. Young Adult Microbusiness Training

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The “NCF Empower Hope Center” was designed to be the social service arm of the church. We had been helping women in the Kristy Love Foundation house transform as individuals and families through education, and spiritual formation through a weekly “1-hour of power.” Through this partnership, these women have been adopted into our faith community and they are receiving life skill training, mentorship, and transformation into a loving relationship with Christ. Every week I saw the work of the Holy Spirit moving in the lives of many women. I encountered what only God had planned, not me.

We can see the vision and dreams of what can happen in the future. Through life skills classes, financial education, and entrepreneurship training, these women can be better prepared to meet the demands of life. The story of our project came as a need for our faith community. We empower hope, because “We believe Hope changes everything.”

As we continue to move towards educating others in mission in EHC, we sought the need to offer a Leadership Institute track, which is a nine-month training program that teaches not only our core group, but other leaders in the community, to provide education and that helps them be better men and women prepared for ministry.

We plan to reach young African-American men and women by exploring entrepreneurship and teaching them how to start their own businesses. I believe the EHC has an opportunity to build sustainable programs to assist families in low/moderate income communities. We believe that we can become a resilient community where families can be educated to become sustainable, enriched, and empowered to achieve their hopes and dreams. Why? Because “We believe Hope Changes Everything.”

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Walking My Faith
Tiffany Curtis
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
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Last week, Joao*, a community organizer from Brazil, won his political asylum case and was released from Cibola County Detention Center. We immediately got him picked up from the facility by a volunteer, and he was transported to a welcoming home in Santa Fe, where we were able to buy him clothing, shoes, and a cell phone. Otherwise, Joao would have been left at a dusty, rural Greyhound bus station with no money, no possessions, and no social connections in the United States.

I am a founder of the Santa Fe Faith Network for Immigrant Justice, and also one of five core organizers of the network. We meet monthly as a whole network, with an average attendance of 25 leaders of faith communities represented. We have been in existence for six months, and in addition to educating U.S. citizens about immigration justice issues, our two main areas of organizing at this time are building a Sanctuary network among faith communities in Santa Fe, and supporting those detained at Cibola County Detention Center, a private prison detaining migrants near Grants, NM.

We have set up a Google Voice number, which we forward daily to one of our phones (we also have volunteers lined up to sub in for one of our core group as needed). The phone number has been shared with the wardens and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents at Cibola, as well as directly with people who are detained, letting them know to call us when someone is scheduled to be released.

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We currently have 40 volunteers poised to do pick-ups/transportation when people are released from Cibola, and 32 have signed up to offer short-term housing in Albuquerque and Santa Fe, as we help folks get to where they want to end up.

In October 2016, the month I moved to New Mexico to begin my new ministry, CoreCivic - formerly known as the Corrections Corporation of America - landed a new contract with ICE in New Mexico by repurposing a former federal prison (Cibola County Corrections Center), that had recently been shut down due to inmate deaths involving medical neglect, (also under CoreCivic’s management.)

Across the country, the federal Bureau of Prisons has reduced its private prison contracts, and ICE has often snapped them up to detain migrants. Starting in 2014, with a surge in Central American asylum seekers arriving at the U.S. border, usually fleeing violence in their home countries, CoreCivic’s contracts with ICE skyrocketed. Stock prices in CoreCivic also shot up after the election of Donald Trump.

As a Disciples of Christ minister and community organizer, raised in an immigrant church in Los Angeles, migrants are integral members of my family in Christ. I am walking my faith by resisting the dehumanizing systems that continue to intimidate and incarcerate migrants in our communities. I am thankful to the NBA Incubate initiative, as well as to the NBA’s Prison Ministry Peer Group, for their support of my emerging ministry here in New Mexico.

*name has been changed

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Creating Cultures of Inclusion
Christopher “Topher” Endress
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
November 2017

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There are so many words we use to label people with disabilities: handicapped, special needs, disabled, differently-abled, limited, marginalized, etc. The list could go on and on, especially if I added the more offensive names to the list. Why is that?

I think it’s two-fold. For starters, humans just love to define and label things. Our minds are geared for pattern recognition, and it’s frankly a lot easier to anticipate needs if we can assign a label and group people together. But also, it’s important because we all want to be known. It can be comforting to see someone else with your label - they are like me, they get it, I’m not alone.

People have different reasons for their preferences with titles and labels. Some may prefer “autistic,” while others want to be “a person who uses a wheelchair.” Some are fluid, changing their preference based on context. Other slowly morph over time.

If there is one thing I learned from the NBA’s SENT Seminar, it was a similar lesson - what we call ourselves matters a great deal, but it is never static. I entered the weekend already emboldened as a theologian to speak about the right-ness of disability inclusion, but had to learn as well, that being called ‘CEO,’ ‘President,’ or ‘Director of Marketing,’ are no less forms of ministry.
As I lean into work with churches, coaching and teaching them about creating cultures of inclusion, I have to pick titles. Maybe I’ll be a consultant. Maybe a minister. Maybe a prophet. Maybe all of these. If my goal is to see churches widen their walls so as to include all people, whether they use the label disabled, differently-abled, handicapped, or whatever, I’ll have to see myself as ministering through the different types of work that must be done.

One of the most memorably encouraging moments of my experience was when we collectively worked on our Facebook presence. As someone who takes technology for granted much of the time, and who is frankly kind of bored with Facebook, I was abundantly aware of how others put much more stock into shaping the online image of their ministry. I may have been able to help a few locate the right buttons, but they were able to show me how to look less cynically at the social media world. Their eagerness to share their hopes, mission, and vision stuck with me; building a ministry page online became an act of careful ministry, illustrating God’s calling to a world awash in selfies and targeted ads. What a gift - to see the entire process as a ministry itself!

The SENT Seminar encouraged me to find where God is moving in the midst of blog posts, networking, and document editing. The people I was learning alongside encouraged me to find where God was moving in my own spirit as well. Working side by side with others who so clearly felt God’s calling was an incredible gift, and one that will help shape my own work.

I do not know what I’ll be called in 10 years. But I know that my work, guided by the NBA, will be ministry. And I know that God will be moving in our churches, breaking down the barriers between us, no matter what we call ourselves.

The NBA incubates new ministries, supporting social entrepreneurs of faith who are serving their communities in a variety of innovative ways and empowering these Disciples-led health and social service projects to focus on growth, impact, and sustainability. Learn more at nbacares.org/incubate or by contacting Rev. Ayanna Johnson Watkins, Director of the NBA Incubate Initiative, at awatkins@nbacares.org.
The Birthing Process
Yvonne McCoy
NBA Incubate SENT Seminar Participant
November 2017

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When God drops a vision into your spirit it might take some time for it to come to fruition. In the meantime, we have a responsibility to trust God to bring it to pass in His own time.

In 2008, I was impressed by God to create a unique sanctuary for women, who are abused and traumatized, to experience healing and transformation. The activities performed in this “Holy Place” will improve the quality of lives and empower women to thrive within the community. This will be achieved by utilizing the Holistic Healing concept of nurturing the whole person, mind, body, soul and spirit.

Immediately, I began to look for a location. When I found the ideal place, I set a date, reserved the facility, made a US $1,000.00 deposit, and began to advertise. I got no participants, had to cancel the facility, and lost my deposit. I was sure that I had followed the leading of the Holy Spirit. I asked the Lord why the venture had failed. God responded in one word: “timing.”

For the next 7 years I chased the vision, while continuing to practice and grow in my holistic healing vocation. Eventually, I became tired and frustrated. I questioned if I had pursued this on my own.
In 2015, I met a person at a conference with the same vision, and thought the dream had been revived. We set a date to meet. The date came and went, and no word at all!

I felt defeated and wanted to give up. I told myself all the reasons why I could not move forward. The primary reason: I was too old and had run out of energy. I didn’t have the strength to continue the mission.

Two years after that encounter, I received a call from a clergy friend who was present at the General Assembly. She knew of my vision and shared with me an overview of the presentation made by the NBA for the SENT Seminar. I felt the excitement in my belly and knew the dream was still alive. I applied, was accepted, and attended the Seminar. The transformation experienced after the first day was phenomenal. Yet, I was fearful of becoming too engaged and again experiencing disappointment. I heard God say, “trust Me - now is the time”!

I was so encouraged by the retreat leaders and the other SENT participants. Finally, I felt like I was a part of a supportive community and not all alone. I experienced the labor pains and knew it was time to give birth. I had been pregnant for 9 years and was now ready to bring forth the child. Midwives were in place to assist me in the birthing process. Resources were available to help me grow up the child.

God’s timing is impeccable! Wait, I say on the Lord! They that wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength!

Thank you, NBA, for being instrumental in the birthing and growing of the “Oasis Retreat and Wellness Center!”

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