lHello, my name is Sanatra Charles-Browne, looking at my life now I would say it’s amazing, however it hasn’t always been this way. Looking back 24 years ago, I will begin my story about my journey. I was born and raised in Grenada an island in the Caribbean. I am the second of eight kids on my mother side and the fifth of nine kids on my dad side, put us all together there’s a total of 13 of us. Growing up in Grenada was so much fun, the best time of my childhood. I was a little girl with no sense of worry. A typical day for me in Grenada will start around 7am In the morning. My siblings, Cousins and most of the local kids and I will walk quarter of a mile down the hill to river to get our morning bath. On the way to river we were sure, to stop in neighbor garden and treat ourselves to fresh fruits like mango, bananas, plums and oranges just to name a few. We just had the best time of our lives. I remember we will move stones in the river to create a big pond deep enough, then we will find the biggest stone and jump into the pond shouting “canoe ball”. We will take our bath and walk back up the hill to get ready for school. As I open the door to enter the house, the sweet aroma of fresh cocoa tea and my mother fresh baked bread will hit me straight in the face. My mom was the best and still is. Every morning she was up before 5am prepare our breakfast and iron our school clothes which needed to be neatly pressed. School in Grenada was strict, but we sure know how to have a good time. The girls wore green skirts with pleats and yellow shirt, while the boy wore khaki pants and yellow shirt. My childhood days in Grenada was awesome.

Unfortunately, that all changed when I was 11 years old, and I moved to America to live with my dad. I had two siblings with me, but they were from different mothers. I tried to make the best out of my current situation, but it was just different. Here I am in a new country with no mother and a father who was never there and didn’t know how to be a father. I had to grow up quickly for I was responsible for my own self, making my meals and doing all things that my mother would have done for me. I adjusted physically but emotional and mentally I was hurting inside. I tried talking to my dad but that didn’t help, and things just got worse between us. So, for the next three years I was on my own until I couldn’t take it anymore and left home. I stayed with different friends every night, until my aunt my mother sister took me to live with her. That didn’t work out either for I was constantly seen as the troubled kid and my aunt always talked about my dad not helping. So, for the next two years I lived with my aunt running away when I felt I had no one to comfort me. Eventually my aunt had enough and decided to send me back to Grenada. Thankful that didn’t happen because an uncle that I never knew decided to take me to live with him. He is my mother brother but from a different mother, and they were not close, because he moved to America years ago. So here I am at 15 and moving from New York to Pennsylvania again to live with someone I didn’t know.

My uncle was a professor at Penn State University, so he took education very seriously and always talked to me about it. Over the next few years our relationship grew, and he became like a father I never had. However, I felt like I was still missing something so when I turned 18, I moved out, but kept in touch with him. I got a job, had my own place but still didn’t feel okay emotionally. Then I met my first boyfriend, after two years we moved in together and life seems perfect. Well after a year off living together he moved out and I hit rock bottom, I felt like taking my life, and I did try by taking some pills. Thank god I had a good girlfriend who stood by my side, after I told her what happen. She took me to the doctor, and I told him how I was feeling, severe cramps in my stomach. The doctor took a pregnancy test and to my amazement I was pregnant. Those words echoed in my head and would change my life forever. Nine months later I welcome a healthy baby girl and life change drastically.

Here I am a mother, with a beautiful baby girl and a whole new purpose for living. I reached out to my aunt and we talked. Over the next few years I spend my time taking care of my baby and reconnecting with my aunt and uncle, I had a new outlook on life. My older sister on my mother side had migrated to Canada now, so it was a comfort to have someone that I can really talk to closer. We visited each other and that helped in my healing progress. Two years later I met this loving guy and we dated. After two years dating, we welcome a baby girl, my second child and life just got better. Two years later we got married, in the present of family and friends. Today I am looking back at my life, it wasn’t easy but happy that I have triumphed over this difficult period in my life.