

## **Questions and Answers from Symone, contributor to** **[INVINCIBLE: The 10 Lies You Learn Growing Up with Domestic Violence, and the Truths to Set You Free](#)**

***What has having your story included in INVINCIBLE meant for you and/or allowed you to accomplish?***

Sharing my story in *INVINCIBLE* was the beginning of a new journey into myself. I am proud and humbled by my life. Each one of my traumatic experiences has given me the clarity I need now to navigate difficult situations. I am thriving and living each day in the present moment. I know through being vulnerable and opening up to you, that we both are healed. I don't want to keep secrets. I can be seen and not feel guilty about it, because I know the TRUTH.

***What did you learn about Childhood Domestic Violence (CDV) from reading INVINCIBLE that you didn't know/fully realize before***

I had no idea that there was so much scientific data to back this up. The studies alone are jaw-dropping.

***Does reading the book advance or shift your understanding of what you experienced in childhood and how it impacted you?***

Before I even read the final drafted copy, I knew this message was powerful, because I knew how it had affected me when I first started connecting to CDV. I didn't actually meet anyone in person from CDV until about a year after I reached out to share my story. But the truths and lies were profound and comforting in ways that allowed me to begin looking at my life through a different perspective on my own.

***Did reading the book give you a different perspective on the unlikely gifts earned from your childhood experience above and beyond the scars?***

I am conditioned to prepare. I am wise beyond my years. I don't need to live with "victim consciousness" as my mindset. I understand suffering and I realize that synchronicity is real. It's not just "crazy" or "coincidental" that things unfold the way they do. I had to explore the dark in order to understand it better and use my gifts as a way to be of service to other people just like me.

***In what ways has your interpretation of your childhood experience and what it means for you, your life, and your future changed after INVINCIBLE?***

The biggest change that has come from this is the relationship I have with my Mom. *INVINCIBLE* played a big part in us finding a common understanding, given our distance. I have only seen my mother three times in the past 8 years, and our relationship didn't really start to improve until I discovered this message. I didn't even know she had read the book until recently. We have finally been able to connect and talk about each of our childhood experiences with maturity and compassion for each other. I am no longer angry and resentful about it, and she doesn't feel guilty or hopeless anymore.

***In what ways have your everyday feelings, beliefs, thoughts and actions changed since reading INVINCIBLE?***

I am much more mindful and compassionate now with myself and others. I know what my triggers are, like feeling *ALONE*, *SAD*, and *RESENTFUL*. When these feelings come up, I allow them to be and remember what my TRUTH is. Yoga has been a strong support for me – and something I am very passionate about sharing.

***What chapter of INVINCIBLE was your story featured in and what other LIES have you struggled***

***with besides the one in the chapter where your story is featured?***

Although my story was featured in the “SAD to GRATEFUL” chapter of INVINCIBLE, after reading the book, I realized that I've also struggled with some of the other lies...like FEARFUL.

For years, I kept dozens of journals, paintings, and music hidden away. I had this fear that someone would punish me for being so vulnerable and open about how I feel and expressing my authentic self. Because my mother was a musician, I ran away from sharing any type of musical or artistic talent, simply because I didn't want to be like her at all.

The fear surrounding releasing my TRUTH and sharing my expression is something that I had let rule me long enough, and I didn't want to feel that way anymore. That's one of the reasons why sharing my story was so important. I started blogging to share my writing, entering my artwork in galleries and I feel stronger now that I am able to be myself unapologetically. FEAR is a liar!

***How did your childhood experience negatively affect you?***

My cutting lasted for 7 years. From 14 to 21, I would cut myself with a box cutter or razor blade, and it was my way of controlling my pain and ANGER. No one would be able to hurt me like I hurt myself. I enjoyed this false sense of self-power, and it became so comforting to me that years were going by and I hadn't realized that I didn't know any other way to deal with my issues. Along with drinking, drugs, and recklessly seeking approval from men, there were no other outlets. I wanted to be everyone but myself, and I was proud of the hard shell I had become. I would stay in bed for days, not shower, cry. I always felt SAD and ALONE. I thought being in a loving relationship would make me feel better, but I didn't understand how to navigate relationships in a LOVING and COMPASSIONATE way. I didn't believe that I could be beautiful. ATTRACTIVE – yes. But I never felt like I was actually beautiful on the inside. I'm still taking my time with relationships because I know they are still very triggering for me. My first marriage ended in divorce, because I finally noticed that I was doing some of the exact same things I watched my parents do growing up. I became violently ANGRY and RESENTFUL every time something painful that reminded me of my childhood happened, and I was repeating a dangerous cycle of karma. I had to sacrifice my relationship to continue to work on myself.

***What was your turning point?***

I got pregnant. My boyfriend at the time was selling drugs, and he was physically and verbally abusive. I couldn't imagine trying to raise a child when I didn't even understand how to take care of myself. The abortion process made me wake up and truly realize that I needed to start working towards something for myself. My uncle took me in, and I did a complete 180 in about 6 months. I invested in my self-care and started working in Hospitality, which really brought my attention to how I move and interact with different people. My perspective of myself changed, and I realized that I wasn't WORTHLESS – I was on the way to accomplishing my life's purpose, which is to be of service and a healer.

***What TRUTHS do you cultivate daily to replace the LIES and how?***

GRATEFUL: I wake up and thank God for keeping me aware of the synchronicity of my life. Everything happens for a reason, and I know that the Divine plan for me is bigger and better than anything I could imagine. Every day, I want to grow closer to remembering what the Divine purpose is that God whispered in my ear while I was still in the womb.

COMPASSIONATE: My personal yoga practice gives me the space I need to be vulnerable with myself in a nonjudgmental way. I have come to realize that there is a time for me to love, heal, and nourish myself from the inside out.

ACCOMPLISHED: Teaching Yoga allows me to share my hard-won wisdom and help to empower other people to realize their true potential. I am dedicated to sharing the techniques I have gained to inspire and heal the world around me.

***What was contributing your story to and seeing it come to life in INVINCIBLE like?***

Difficult because all of the pain began to ooze out, unconsciously wreaking havoc on the life that I was building on top. Out of fear, I continued to fill the cracks, oblivious to the pungent stench of self-neglect that was infecting all of my best intentions. I had no choice but to start removing the fillers, and with each layer, the smell got stronger and the reality even more ugly.

The message became loud and clear: the healing I needed was lying dormant inside the hole. I had never taken the time to inspect it and clear out all the poison that was there from my childhood. I was constantly looking to outside sources for approval. No one could stop the underlying pain that I wanted so desperately to vanish. I had to look inward – my soul was starving for my attention. I had to explore my own path and accept my true self, not the “self” I was portraying.

I had to go back in time and reevaluate everything I had ever thought, because the lens I saw it through was tainted with the scars of Childhood Domestic Violence. I was nervous about what people would say or think of me. It was difficult, but I am humbled and honored to have been able to share this journey. It’s something I still deal with every day, but because I have faced my TRUTH, I understand that there are ways to deal with the LIES when they sneak in that are healthy. I have grown in so many different areas in my life. I have more confidence and love for myself now that I have shared my TRUTH, and I’m thriving now because of it.

***Would you recommend INVINCIBLE to others who grew up living with domestic violence or anyone who cares about someone who did and why?***

I would recommend *INVINCIBLE* to anyone who grew up living with domestic violence or anyone who knows someone who did because it is about Wounded Warriors. This book says the most comforting things that anyone who grew up with domestic violence needs to hear – whether they know it or not. You are seen, heard, understood, and loved. People are afraid to talk about the TRUTH. But this book can be the catalyst for a wave of healing for generations to come.