

# Dear New Mothers & Mothers to Be of my Village,

Hope all is well! I am writing this letter to share some gems that I have learned from the elder mothers of our community; mothers, grandmothers, aunts, etc. Throughout my years, I have witnessed and aspired to embody the image and ways of the “Strong Black Woman.” The mother loves, provides, nurtures, supports, and holds it “all” down for the family. The society also played a part in this narrative which I so desired to prescribe to. Nonetheless, as I grew older and had my own children, I learned my truth in this illusion. I learned that this was not the desired or chosen path of my mother, my grandmother, my aunts, or other women in my community. They had to adapt and adjust and create ways to deprogram this expectation with collective and communal support. Yes, they were from an era of stay-at-home mothers, late workers, and hard workers to support and make ends meet for their families but had to be resourceful in creating a village of support.

I learned this wisdom through experiences and questioning because it was not readily told, or I didn’t understand until I, too, had to create a sense of ease for my parenting when I could not uphold the narrative of the strong black woman. I started with acknowledging, accepting, and changing the self-given expectation to do as my mothers did. It was not realistic, and it was self-appointed through a societal lens and a self-imposed lens.

However, this was impossible because my village didn’t look or function like theirs. So I had to become creative with my support system, who were also working mothers, grandmothers, aunts, sisters, and friends. I had to create like-minded circles of women who wanted to lean on and support each other through empowerment circles, weekend and weekday play dates, dinners, and mental health days. I learned that I am the co-creator of my destiny, and my desires can cultivate with ease all that I need. So, sisters, daughters, nieces, and friends of my village know that you, too, are the master of yourself, and you, too, can cultivate what you want.

Be encouraged and seek what it is that you need.

Do not be embarrassed to ask for help because “closed mouths do not get fed.”

Lastly, it takes a village.

Smooches, Peace, and Blessings,

  
Mama Aisha

