Growing up in a household predominantly male, I was surrounded by family and friends with love and support. “The princess” of the house; I was born in the island, of Grenada, West Indies. At the age of seven, I left my country and went to Canada where I stayed one year before arriving in the United States. Brooklyn has been my home and community since I was a little girl. I have observed, experienced and learned many things that eventually steered me on the career path in Human Services.

As a young girl, I was always passionate and might I say well at helping others and listening. I would say the needs of others are very important to me. I feel a sense of satisfaction knowing that I helped someone, even in the smallest way. As the years went, may people start telling me that I should become a therapist, it did not strike me then that this profession was what I wanted to do but as time went by, I felt more drawn to it than ever before. I hear and see the pain and struggles that people go through and believe it or not, it hurts me. One of my weaknesses is to see people in trouble and not even attempt to help. Working in this field can give me the opportunity to help and do more. I may not be able to save everyone that crosses my path, but I am sure that given the chance, I will have an impact on his or her life.

When dealing with people and their problems, you must have compassion and empathy toward them and their situations. I believe this profession is ideal for me because it requires you to have passion for the people you serve. When a client enters a care facility, they want to feel comfortable and safe. My family has told me that I have a way with people. I always make them feel at home and I believe it is the value that my parents instilled in me. I always here the saying “do unto others as you would want done unto you’. It is a cliché, but it speaks truth to me. When a client comes to me for help, my ultimate goal is to “help and assist” and I believe the helping process starts from the second a client walks into the front door and you have the opportunity to leave your very first impression to begin with.

As a helping profession, human service requires good customer service skills. I have been working as a customer service assistant for years in retail. I am in contact with many individuals who at some point sought my advice. To be honest, it made me feel good to know that a stranger valued my opinion. Whether it is clothing, accessories, financial troubles, and relationships issues big or small, everyone at some point in their life will need advice and help from someone. I understand working in retail is qualitively different from working as a human service professional but it helps one internalize the values of putting the customer’s first.

The client population I would like to work with is child welfare clients with substance abuse. As a Human Service professional, I would like to broaden my range by working with different clients and their problems. Substance abuse has been an ongoing problem for many. I have never met anyone dealing with substance abuse but that is why I am very much passionate about learning more about how it affects such a large population.

When I see someone who resorts to substance, I will explore the underlying reasons why the individual chose to take that route. Destitution, homelessness, and mental health issues may be the ecological variables worth looking into. I will engage my clients with active listening skills, empathy and a non-judgmental attitude before referring him/her to appropriate services.

Child welfare is another population I would love to work with. Child welfare is a very sensitive topic and whatever issues going on within this population can manifest into something greater, if not dealt with. Children are resilient, to some point, depending on the extent of the issues they are going through. As both professions go, I believe you must have compassion, knowledge of counseling skills and coping methods. I believe everyone deserves a second chance. Substance abusers, I believe is a way for them to say “I need help” and children are sometimes not physically and mentally able to take care of themselves. We are their voices and what greater joy is there than helping.

Upon completion of my baccalaureate degree in human services, I would find employment either working with substance abuse clients or children. My education does not stop at that level. I will further my education by working towards my masters in social work and business as well as trying to obtain my PHD in psychology. With a business degree, I can someday open my own facility to help individuals within the community.

My future looks bright. I have already set my goals at what it is I want to achieve and with the education and training I will have learned at my institutes, there is no guarantee that I will not achieve them.