

Ra Azreal Whitehead



My name is Ra Azreal Whitehead; however, that isn't the name I was given it is the one I chose. Growing up I suffered from a similar experience that many black youths face in underserved communities. My father was not in my life and as a result, I lived with my mother and a very physically, mentally, and emotionally abusive stepfather. Due to the nature and frequency of the abuse from the age of five years old I suffered from bouts of deep depression, and ever present thoughts of suicide. By the time I entered middle school I had attempted suicide once, and I began to develop alternate personalities to deal with the pain, suffering, and loss of my belief in god which had been a large part of my identity up to that point. The cyclical depression, thoughts of suicide, the attempts, and the resulting personality disorder all plagued my youth until

I found safety and purpose in the arts. I was later formally diagnosed with a laundry list of mental illnesses which only served to deepen my hatred of self; but I stayed focused on my passions refused medication as the only catharsis I knew I needed was on stage. I have been a working actor for the last nine years, a mental health activist, runway model, and clothing designer. I am proof that the right influences and resources can heal the deepest of mental wounds. My stage name became my truest self and the me I could truly love.