

HOW DID I GET HERE?

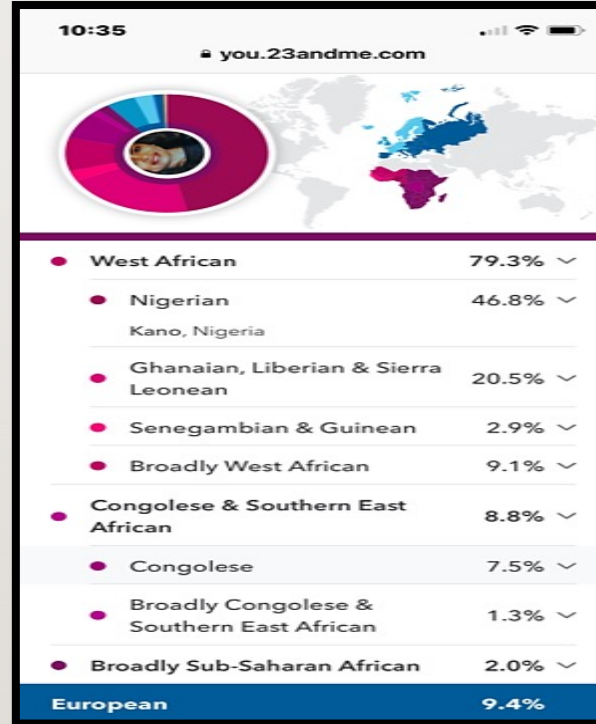
KNOW-HOW FOR OVERCOMING THE BARRIERS TO CAREER SUCCESS

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Visiting Professor of Religion & Multiculturalism



Introducing 'Me!'

My identity: "A label that should only be bestowed by the self"



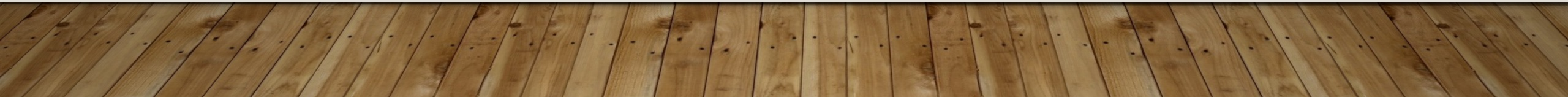
- **Black British** (born in Hackney Hospital north London)
- **Jamaican parents**, mixed heritage grandparents (**African**, **Irish**, **English**)
- **Pronouns She/Her**

Why I agreed to do this presentation

- ➔ To share my story of critical lived experiences as a small part of this event's learning process
- ➔ To provide `know-how` for overcoming barriers to success
- ➔ To present `me` as living proof that you too can become pioneers regardless of difference, which is what makes us unique
- ➔ To make evident that everyone is deserving of respect, to feel included, and to know that they too belong.

WHERE MY JOURNEY IN ACADEMIA BEGAN

*With my critical learning experiences –the barriers I used as
'drivers to success'*



THREE OF MY EARLY CRITICAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES (SIGNIFICANT, IMPACTFUL, MEMORABLE)

1) Me age 5 a Catholic School pupil taught by nuns in 1960s Britain



Treat others how you expect to be treated, respect yourself and others. Remember, what you sew is what you reap! Knowledge is power so `Education, Education, Education` is a must!"

What my parents also taught me: "Speak up if you want to be listened to. You have a voice and the right to be heard! **What the nuns taught me:** "Speak only when spoken to, children are seen and not heard, you are black and left-handed so you will go to hell because you owe the devil a favour!"

What the nuns did: Punished me for speaking, asking questions, having what they called was a "half-bred father with green eyes!" Dragged me to the chapel to say my `hail Mary's then to the confession box to ask the Priest for forgiveness "for I have sinned." One day I asked him why it was wrong to point out Tommy's suffering (he wanted to go to toilet but was too scared to ask), or to ask questions if I did not understand, and whether it was true that being black and left-handed meant I was going to hell? He responded in the usual manner by saying "never mind child, God forgives you", to which I would always ask, "for what?".

Although I knew back then that I wanted to be a teacher like my grandfather who was a Maths Teacher, I also knew that I never wanted to be the kind of teacher that the nuns at my Catholic school were to me and other pupils like me of colour.

2) Aged 5 while out shopping with my mother in Chatsworth market Hackney. We were surrounded by a group of white women at a fruit and vegetable stall who accused my mother of having a child with a white man (I was fairer in complexion, with jet black long wavy black hair and light eyes). They spat in my hair and face so my mother tried to pacify me with a toffee apple, which I used to like, as she tried to wipe the spit out of my eyes as we wept.

3) Aged 16: I asked my Headmistress why I did not receive my predicted O'level grades after I was informed that I was on course to secure grades A's and B's? She responded by asking me what I wanted to do when I left school? I said, "I want to be a Teacher or a Lawyer!" She lowered her glasses, cleared her throat then informed me (and two other pupils, who like me were black British born to parents of the Windrush era, with the same query), that "these are called professions girls, and not for people from your coloured background, but I will provide all of you with references for work in the local tomato factory." **Before I knew it the words `stuff your tomato factory!` flew out of my mouth and from that moment I** pledged to pursue a career in the very profession that my Headmistress said was not for "people like me", which was education.



Strength` rich picture painting by D. Wilson 2007

(1) The reason why I decided to share my critical learning stories with you read from a typed power-point slide was because;

I wanted you to not only hear what I was saying, but to see and feel what I was experiencing along the way through my words, as someone who is Black British, born and growing up in a country I know to be my home.

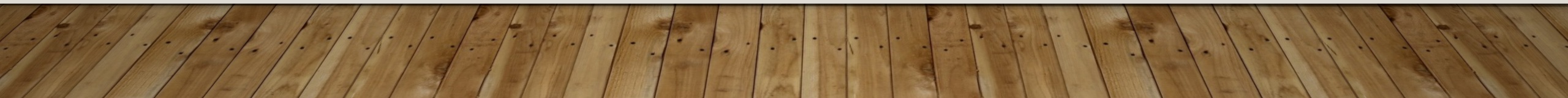
These critical learning experiences motivated me to fulfil my quest to become an educator.

So I set off on my journey by collecting a `bag` of diverse skills that would prove useful, along the way!

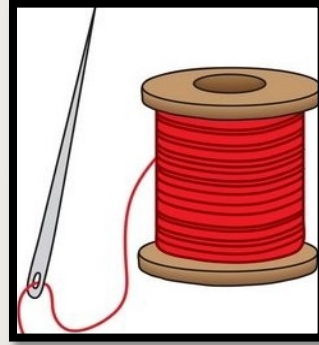


(2) Acquiring different skills from a range of work experiences

- **Former nurse** (care, patience, empathy, listening, observation, knowing to cater for the needs of diverse patients)
- **Former layout artist & Journalist** with Westindian World one of the first black UK tabloid newspapers (visual designing, logical structuring, presentation, research, develop fact-based writing aimed at the target audience)
- **Lyricist for Cougar Records** (creative writing)
- **Former TV Presenter** for BVTV (Black Variety Television), wrote, produced, and presented programmes such as `Community Reports` and `Women on Women`, hosted and helped to organise award ceremonies, conferences and other events such as the `Voice` newspaper's 10th anniversary
- **Former Manager of five community projects** led consecutively, to address the under-representation of Black, Asian and other ethnic group members in key roles, across different sectors of industry (sustainable leadership, budget control, resource management, recruitment & selection, HR management, negotiating, report writing, fund-raising, employee relations, undertake staff appraisals, disciplinary, develop HR and Business strategy)
- **Former Business Training Coordinator** (wrote and delivered business programmes such as the `Black Women in Business` programme).
- **Former Chair of Trainers & Mentors** for PATH National (Positive Action Training Highway) designing and delivering a variety of programmes primarily for Black and Asian leaders and key workers in the public sector (NHS, Fire Service, Local authority)
- **Former business consultant** (commissioned by e.g., the Learning & Skills Councils to enable their FE providers to address their inability to achieve their minimum EDIMS (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Measures), design and deliver diversity awareness training, and write development action plans.
- **Taught for the `Black Mental Health Association`** (not to be judgemental, learning in other people's stories, understanding the impact of trauma, coaching, mentoring, facilitating, educating, boosting self-esteem)



(3) "Besides the skills gained and developed there was a 'common EDI thread' namely; "



- ➔ **Working in diversity** (across the 9 Protected Characteristics of the UK Equality Act 2010 - gender, race, social class, age, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, status etc)
- ➔ **Nurturing inclusion**
- ➔ **Promoting cultural awareness**
- ➔ **Educating people of difference to achieve**
- ➔ **Boosting self-confidence**
- ➔ **Building trust**
- ➔ **Addressing stereotypes**
- ➔ **Nurturing an environment of respect for self and others**

(4) Seizing the opportunity to prove my worth both as an academic, leader, diversity expert and professional practitioner

- ➔ **Middlesex Diversity Lead (Teaching & Learning)**, taking forward a University wide programme of engagement, demonstration projects identified to incorporate diversity more strongly into the University curriculum and teaching and learning practice
- ➔ **Co-Chair of MDX-ARN**
- ➔ **Chair of EDUBATE** (Current affairs panel discussion series)
- ➔ **Module Leader for 24 undergraduate and postgraduate modules** including the final-year undergraduate EDI module created from my doctoral research that explored cultural meanings of respect and how these meanings manifest in behaviour
- ➔ **Programme Leader for nine Postgraduate Programmes** including the MA HRM Work Based Learning Programme, and the Executive MBA Programme and reputedly the first female black academic to lead this latter programme
- ➔ **Delivering diversity awareness and unconscious bias sessions** for students and staff
- ➔ **Commissioned by the Metropolitan Police Service** to undertake a diversity project to help them become more culturally aware to improve stop and searches and community relations
- ➔ **Invited to share insight to diversity awareness interventions** with Bank of England, Deloitte, KPMG, Home Office



(5) Developing my niche as a diversity expert and Middlesex ambassador

e.g.,

- **Co-Chair of MDX-ARN (Middlesex University Anti-Racism Network)**
- **Commissioned by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)** to undertake a diversity project based on my diversity work, that includes the creation of `An Inclusive Cultural Approach to Policing Best Practice Toolkit` and a two-part cultural awareness video (2020).
- **Editor in Chief for `Inclusivity in Practice` handbook for business leaders** published in September 2015.,with editorial input from the award-winning America journalist, Financial Writer and Editor for Fortune 100 Financial Services, Charles Wallace.
- **Appointed by the Chair of the Academy of Management (AOM) Diversity & Inclusion Theme Committee** to create a cross-cultural awareness PDW (Professional Development Workshop) as an all-Academy practice event.
- **keynote speaker at the HR Business Directors Summit 3-4 February 2015**
- **Chair Nubian Jak Charitable Trust** that aims to foster understanding between people from diverse backgrounds by promoting equality and diversity for public benefit, particularly but not exclusively among Britain's African Caribbean Community
- **Consultative Advisor on faith and religion National Schools Curriculum** for the Qualifications Curriculum Authority (QCA)
- **Patron of WEST educational Scholarship bursary initiative** for HE students of African and African-Caribbean Heritage

(5) Building a track record: Examples of my published work

Research papers & professional articles:

- ➔ **Wilson, D, (2019):** "Why we need to understand each- others' respect!" BAME Educational & Careers Guide, BLS Media Ltd.
- ➔ **Zolnai, L & Wilson, D (2016):** `Art-based Business` **Journal:** Cleaner Production, Elsevier **Ref. No:** JCLEPRO-D-15-01870R2 This paper is being used by Knut Ims Professor in business ethics at the Department of Strategy and Management at the Norwegian School of Economics in Bergen, in his ethics programme that caters for 120 students from 28 countries.
- ➔ **Baruch, Y, Humbert, A & Wilson, D (2016):** `The moderating effects of single vs. multiple-grounds of perceived-discrimination on work-attitudes: protean careers and self-efficacy roles in explaining intention-to-stay` **Journal:** Equality, Diversity & Inclusion, Emerald
- ➔ **Wilson, D & Baruch, Y (2015):** `Maintaining Respect for Spirituality in a Secular Work Environment: A Biographical Account of the Career Progression of A Female Practitioner of Faith`
- ➔ **Wilson, D & Baruch, Y (2013):** `Cultural Diversity: A Gateway to Business Success or the Honey Trap?
- ➔ **Baruch, Y., Humbert, A. & Wilson, D (2012):** `Multiple Discrimination Perceptions and its Impact on Managers' Careers`
- ➔ **Wilson, D (2013):** `A Practitioner's Guide for Nurturing Respect among Multicultural Work-teams` received a 3 star rating (of 5) for CMI Top Management Article Award
- ➔ **Wilson, D (2012):** `Respect for Diversity Makes Perfect Business Sense` KPMG Practice Made Perfect magazine
- ➔ **Wilson, D. (2010):** `What Price Respect` - Exploring the Notion of Respect in a 21st Century Learning Environment Journal of College Teaching & Learning Clute Institute ISSN: 1544-0389
- ➔ **Frame, P., Hartog, M. & Wilson, D. (2005):** `Productive Diversity: Capitalising on Human Resources: How can we Harness our Knowledge of Diversity?` Common Ground Publishing
- ➔ **Wilson, D. (2003):** `Exploring the Life of a Female Politician` Women in Management Review MCB University Press
- ➔ **Liu, J., & Wilson, D (2002):** `Developing Women in a Digital World` Women in Management Review MCB University Press
- ➔ **Woo, H., Wilson, D., Liu, J. (2001):** `Gender Impact on Chinese Negotiation: Some Key Issues for Western Negotiators` Women in Management Review Vol. 16 No 7 & 8.

(6) My mantra: Words that inspire me!

1. Use your barriers as vaults for success
 2. Do not allow others mistakes to be your punishment
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1. Being different is what makes us unique!
 1. Take comfort in who you are
 2. Be the example for others to follow
 3. Respect yourself and learn how to respect others because, “unlike food, respect costs nothing” (Social thinker Richard Sennett, 2003), so does not need to be in short supply.
 4. Nil desperandum - never give up!

She
IS CLOTHED IN
strength
AND
dignity,
AND SHE
laughs
WITHOUT FEAR
OF THE FUTURE.
PROVERBS 31:25





for listening! Any questions?

