From Grateful Hearts to Fruitful Living: The Women of the Grateful Hearts Ministry Celebrates Empowerment through Art

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Workshop participants create emotive art collages.

Atlanta, GA (RPRN) 09/18/12 — The women of the Grateful Hearts Ministry at Mount Paran Church successfully completed the "Healing for the Broken Spirit" workshop on Saturday, September 8, 2012. Founder and Executive Director of ZFusion, Azizi Blissett, facilitated the six-week workshop with assistance from ZFusion Empowerment volunteers from the Art, Business and Family Therapy communities.

Using mixed-media art and collages, the women of the Grateful Hearts Ministry were provided the opportunity to heal their spirits and stimulate their creativity. "Thank you for the class. I really enjoyed it. It helped me understand more about myself", said Tanya, one of the Grateful Hearts participants.

Employing the **Fruit of the Spirit**, the women explored the life skills that result when they form a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and experience the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Each woman was given one of the fruit characteristics (Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness,

Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self Control) and was challenged to create a collage that depicted their personal expression of that word and it's opposite. Through this form of art, the women experienced a freeing, joyful and therapeutic way to express themselves. "It was a great inspiration to me and my future," said Rochelle, another Grateful Hearts participant.

Thought-provoking icebreakers and other fun exercises challenged both the participants

and the ZFusion Empowerment volunteers to connect with one another in a meaningful way. The ZFusion Empowerment volunteers realized the dual impact on their involvement in the workshop with an understanding that overcoming emotional adversity is universal. "We think that we are helping the women, but we are actually helping ourselves also", said Leoni Wilson, ZFusion Empowerment volunteer.

Participant presents visual depiction of the word "gentleness".

The workshop concluded with the "Fruitful Living Celebration" where each participant delivered passionate and emotional collage presentations. "The participants' collage presentations were inspiring and compelling for everyone. It was evident that their workshop experience was transformative and made a considerable difference to their self-esteem and self-worth", said Ms. Blissett.

"I was so blessed and blown away by the testimonies shared by the Ladies. They are courageous, and so is Azizi in sharing her journey with others." said Alison Cross, Licensed Professional Counselor and Founder of Body Beauty Bravery. Alison also enlightened the women with an insightful presentation on self-image. She encouraged them to feel beautiful from the inside out and to embrace their natural God-given gifts, talents and beauty.

"Thank you so very much for the love, support and guidance you have given

all of the Grateful Hearts Ladies. We have been inspired", said Mary Jane Theden, Founder of The Grateful Hearts Ministry. "It takes a village to re-build sustainable lives and communities."

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About the author: Azizi embodies all of the characteristics of a truly "valuable and rare" individual as her given Swahili name suggests. Armed with the gift of imagination and a desire to encourage creative expression and thinking, Azizi is the embodiment of a 21st century creative change agent. Her mission is to use her passion, energy and enthusiasm to inspire young aspiring creative artists, at risk youth and women. Ms. Blissett is the Owner & President of Project Z, a family of multi-media marketing and entertainment companies that connect, engage and empower a variety of audiences.

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