

Show Up Strong



Have you ever had an experience where one chance meeting flowed into a series of events that ultimately will affect millions of lives?

Recently, I was a part of one such experience while attending a conference. While on the plane, I met a woman who was attending the same conference. She explained that she was meeting her sister and a group of other women. We ended up taking the same shuttle to the hotel where I also got to know her sister.

Later, her sister introduced me to another woman named Ros. In the course of our conversation, Ros shared her story to me. Last year, when her son was studying abroad, their group went on an excursion to the beach. Tragically, he was carried away by the rip tides and lost his life.

During the next couple of days as we became acquainted, I asked her if she was attending the dance party to fundraise for this organization's foundation. She explained that she hadn't been able to bring herself to dance or listen to music in over a year since her son's death because music and dancing was a painful reminder. You see, her son loved music and to dance. I asked her to consider attending. She said she would.

While we were in different breakout sessions, Ros met up with the two other women. Out of the over 600 women in attendance, another woman came into their path and said I have an extra ticket to the fundraiser would any of you want it. The two women looked at Ros and said, "this is your opportunity".

Ros then accepted and was my date for the fundraiser. As we entered the dance, they gave us leis as part of the festivities. For the first time in a year, Ros danced and listened to music.

As she expressed how good she felt to laugh and dance, she mentioned that she also wasn't able to wear red (her son's favorite color). I grinned as I pointed to the lei around her neck. In that moment, she noticed that her lei was red.

Ros now works for the Clear Cause Foundation. The Clear Cause Foundation's whose purpose it is to reach out to 45 million American youth and students who are encouraged to study abroad every year with comprehensive stay-safe information, emergency preparedness, and safety assessments.

Always remember, you are in the perfect order of things. The next time you might think that it doesn't matter if you show up, I want you to think about how in a series of events, you do matter and you are missed when you're not there. Show up strong.