

**“#PROUDTOBEYOURFRIEND,
IN CELEBRATION OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH”**



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THE BACKGROUND

In today's world, our view and understanding is very much influenced by what we consume in media...maybe even tainted.

We start to form an opinion and judgement, before we even take the opportunity to actively engage and find out for ourselves.

THE REALITY

We need to take a moment to remind ourselves
that everything we see on media is not just a story,
sometimes it's someone's real life.

THE STIGMA

The non-black community's view and understanding of the black community is mostly fed / influenced/ crafted/ tainted by the media.

Even when they have the opportunity to actively engage and take action, their first reaction is usually more of a passive one.

They are consuming the information they receive as though it is a story that is being told on media channels, rather than acknowledging it being a real life happening.

THE CHALLENGE

To drive a more positive conversation on #BlackLivesMatter, we need to change the way we consume media stories of the black community. To encourage acceptance of each other within the society, we cannot start the conversation by pointing out the obvious, the things we see... the colour, the stories.

Our #LeapingPoint...

If you hear a story from a black person, you react/ respond in a certain way. Imagine, if you close your eyes and hear the same story - without knowing the story is being told by a black person, would you still react/ respond in the same way?

OUR CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

Try this for a change...
close your eyes and start to truly listen.

Get to know the person, by allowing the person
to come into your personal space.

Basically, open your heart, your ears, your mind...
be a friend first,
then open your eyes.

By then, colour may no longer matters...
and stories become reality.

OUR ROLE

At #Bandjamm, we take pride in our brand promise...
'meeting Bandjamm is like meeting family,
coming to Bandjamm is like coming home'.

In line with the #BlackHistoryMonth2021 global theme #ProudToBe,
we would like to share with you – our Bandjamm campaign
#ProudToBeYourFriend.

OUR TEASER VIDEO

what
are
you
proud
of...

<https://vimeo.com/838457856>

OUR CAMPAIGN VIDEO

BAN 

Everything in the media
is not just a story,
it's someone's real life.

JAMM

<https://vimeo.com/722232909>

OUR STORIES

Thank you to...

CNo,
Mr. M.A.R.S,
Simone
Sarah

for sharing your stories with us.

We, at Bandjamm is extremely proud to be your friend.

BAN



CNO

**Artist & songwriter.
Jamaican roots,
London born,
American made.**

I am #ProudToBeBlack

<https://youtu.be/DAu2SDW1gIA>

JAMM

CNO

MEET OUR FRIEND, CNO... JAMAICAN ROOTS, LONDON BORN AND AMERICAN MADE

So what does the US prison system have to do with hearing the life experience of rapper CNo in 2021. Part of his life is that, he was born and lived in London till the age of two and has Jamaican heritage. However, hearing the other part of his story illustrates despite being incarcerated in the US prison system, as a standard rite a passage for a young black man, he was able to find other opportunities outside this system to rise.

The origin of the rite's of passage for a young black man in America to be incarnated, started in 1865 when the 13th Amendment to the US constitution abolished slave labour or involuntary servitude except as a punishment for a crime. The abolition of slavery although resulted in the loss of African American's as slave labour, however the 13th Amendment resulted in this labour being regained as prison labour. Tough punishments and arrests were administered in order to gain this prison labour.

Today it's a highly profitable & lucrative system for private companies. Uncompensated labour make goods for private sale. This varies from manufacturing, clothing, books, to US military items. Although 1 in 5 of the world's prisoners are in the US, the majority of this labour are black males, whereby, 1 in 3 black men will spend time in prison vs 1 in 17 white men. It's a rite of passage for a young black man indeed.

For CNo although incarcerated and released he returned again, like others who return time and again. But why do they return? Although released, they still hold a criminal record against their name, which has a negative and discriminatory impact when making applications such as for employment. Effectively moved from the seat of those considered employable, to those who are considered unemployable and then thrown back into the community to make them feel like there is no other option in their life but to return.

In first asking CNo about his experience of this, rebellion is what first came to his mind. Rebellion against a suppressing system that creates a perception that there are limited opportunities once incarcerated.

However, it was upon his returned incarnation and in the moments of stillness in prison, he was able to grow his spirituality, his physicality and his mentality of seeing every challenge and obstacle as an opportunity to rise. To find answers to his own questions, to observe his situations and to navigate a way out for himself. Ultimately, to realise his opportunities in life were limitless.

At #Bandjamm we are proud to share CNo's story and we are extremely #ProudToBeYourFriend.

BAN



Simone

**Writer, vlogger
& TV presenter.
From Hoxton,
London.**

I am #ProudToBeBlack

<https://youtu.be/Bu-N1MmXPvg>

JAMM

SIMONE

MEET OUR FRIEND, SIMONE... A JOURNEY FROM PAIN TO PROMISE

For Simone, the answer to Endometriosis was not medication. Despite the doctors first dismissing her pain and finally telling her there was no cure, she was adamant there was a way out. In Simone's story we learnt that through opening up, a change of mindset and with the help of natural remedies, she was able to reverse her symptoms and find a way out of the pain.

Endometriosis, is defined by the NHS as a condition where tissue similar to the lining of the womb start to grow in other places such as the ovaries and bowels. It can cause significant pain and it affects 10% or 190 million of reproductive women and girls globally.

There is according to the NHS no cure for this condition.

Before Endometriosis could be identified as the cause of Simone's pain, the pain she experienced was just dismissed by the doctors as period pain, failing to recognise there was an underlying reason. This was despite it causing debilitating monthly pain. Her pain was minimised and as a result she suffered for over a decade and a half causing it grow into chronic daily pain. During this time, there was frustration that the pain still had no name and had intensified to the point she was rushed to A&E.

At A&E she had numerous scans and tests and the doctors still did not know the cause. Following surgery the doctors finally identified the cause was Endometriosis. She later had major open surgery and rather than ease her pain, it made it worse. She ended up out of action for a year following surgical complications. Furthermore, her periods pains returned with more intensity and was advised by every doctor that only strong pain relief medication was the answer to ease her condition. She hit crisis point and rather than just take the medication, she tapped into her spirit to find the answers on her own to her condition.

Simone began to share her story and open up to others about her condition. In doing so, she discovered natural remedies. At first she was sceptical and apprehensive it could work. She decided to give it a try and in the end natural remedies reversed her symptoms.

The medical professionals did not have the answers she needed and rather than accept their responses she changed her mindset to heal from her pain.

For Simone, hearing time and again there was no cure only propelled her to find a different truth. From her experience she realised the power of sharing stories, speaking up and also the onus being on ourselves to find the answers we need.

At #Bandjamm we are proud to share Simone's story and we are extremely #ProudToBeYourFriend.

BAN



**Mr.
M.A.R.S.**

**Artist, songwriter,
poet & chef.
From Zimbabwe.**

I am #ProudToBeBlack

<https://youtu.be/M9UxLCK0jlg>

JAMM

MR M.A.R.S

MEET OUR FRIEND, MR. M.A.R.S ... THE JOURNEY INTO THE UNKNOWN

Think back to when you were 18 years old. You probably legally brought your first drink or was trying to decide which university would define your uni days. In M.A.R.S story, we learnt how he was inspired by his grandfather's life when he was 18 going on 19 years of age. His grandfather was able to take a journey into the unknown, to return to his home country, to help rebuild the nation when it was freed.

Mr M.A.R.S grandfather was at 18 years old residing in Mozambique that was under Portuguese colonial rule. This was during a time when Portuguese settlers took the economic opportunities denied to African's.

Mr M.A.R.S grandfather in the 1950's at the same time was hearing in his home nation of Zimbabwe there was a growing dissent amongst people against its colonial British rulers. He decided to leave Mozambique to repatriate to Zimbabwe in order to help rebuild his country. He left in not knowing the language, anyone there or what he would find but yet at 18 years old undertook that journey.

To voluntary take a journey into the unknown sounds terrifying but especially when not knowing how life would turn out.

Today we hear of stories of refugees or migrants making the journey to the UK but rarely the circumstances or of their bravery to undertake the journey.

Still Mr M.A.R.S grandfather left and was not only able to help rebuild the country but happily found love, a family and his bravery is able to inspire his entire family including Mr M.A.R.S to always take journeys into the unknown.

Again think back to when you were 18 years old or even now would you take a journey into the unknown?

At #Bandjamm we are proud to share Mr M.A.R.S's story and we are extremely #ProudToBeYourFriend.

BAN 



Sarah
Social media.
British born, with
St Lucian, Caribbean
heritage.

I am #ProudToBeBlack

<https://youtu.be/-ldOxMSpaTI>

JAMM

SARAH

MEET OUR FRIEND, SARAH... FINDING A SENSE OF BELONGING THROUGH FAMILY

No dogs, no blacks, no Irish was a media snapshot of the anti-immigrant attitudes in 1950's and 1960's Britain. Today we have the Windrush scandal and Piri Patel stating "people across the country do not want their communities and way of life to change beyond recognition".

Then and now the media report anti-immigrant attitudes and policies but rarely the experiences or impact anti-immigrant attitudes are directed towards. For Sarah, born following a period of 60's anti-immigrant attitudes, although such attitudes for Sarah was more subtle, there was still an impact on her feeling connected to Britain. Sarah is British born and was residing with parents in London, however a sense of belonging and identity for Sarah was discovered at the age of 7 in St Lucia.

The attitudes towards immigrants including those 2nd generation immigrants in Britain was negative and fuelled by the media and politicians notably by Margaret Thatcher in 1978 whom stated the following:

People are really rather afraid that this country might be swamped by people with different culture and, you know...people are going to react and be rather hostile to those coming in.

Such attitudes created for Sarah a feeling of unwelcomeness and no sense of belonging with British society.

At home for Sarah when residing with her parents as a child, home was a still a place of safety from the outside. However, a sense of belonging could neither be formed here due to a unsettled marriage between her parents.

In Sarah's story a sense of belonging and identity was discovered at the age of 7 when meeting her great grandfather in St Lucia. Sarah was able to reconnect not only to her great grandfather and to discover his love, but she was also able to connect with other relatives residing in St Lucia. Meeting them, hearing their stories and journeys, inspired her and formed a sense of her identity as she got to know of the footsteps of those who had come before her.

Despite anti-immigrant attitudes in British society, Sarah's story is able to illustrate how a sense of belonging and identity can be formed from family ties and heritage. The black cultural archives in Brixton for instance was founded in 1981 to collect, preserve and celebrate the histories of Afro-Caribbean people in order to give strength to individuals, communities and societies. These stories like Sarah's are a powerful tool in feeling like you belong in the face of feeling unwelcomeness.

At #Bandjamm we are proud to share Sarah's story and we are extremely #ProudToBeYourFriend.

Bandjamm
is
extremely
proud
to be your friend.

in celebration of
october
2021

black

history month

#ProudToBe