



## Ashley Michelle

Author of 'Finding Strength Through Tragedy' Ashley Michelle was witness to a murder and told that she was next! Thankfully she escaped though has suffered from PTSD ever since

**Anu:**

Hi, beautiful listeners and welcome back to the “**Victim 2 Victor**” podcast. My name is Anu and I am your host. In today's podcast episode, I have Ashley Michelle on my show. Ashley is the author of finding strength through tragedy book. After experiencing a series of tragic events that could have killed her. She used the experiences to regain her internal strength, and is now inspiring many others with her light and wisdom. Ashley shares her experiences with us as she raises awareness about the harmful consequences that can ensue as a result of trauma. She is aiming to create a society of less judgment. When we look at a homeless person who is abusing drugs, our first impression of them is usually that they are an addict. We don't know their life story or what may have happened to them, that they now need drugs as a form of escapism. So why do we so instantly Judge. Ashley was sexually assaulted and a witness to a murder scene where her ex-boyfriend had just killed someone whom she knew. He locked the door behind her and told her that she was next. Thankfully, she escaped. But from that moment on her life has been filled with post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and anxiety. Instead of allowing this to take over her life, she chose to talk about what had happened to her. But more importantly, about her healing process. So that it can inspire people to change their lives after going through their own tough times. As she would like somebody to look at her and say, because of you. I didn't give up. Hello Ashley. So good to see you.

**Ashley Michelle:**

Hi.

**Anu:**

How are you?

**Ashley Michelle:**

I'm good. Thanks. How are you?

**Anu:**

Good. Thank you, you're looking beautiful. So lovely to have you on my show, to share your journey, which I know it's, you know, not been a very easy journey. You've had a bit of tragedy. And, you know, it'd be good for you to share that witness in your own time.

**Ashley Michelle:** Well, thank you so much for having me on your show. I really appreciate it.

**Anu:** It's an absolute honor. Ashley, honestly and you know, we're always into look in how people have become victims from any traumatic incidents that they've gone through which you have and you know, you've come out empowered, and a very strong lady that you are after overcoming such a bad incident, or a few incidents, or why here. So did you want to talk about what happened to you?

**Ashley Michelle:** Sure. So in 2016, in July, I was assaulted on a trail while I was running. And then like, a couple weeks after that, August 28 2016, I was a witness in a murder investigation.

**Anu:** Okay. Wow. So it happened quite fast, you know, conquering.

**Ashley Michelle:** I feel like when trauma happens, I feel like, it's like, layer upon layer upon layer. And then when you're ready to get into the healing stages, I feel like you have to really dig down deep. And you have to talk about everything from day one, minute one. And if that's stemming from childhood, and that's where you need to start.

**Anu:** For sure, absolutely. So you talk about your childhood, did something happen to you when you were younger as well.

**Ashley Michelle:** In my childhood, I was bullied in high school, I was punched in the face by a girl while I was walking home. It was really bad at times, you know, my self-esteem dropped, my confidence dropped. I didn't have the best upbringing. I mean, I didn't have the worst. Like, I'm still close with my grandma, my aunt and my cousins, you know, it was hard at times, it was difficult at times, there were times where I just had to like go in my room and in cry by myself and just deal with all my thoughts and all my emotions by myself. And it was pretty overwhelming. And then when I got to college, I had my first relationship my first kiss my first everything and that turned into an a very abusive, toxic situation where I ended up leaving as a result of him cheating on me. And you know, the other thing is to like people always say, Oh, just leave well, guess what? It really is not that easy just to pick up and leave. I had an apartment with this individual that can just up and leave a lease that I just signed, right and people don't understand that there's so many reasons that a woman or men don't leave their abuser. I mean, there's financial purposes. There's kids involved, there's, you know, the mental emotional side of it, you know. So it's not that simple to leave. And plus, you know, you're at the highest risk of death when you leave your abuser, that's what they call separation assault. And that's when you need to have a safe exit plan. And that's when you reach out to community resources. So that was another part of trauma. And then, you know, being assaulted while I was running in broad daylight, you know, in running for me was like, so peaceful, like going on trails and all of that stuff. And then all of a sudden, that happened, and I no longer run on trails anymore. If I'm going for a run, it's where people can see me like, it's on the main streets, the main roads. So again, I had to give up something as well. And then, like I said, August 20, happens. And I went out with this individual. For

some time, it was an off and on thing, he came back from out west, he showed up at my work, pretty much said everything that I wanted to hear, you know, told me, he loves me, I was helping him out helping him get back up on his feet when he came back from out west. And so is his friend that he ended up murdering. And so I got a call at 5:30 in the morning on August 28, from him. And then he asked me to come over to the apartment. So I did, we kissed I told him, I loved him, he told me he loved me. And then we went up to the apartment. And that's where he locked all the doors from Jaime told me that I was going to be the next one dead, because he's already going wait for one count of murder, why not make it to he wanted me to help clean up the scene. I said, No, he got mad, he strangled me put it a knife to my back told me this, they would be easier, then he sexually assaulted me and kept pulling down my pants and kept trying to make me have sex with him, which I declined several times. And then he went to the bathroom and I ran down 18 flights of stairs. And at the trial, I missed him by seconds. And the video that they showed on the surveillance, and so that I went across through to a variety store and I call them one police came, went into the police car and they drove me to the station where I then gave all of my statements from there, it was really extremely difficult. I mean, I felt so much guilt, so much shame that this is the type of person that I felt for. And then, you know, I felt guilty that I was still alive. And the deceased was not here. In October of 2016. I tried to add my own life because I couldn't take the pain anymore. You know, I took some pills, mix them with alcohol, and I skipped an entire day. And then I ended up waking up and I was like how could I be this selfish, you know, like, I'm here because I need justice to be served by me to, you know, step up, I need to be strong for this family, I need to testify. And I've been given a duty of responsibility to do so though, that's when you know, counselling is so vital. And all of this. So that really helped me I mean, I had a little bit of counselling in college after that first abusive relationship. And then I had counselling again, more recently, and I still keep in touch with my counsellor and I still you know, send a message anytime that I need counselling because I think that that is a vital into the recovery and healing process. Without that I don't think I'd be where I am today. And you know, if it weren't for the police and the detectives that like rallied around me in victim services, like they were such a phenomenal group, my crown attorney was amazing. Everybody was just so supportive, so inspirational. It was like, how can I help you get through this horrific trauma, and I wouldn't be where I am today, honestly, without any of them. And you know, the first thing that they asked me before they even started to question me was like, please make us a promise. And I said, what's that? And they said, please don't turn to the streets and end up on drugs or prostitution and alcohol. And so I said, of course, like I promised that I'm not going to go down that route. But that just tells you like how high this is. Two sticks are for survivors of crime that they end up turning to the streets as a result. So that's when I was like, You know what, after journeying through all

of this and getting the proper counselling and help that I needed to be become the best version of myself that it could be I decided, like that message stuck with me for the past four years. That message that the detective said to me really stuck out to me so that's when I was like, you know what, I need to put pen to paper, and I need to write a book. And if I can see one person or multiple people from going to the streets, then that is my duty. That is my mission. I don't want anyone thinking that that's the way out because it's not, you know, they're survivors. They're warriors. They're brave, they're courageous. And because, and they will get through this. It's just taking the proper steps to healing and grieving, and making sure that you process every single emotion. You know, I always tell people feel everything that you need to feel, because the moment you decide to run away from your emotions, they will catch up with you.

**Anu:** Wow, that's really powerful. Ashley, and I can just see it in your body, and also the way that you speak and that it does still obviously, trigger, you know, it's still quite a raw topic for you to be discussing. I really thank you for opening up to us.

**Ashley Michelle:** Of course yes, absolutely. It's, you know, it's something that I think about every single day, I don't let it consume me. But it's, you know, it's definitely a worldwide epidemic, like, this isn't actually situation. This happens every single day, there's a survivor of crime nationwide, countrywide. And you know, enough is enough, and like, something needs to be done. So if you know, the words that I put in my book can help inspire someone, that's all that I want out of this journey, or one of my videos can help someone, you know, like, for my YouTube channel, to I'm going to be talking about the different stages of, you know, healing, and how do you overcome your trauma. And you know, that's first, you know, sitting down and in processing, every single feeling that you feel, and it's all about self-care, it's all about working on yourself. It's about cutting ties with toxic people. And it's about bringing as much positivity into your life as you can, in order to be the best person you can be for yourself and for the people around you. But you have to be willing to get to that stage, you have to be willing to fight for yourself, because nobody else is going to do it except for you.

**Anu:** And it's interesting, you mentioned in the, you really have a lot of respect for therapy, which form of therapy, was it? And you know, what it that you're currently doing with your therapists.

**Ashley Michelle:** We did some FDMR therapy. But we also just like sat and talked like I just, it stemmed like, you really have to start all the way back. So yes, what happened to me in 2016 was a trauma. But that's not where the trauma started. The trauma started for me at childhood and getting bullied getting made fun of, you know, dealing with different situations in my childhood. That's where the trauma started. So you have to go back and back and back. And you have to be willing to talk about everything in order to heal, in order to process the moving forward piece of your journey, you just have to be willing to talk about

everything that has, you know, brought you down, hurt you. It's just all about communicating that with your counsellor, and going back to the very beginning stages, because you can't heal just a couple of wounds, you have to be willing to heal them all.

**Anu:**

So true, and there's a few things that I can really resonate with you there when you mentioned about you know, the repetitive patterns from the trauma and the fact that you know, it was just repeating the cycle, the cycle of darkness. And for me as well, I was just continually attracting the wrong people into my life and just having, you know, real awful relationships continually, which just damaged me even more. And so then it's interesting that you've, you know, you mentioned that as well. And I know, as a trauma survivor, it's so difficult to actually step out of that, you know, and sometimes as well, you know, and I know, I've heard this from a lot of clients even going to have therapy, talking therapy, a lot of the times, it's difficult for them to even acknowledge what is going on. And it's you know, and I just think that for counselling, sometimes you need something a bit more deeper, and that's where the EMDR is probably more beneficial for people who are first starting out therapy. And could you go more into what EMDR actually is, is EMDR that you mentioned was **[Inaudible 13:15]**.

**Ashley Michelle:**

I did I did a tiny bit of it. I mean, again, do much it was mostly the talking, but it's going back to the initial trauma It's, you know, re living it, that's what essentially GMR is, it's just going back in that situation, and really putting yourself there and like, they'll, you know, they'll ask you to think about something. And basically, you know, you shut your eyes, you can close your eyes, or you cannot close your eyes. And, you know, they'll tap you lightly. And it's, it's really, it's really in depth. It's really reflective, like you really have to go back and being in your trauma. And like, that may be super difficult. Yeah, for a lot of people, but it's totally, it's been a lifesaver. It's really, it's really changed my life. And, you know, for some people, I know that counselling really isn't a thing. I mean, it should be for everybody. But everybody doesn't feel the same way that you and I, and we feel. So there are different coping strategies, other than counselling, but I still think that counselling is one of the main purposes to healing and your main tool to overcoming the trauma. But if some people are not comfortable or not in that spot, yet, then you know, you need to look at coping strategies. So what is that? So you have to dig deep, and you have to self-reflect, and you have to ask yourself, what is going to make you happy, not take away the trauma. But what's something that you can focus your energy and your attention. And I think with that, I think it's, you know, for me, the gym, saved my life. Like, it helps me with depression, with anxiety. With PTSD, it's almost like me taking a mini vacation, and just, you know, closing off the entire world and just being in my zone. So for other people, it may not be the gym, for other people that may be journaling. For other people, it may be writing a book and talking about your feelings and experiences in your emotions. For some people, it

may be going to maybe a group therapy, maybe they're not ready for individual counselling, maybe they want it to be in a group setting. You know, for some people, it may be knitting, sewing, drawing, getting in the creative field, it's about finding what is going to be best suited for you something that you want to put your full energy into, that's going to heal you, but also make you a better person. And that's going to, you know, help you during the process of healing and rebuilding yourself and finding out who you are.

**Anu:**

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, now I think that's beautiful. And obviously, you know, there is a place for counselling, I know, you know, cognitive behavioral therapy, like in the UK, that is actually first line treatment for, you know, post-traumatic stress disorder. It is, you know, I just think it's fantastic. The way that cognitive behavioral therapy works, because it's all about, you know, changing what was an awful situation and actually, just changing your thought patterns to make it into a positive, right. And like, just thinking about the lessons that you've learned from each of those incidents? Did you feel that all of everything that happened to you, do you find that, you know, there were lessons than in all of that?

**Ashley Michelle:**

Oh, I do. Like, I definitely feel like it's made me a stronger, wiser person, like, I hate, obviously, everything that happened and occurred to get me to like, where I am, and I wish that wasn't the case. However, I am grateful to have such an eye opener, in a sense to be able to go back and talk about my trauma and be a teaching tool for somebody else who may think I can't get through this. No, you can get through this. I truly believe that you can do anything that you set your mind to, you know, no, it's not always going to be rainbows and sunshine. Sometimes it's a difficult day. And I mean with this COVID pandemic, have I had difficulties? Absolutely. I have, like, I'm the kind of person that needs structure, routine and consistency. And for me not to be able to go to the gym during this lockdown has been so difficult. Yes, I'm still working out still going for runs. I mean, I have some free weeks. But let's face it, it's not the same thing as the gym. I mean, I don't have a leg press in my living room. So there were some dark days where you know, like on a Sunday for instance, I would just stay in bed because I didn't have the motivation to get up. Like you know, at first I complained about this. You know, the gym only had like the hour sessions that you could buy but now looking back on and I'm like, this is great that they have an hour session that I can go and book for. Because you know, you know that you need to get up at this time, you know, you need to shower at this time, this is the time you need to leave your house in order to get to the gym. So you miss that structure, that consistency that routine. That's been a challenge for me. Because when you can work out at home, well guess what you can do that whenever you feel like, you know, there's not a timeframe, there's not a time limit. So I can't wait to get back in to that. Because that's been challenging. But then, you know, like I said, diving into other things that are healthy for you as well, like the working out from home. Yeah, it's good. But you know, working on like, videos about trauma I find

helps me when I'm helping other people. That's what makes me smile. That's my motivation. That's my push for getting up in the morning.

**Anu:** And it'll be fantastic to hear about your book and all the amazing work. Please tell us.

**Ashley Michelle:** Yeah, so my book is called finding strength through tragedy. And it focuses on domestic violence, it focuses on strength, and that we don't really know what strength is until we come face to face with the trauma. And then we finally have to use all the strength that we need to pull ourselves together. It talks about who I am today, it talks about finding love after tragedy, it talks about my support network, there's even quotes from friends and that have literally turned into family and that book as well. So it gives a lot of insight, it gives a lot of detail. It talks about anxiety, depression, PTSD, how to overcome it, there's different links in there to different websites, community supports, their self-affirmations, which I believe are, are truly helpful in you know, rebuilding your self-esteem, your self-confidence. So I'm really excited to share this book with the world. I'm just excited to get it out there and get my message out there and help as many people as I possibly can. I mean, that's all that it comes down to there's not some hidden agenda with this Nothing. I just solely want to help people, I've been given this second chance at life. So why am I not going to do good by it?

**Anu:** Absolutely. And just obviously, by, you know, reading your story, and also, you know, what you're offering out there, I think you are already touching so many lives. And you are you are a victor, you know, your hero who has survived such tragic episodes of your life. And, and I just feel that, you know, it was all meant to happen to make you who you are today and for you to be able to help others. And yeah, did you feel that now? Do you feel that you have the strength within you and the power within you to avoid any other occurrences? Any kind of bad relationships in the future?

**Ashley Michelle:** Oh my gosh. Yes I mean, I'm super hyper vigilant. I mean, there's been some other incidences where I've, you know, been approached by like, not so good people and have had incidents happen where I've needed to call 911, since. So, yeah, like, I'm always super aware of my surroundings. If I feel uncomfortable, I let the person go in front of me while I'm walking. Like I said, I run on the main roads, now I carry a whistle with me, I always make sure my phone is fully charged, because safety is a huge thing in case you need to call 911. You just never know what's going to happen. And I was talking about this yesterday in another podcast, so much of this generation is like so into their phones and not being aware of different surroundings. And that makes you very vulnerable for somebody to, you know, come up behind you. And I think that in this day and age, you have to be so aware of what's going on. You can't be in your phone constantly. You if you have to, I don't want to say watching over your shoulder, but you need to be aware that anything can happen at any given time. Rather, it's day or night. It's possible for anything to happen. And you need to be aware of that.

**Anu:** And, yeah, there's a lot going on at the moment about you know, these Android humans that you know, that everyone's becoming the fact you know, we're just controlled by technology. And you're right and it's you know, that image of people just walking around with their heads down on their phones. You know, it's, it's quite scary.

**Ashley Michelle:** It is because it takes seconds for something traumatic to happen to you know, people take advantage of that time that you're on your phone predators do, there are predators out there looking for vulnerable people. And you cannot have you know, you can't see that nothing's ever gonna happen to you. Because you don't know that you're not invisible. Like I said, anything can happen at any given time, you just need to be aware. And I think that there are so many people who just aren't aware, who aren't attentive to what is going on around them. And I think you need to pay full attention to everything. Just because you think you're in a safe area, that doesn't mean anything.

**Anu:** Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. No, I fully agree and you know, it's just trying to stay present, you know, I think is the art of practicing just deep breathing, and just, you know, being aware of where you are your surroundings, and you obviously know that, you know, one of the side effects of trauma and PTSD people is the fact that we live in...

**Ashley Michelle:** Oh, I do in you know, like, for instance, to like, if I hear loud noises, I still jump, like, I still get worried, you know, so someone was coming up the steps in my building, and I, you know, I didn't hear it right away. And then I jumped, and it was like, an eight year old girl coming up the stairs, you know, and she's like, Oh, so sorry, for scaring you. Like, you know, like, it's hard. It's difficult, you know, like, there are certain noises that just like, jump by jump that just, like, set me off. And it's like, the little tiny things. And, you know, I've had people literally be like, Oh, I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to scare you, or, you know, what I'm walking in someone, like, runs up behind me all of a sudden, and I'm like, Oh, my gosh, like, you know, you think the worst still at a particular point in time, which isn't good, either. And with PTSD comes, you know, confusion and in memory loss, they talk about that, as well. And I find myself sometimes forgetful of things that I did, and like, Oh, did I send that email? Like, not remembering that it? Yeah, you did? You know, so I definitely feel that side effect of the PTSD as well, you know, forgetting certain things, and, you know, loud noises and, and the, the yelling and screaming type things. And, yeah, there's, there's still, some of that, and I think PTSD, and I think anxiety and depression, are, are always going to be there, you know, along with the trauma, like, it's never going to fully go away. But it's, how you deal with it. It's how you process it. It's how you heal from it. It's what you choose to do in that time? Are you going to sit there and choose to feel sorry for yourself? Are you going to move forward with your life? And if you're going to do that, how are you going to do that? Why? What's going to make you get there? You



know, what's your purpose in life? What's your mission in life, this is where like, so much self-reflection has to really come into play.

**Anu:** But it's all about just you know, being aware. Like you said, it's about having that support network around you.

**Ashley Michelle:** And I think that is vital. Like, I am so grateful. And I'm so humble. For the support network that I have, like, I have such a large support network of people like I've been in London for 11 years now. And it's unbelievable. The relationships I have with people, like I literally consider them family, because they're just I know, I can always count on them. You know, I had someone say, when I told them about what happened to me, they're like, oh, but I don't care actually what time it is, you can call me at whatever time I don't care if it's four in the morning, like, just people that like, literally rallied around me when I was going through something so horrific. And you know, to like trauma, not just you know, what happened to me, but even like childhood trauma and stuff like that, or, you know, if you're going through divorce or separation, you know, you really get a clear image of who's going to be there for you, and who's not going to be a supporter. And you know, there's family members that I've literally had to cut out in my life like you know, toxic is going to always be toxicity, like that's always going to be there and you can't change someone that doesn't want to be changed or doesn't see problems with their actions. So you can't change someone you just can't. And you have to take care of yourself and you have to do what's best for yourself. And you have to ask yourself, okay, is this person in my life to create new activity? Or is this person in my life to create positivity?

**Anu:** For sure, exactly. And it's about surrounding yourself with those white people. And I know that again, with myself, I struggle for many years, because I just kept attracting negative people into my life. It's like, wow, you know, yeah.

**Ashley Michelle:** You know, I really, truly believe Families what you make it to be family is not defined by blood whatsoever like I can. I have my aunt, my grandma, my cousins, yes. And then you know, I have a ton of friends who literally gave up weeks of their own life for me to come to a trial every year to be at my side that speaks volumes to me.

**Anu:** I'm so blessed.

**Ashley Michelle:** I really am.

**Anu:** And it's amazing that they do say to me, you know, there's always a silver lining, and it's like, now you realize that you've got some amazing people around you. And you know, maybe this tool needed to happen in order for you to realize this and to be in this awareness. You know, and, and it doesn't I think it gives you that strength to move on and to become, you know, a better version of yourself motivates you to go on.

**Ashley Michelle:** is that is it really makes you self-reflect in all aspects of your life, you know, your career, what is it that you want to do? You know, what are your hobbies? What are your dreams? What are your values? What are your morals, if you really start to develop new habits, you start to develop new patterns, you start

to see yourself in a completely different light. And it's a beautiful feeling, being able to, you know, keep moving forward one foot in front of the other, like, like I said, there's always going to be challenging days, there's going to be challenging moments, you know, when anniversaries come up, that's extremely difficult. But you know, I don't believe that time heals all wounds. I believe it's what you do in that time that matters.

**Anu:** Yeah, talking about dreams and visions. What are your dreams now? Where will we see you next?

**Ashley Michelle:** Well, I'm really hoping that this book takes off as well as my YouTube channel takes off, and I can just go and do public speaking full time like that would be, to me helping people is better than winning the lottery. And I just I love the feeling. I love the inspirational messages. I love just being a listening ear to somebody else, like people have already put so much trust in me and have reached out and share their personal traumas with me. And that means so much more than, you know, money can ever buy. Like, it's, I can't even tell you what that means to me. Like, I'm so grateful to be able to have that opportunity to just feel listening, you're to somebody who is going through pain and heartache and suffering and just to be there and let them know that they're not alone in this and that I do understand their feelings, their thoughts, their emotions, as somebody who's been there. So again, being that teaching tool, my story is a teaching lesson for somebody else.

**Anu:** No, I can feel that passion. And you're right. I mean, you know that there's nothing more than actually helping somebody and adding value to their lives.

**Ashley Michelle:** I love it. And I'm sure you must feel the same way doing what you do, you know, you know, talking to people like you're making such an inspirational, positive impact in people's life. Like I think it's, it's truly remarkable. It really is.

**Anu:** And it's just we're starting conversation, aren't we, where we're getting people to speak up about the traumas that they've endured, and just making them realize that it's fine. What's happened you don't suffer in silence? And it's not your fault, because you mentioned about shame and guilt. And it is we carry that don't we have survived?

**Ashley Michelle:** Oh, yeah. You go through all the what ifs you go through all the woulda coulda shut us, you know, but it's not letting that trauma define you, you know, it's going on, it's moving for, but it's how do you do that? You know, what are the steps that you take? How do you get there? And you know, it's not an overnight thing by any means. It's about taking baby steps and being patient with yourself and learning about yourself. And you know, getting the proper help, you know, diving into a toolbox. Like what can you do to help yourself who can help you?

**Anu:** So if listeners would like to contact you, how can they get ahold you?

**Ashley Michelle:** They can get ahold of me, [ashleyinspires.com](http://ashleyinspires.com), as well as my email, [ashley.ashleyinspires.com](mailto:ashley.ashleyinspires.com) our story. I think it's [ashleyinspires.com](http://ashleyinspires.com). I'll have to send you the link for that.

**Ashley Michelle:** Yes. And they can get ahold of me through Facebook. And they could also follow me on Instagram. It's funding strength through tragedy. And they can also follow my Facebook page to finding strength through tragedy.

**Anu;** There's a lot to be said about that title. Yeah, well done.

**Ashley Michelle:** I just I, I fall in love with the title. Like when I was writing the book, I just the title came to me like, instantly because it's about, you know, turning pain into strength. And this is all a journey, about strength. It's about being strong, not just from a physical component, but from an emotional component from a mental component. That's where strength comes into play.

**Anu:** Yeah absolutely what would you say is your kind of main takeaways from the book?

**Ashley Michelle:** My main takeaway from the book is that you're not alone, you will get through this, if I can get through it. Anybody can be patient with yourself, love yourself, forgive yourself, know that your trauma doesn't have to define you, you choose the life that you want to choose. You make life what you want to make it, it's your life, and how do you want to live that life, this book is also about its healing, but it's also about moving forward. It's about using trauma. And, you know, making it into strength, and rebuilding yourself, and finding purpose finding motivation. It's like I said, it's all about being that that teaching tool for somebody else, you know, I want somebody to look at me and say, because of you, I didn't give up. That's the real message behind this. You know, I just want to inspire as many people as I possibly can, that's what it comes down to. There's not some hidden motive there. Just want to be there. For other people. I don't want someone turning to the streets and thinking that's the way to solve their problem. I want them to turn to my book or read one of my blogs on my website, and know that you're not alone. I've dealt with every single feeling there is I've dealt with pain, I've dealt with loss, I've dealt with grieve. And you know, like I've also with anxiety part two, like, there were so many times I caught myself crying in public because something would automatically set me off. So it's okay to feel whatever you need to feel you're not wrong for feeling that, you know, you don't have to justify why if you need to cry in public, then you need to do it cry. Like, let out every feeling that there is because you know what your emotions catch up with you sooner or later. You cannot run you cannot hide.

**Anu:** And where can my listeners find your book?

**Ashley Michelle:** [Ashleyinspires.com](http://Ashleyinspires.com).

**Anu:** Okay, but yeah, so there's.

**Ashley Michelle:** There's tons of blogs on there, too. Like I was talking about one talks about, you know, journeying through the court process, one talks about survival and overcoming the obstacles. On one talks about how you know, it's not just that simple to leave an abusive relationship. One talks about testifying. One talks

about how this is a life sentence for me. I mean, this is a life sentence for me just as well as the person that went away for the crime. You know, I get parole packages, I get parole letters. Now, though, this is going to be with me for the rest of my life. This isn't something that just gets tossed to the side. It is a sentence for anyone that is going through this, it's always going to be there.

**Anu:** Well, thank you very much, Ashley, you've been such an honor to have on my show, to share such a tragic story and to just make it sound so victorious. And I think, you know, one of the key messages that I'll certainly be taking away from this is the fact that, you know, we all have strength within us any trauma that we've endured. You know, it's made us strong, right?

**Ashley Michelle:** It's yeah, absolutely. It's made us stronger. It's made us wiser. It's made us into the people that we are today. It's made us unstoppable. Absolutely. You know, we are we are survivors of our trauma. That's what we need to recognize.

**Anu:** We are survivors, absolutely. And I just feel that you have so much coming your way girl.

**Ashley Michelle:** Thank you so much from the bottom of my heart that means so much to me. I hope so.

**Anu:** You have I can see you standing there speaking you are just amazing. You just...

**Ashley Michelle:** Oh I would love to public speak. There. That would be a dream come true for me.

**Anu:** I can see doing that. You got charisma you've got energy. You are going to go walkabout girl, I think this is just the beginning for you.

**Ashley Michelle:** Well, thank you so much for your kind words. It means so much and I admire you and everything that you're doing. You're helping so many people as well.

**Anu:** So, thank you. So on that note, we will have to call it today. Thank you so Last much again for your time today. And yeah, I look forward to seeing where you go from here, Ashley. And I hope everybody has enjoyed the teachings of Ashley and just her amazing journey of recovery from such a tragic episode that she suffered. And just the trauma that she overcome. Any last words from yourself, Ashley?

**Ashley Michelle:** Yes. Believe in yourself, always. And never give up. And keep going one foot in front of the other. Take it day by day, minute by minute if you need to. And be patient with yourself and believe that you're worth it. Believe in your value. Believe that you will get through it and you will get to the other side of the valley.

**Anu:** Beautiful. Thank you so much. You take care now.

**Ashley Michelle:** Thank you as well.

**Anu:** Okay, bye.

**Ashley Michelle:** Bye.

**CLOSING:** And while this episode comes to an end, do you may want to check out my book on “**Victim 2 Victor**”. Now available on audio and where I have shared my journey of evolving through self-help

and a determination to cast off my damaging part my goal is to reach out to fellow survivors of abuse and provide hope and motivation in their lives. I hope that I can help cricketers transform their lives and achieve mediation in the process of discovering their true self. I also have a 12 week self-development plan which is absolutely free and it aims to guide you on your journey to recovery. You can find the link in the description below. Please like this podcast and tag or share it with somebody who you know is going through a similar situation and may need help. I will be back with another podcast soon. Until then take care and stay empowered.

