Corey Andrew Powell ([00:02](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=2.66)):

So I am thrilled to be joined today by my guest who is also one of my dearest friends. She's a creative artist, author, illustrator, and advocate for vulnerable communities, Dena McMillan-Billups. Welcome to motivational Mondays.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([00:17](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=17.36)):

Well, thank you so much, Corey. I am so excited about being here for motivational Monday and to be with you. Um, I just don't know what that's gonna look like, but I'm excited. <laugh> look fabulous. I know it's gonna be something exciting.

Corey Andrew Powell ([00:33](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=33.31)):

Yeah. To look fabulous. You know, you're, you're one of our first guests for our now on video podcast. So motivational Mondays is now on video and you are, I think my third, uh, on camera guest. So, you know, you're part of our, our new beginning here. So, so thank you for, for that. So, but moving right along though, I wanna congratulate you though on your book, your success for your debut book, and it's called Naked: Stripping to the Core in 40 days seems kind of provocative, you know, the word naked, and then you have a beautiful illustration on the cover of a woman who's sort of bending down crouching very vulnerable, but beautiful. So explain why you wrote this book. What's it about?

Dena McMillon-Billups ([01:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=69.92)):

Very good question. I have this painting and, um, it's actually hanging up on my wall that I painted. And in on the wall, there is this little girl in the painting and she has these two puffs made out of newsprint. Okay. And then across her mouth is the words, finding words. And that's also made out news print as well. And one of the things that, um, and you, you know, this, you're probably more familiar being in, uh, the media is that there are a lot of times when, and I use the newsprint purposefully because a lot of times someone else is telling your narrative, someone else is telling your story. And so one of the reasons why I wrote this book is because there were a lot of women who were a part of my village and leadership positions, um, who didn't really know their worth.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([02:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=129.48)):

And they ended up in either really bad situations, suicidal, suicide, domestic violence, substance Buse disorder. And I just said, wow, if they could only have found their words. And so this book gives that opportunity for someone to read the book and doodle their thoughts and take their time through a 40 day journey, um, of really finding who they are at their core. And so, uh, Naked stripping to the core in 40 days needing less, to be more so it strips you of the labels and all of those things. Um, and just kind of saying, well, who am I? And so that's one of my motivating factors is the people and the women that have been in my life that I've lost.

Corey Andrew Powell ([02:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=175.669)):

Mm. That is a very profound and very heartfelt. And I know that for you too, you bring a lot of your own personal experiences obviously to this equation as well. One of them is that you were a young mom, and I know that for you being a young mom was like for many women was very difficult in many aspects, but you never gave up hope of your dreams, ambitions, career aspirations, and you kept going. And now you're a mentor for other young mothers. So share with me that experience about how, you know, being a young mother, having that responsibility, how that prepare you for now, the role of mentoring others.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([03:34](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=214.669)):

I think life prepares you. And one day literally I was, I had to make a decision between my three year old in preschool at the time. And my, my job, I had to make a decision because my three year old had got the chicken pox. So that day in making that decision, I actually lost my job.

Corey Andrew Powell ([03:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=239.65)):

Mm.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([04:00](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=240.71)):

And I was let go of the job and I just kind of dusted myself off. And I found the biggest job fair there was in the community we grew up in. In Trenton, New Jersey. And I went there for a job fair with my resume. Um, knowing that I just lost my job. I had to make a decision because my daughter had was sick. And I just said, wow, you know, there has to be more opportunities. And, and so one of my greatest gifts is perseverance and resilience, which can be very exhausting. <laugh> <laugh> when you think about, you know, we talk about the word resiliency a lot, but I knew that I could help other young women find the same language. And we had a common language, cuz we had gone through some of the same adverse, maybe childhood experiences. And I knew that there was a power of choice.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([04:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=294.56)):

And so I could have settled in, you know, whatever current state that I had or I could make a, I understood the power of choice. Mm. And so it was very important for me to persevere and to use every opportunity I had. So when I showed up that day at this job fair, the job fair was for young women, teen moms. And I had this awesome opportunity only being shy of a teen mom myself at that time to run a program in Trent New Jersey, where I was hiring and, and, and running a whole program full of teen moms. Mm I got, and, you know, and was, it was a program called Minnesota, early learning division back then. And I didn't know what was, what I was doing, but I knew I had this urgency to not only help others, but to continue to help myself. And I, I ran with it and it was through, uh, the urban league of, of Trenton, New Jersey and Minnesota. I Dr. I traveled to Minnesota, got certified and that was my journey to helping young mothers. And I knew that if I could come out of some of those situations and keep moving, then I could, uh, you know, mentor others in that same way.

Corey Andrew Powell ([06:13](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=373.42)):

Wow. That's really amazing because so often people who want to do well and want to help ... they really haven't walked in those shoes. So they have good intention. Mm-hmm <affirmative> but they may not be the best one to sort of lead that, I guess, lead someone out of that situation or through that situation. Someone who's been through it. Yes, we are, are better equipped to do it. And it's also fascinating for me to think about mm-hmm <affirmative> women still facing the idea of, I have to either go to put my kid in daycare, which I might not be able to afford or take my kid to work with me, which I can't do. Right. Where does that leave you? And it's a, it's crazy that that's still actually something that women are facing still. Like they faced it in my mom's generation, you faced it and they're still facing it. That's pretty unbelievable.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([07:05](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=425.31)):

It is. It is unbelievable. And I think about that time and you know, you know, what it took for me to just still had the dignity to say, well, I have to do something, you know? And I ended up doing really well in the next job where I was mentoring others. And we, I ended up in the newspaper look finding my words.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=446.08)):

Hmm. Isn't that funny? And

Dena McMillon-Billups ([07:28](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=448.12)):

That old job that let me go, they actually called me back and asked me if I would come back to work for them. And so, you know, there's, there's power in making a choice and to keep moving and keep moving forward. And I,

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=461.47)):

Well, I hope you said yes though. Like triple the salary though. I mean,

Dena McMillon-Billups ([07:44](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=464.51)):

I said, I said no, and it was the best thing that I could have done. And then it led me to greater opportunities.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:51](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=471.62)):

Mm.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([07:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=472.32)):

And they saw me in the newspaper. So I said, no.

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:55](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=475.3)):

Oh, right. So did they call you after they saw you in the newspaper?

Dena McMillon-Billups ([07:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=477.58)):

After they called me in the newspaper,

Corey Andrew Powell ([07:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=479.01)):

Come on y'all they didn't even try to hide it. Hey, we were thinking about you and no, you were like, where you weren't, you just saw me in

Dena McMillon-Billups ([08:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=486.45)):

Name. Yeah, no. They saw me in the newspaper and said, you know, that, uh, they were pretty, when they let me go, they said some really harsh things when they said, you know, you probably just end up at Wawa and that was a motivating factor for me.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:18](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=498.91)):

No, they didn't not

Dena McMillon-Billups ([08:20](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=500.01)):

That Wawa people don't. Yeah.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=501.29)):

Nothing wrong with Wawa.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([08:22](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=502.97)):

They were on Wawa, but it, it

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:24](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=504.45)):

Was used as an insult.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([08:25](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=505.68)):

It, it was used as an insult.

Corey Andrew Powell ([08:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=507.81)):

Right. Wow. Okay. Well, jokes on them. Wawa. <laugh>. So, anyway, I do wanna move on to something a lot more optimistic, which is, uh, you created a program called a R T and it's the training and development program that you created and it's to empower leaders, which is of course, perfectly aligned with what we do. So I wanna hear more about that program activate right. Thinking is the acronym that the a R T stands for. So share a little bit about that program, why you created it and what is it all about?

Dena McMillon-Billups ([09:03](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=543.26)):

Yes. I'm so excited to talk about, I'm always excited to talk about our program. Hi, after, uh, I've been in child welfare, working in child welfare for about 20 years and in 2016, I ended my career, uh, as a professional educator and development specialist for, uh, child well working in child welfare and training child, welfare workers. And so, and when I left, I left in with, with, um, the, the urgency to want, to still help professionals, but in a way where I could really help professionals work on their whole self. And so what I did was I just had this goal in mind that I was going to take and incorporate all of the things, you know, so there's some good things that I know at, you know, we're in this world where there are a lot of people who are pursuing entrepreneurship, but all the skills I obtained over the years, working for these companies, working for the state of New Jersey.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([10:04](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=604.51)):

And now I actually contract with the state of New Jersey back in mobile job, you know, being a, and, and Rutgers in Stockton and New Jersey, child welfare partnership, under art training and development. And that was a, a goal of mine to do. So, although I did leave, I didn't leave the family so to speak mm-hmm <affirmative>. And, um, I'm still able to make impact in that, in that, um, industry with those professionals and making real change. So there's two legs to artist training development, and one of the legs is coaching. And the other one is training in order to be a good coach. You really have to be able to train people and, and expand leadership and expand the vision that we have to work with, you know, vulnerable communities and, and our mission is to, you know, eradicate those poverty mindsets through personal training. Yes,

Corey Andrew Powell ([10:54](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=654.64)):

Yes. I definitely want to talk about that because I know that you are expanding leadership opportunities and development in the urban communities, as you mentioned through what you say is eradicating the poverty mindset. So I would love for you to explain more about what does that mean to eradicate the poverty mindset.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([11:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=672.52)):

Sure. So when you think about, um, poverty mindset, you know, there is this idea, um, uh, that, you know, people may be thinking in a way that they're influenced by negative thoughts and that have been passed down from generation to generation, and you actually don't have to be in a poverished area or urban area to have a poverty mindset. It is just that you're limited by those negative belief systems that may have been told to you. I can think of a common one, uh, you know, being a teen mom, you know, I remember someone saying, you know, you're just gonna be a, baby's having babies or, you know, and if you believe those things or you believe those thoughts, then they can keep you from moving forward. And I knew in my mind that that would not give me the abundance of, of who I was, or that would not, those thoughts would not take me to my place of self wealth.

Corey Andrew Powell ([12:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=731.87)):

Mm,

Dena McMillon-Billups ([12:12](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=732.36)):

Absolutely. So that that's really important. So when you think of poverty mindset, it's kind of breaking off of those, those cycles of those limited beliefs.

Corey Andrew Powell ([12:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=741.49)):

Mm-hmm, <affirmative> now that's so true. I have a, a client who, uh, is a mutual friend of ours who wanted me to help her with some, getting more comfortable speaking in front of a crowd with speeches, cuz she's done so well. She's now being asked, uh, to do conferences and, you know, we did some, some work to try to get past her fears of speaking publicly. And what was fascinating was as we laid, I peeled back the layers of why she was nervous to speak. It was tied to like trauma of like childhood stuff of like being told that she wasn't smart enough to speak as a child or, you know, or shut up, you know, what do you know, you're just a kid or, or, you know, whatever the situations are, it's that sort of like the unresolved trauma that we experience in many cases that we bring forward and kind of gets us stuck in a circumstance that we can't get out of. Yeah. And, um, I think it was really amazing that we kind of, you know, we, we peeled back that layer. So for you, you're saying, unless you can see yourself out of that, you'll be stuck in it basically.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([13:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=806.26)):

Yes, absolutely. And what we wanna do and part of, uh, activating right. Thinking is changing the patterns of your brain or your mindset, the way you think, and creating a new narrative for yourself and teaching people. What you just did with a mutual friend of ours is teaching people how to find their words so that they can see their self worth. And so, you know, that that is clearly an good example of what, you know, changing those mindsets would look like.

Corey Andrew Powell ([13:57](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=837.059)):

Yeah, it's so important, especially with children because the vulnerability of a child believing about themselves, what the adults in the room tell them about themselves when they're a child, there's a high probability that that will stick.

Corey Andrew Powell ([14:11](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=851.62)):

Yeah. And so many kids get damaged early on by not having that nurturing support at home and actually getting quite the opposite. So it can be really, really damaging. So I'm glad that you, you are addressing that area and your work. Now, another key focus of your work too, is bridging the gap between marginalized communities and the leaders in those communities who can make a difference mm-hmm <affirmative> and you do a lot of different things in that, in that line of work. So tell me about some of the things you do to, to bridge those gaps.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([14:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=879.79)):

Sure. So it's really important, um, that we invest in ourselves. And, uh, one of the things before I got into the coaching industry is I did a lot of investing in training for myself and understanding tho those powerful concepts that make a difference in our lives and, and coaching. There are very, there are a lot of models, um, that one might use in the thing that I think about when I've coined activate, right thinking or, you know, in that concept and how I use that. I use the, the, um, art of perception a lot mm-hmm <affirmative> and talked about how one perceives themselves. So even if you look behind me, you know, and you see, this is the cover of my book, right. I would say one way, or one thing that I would do is ask you like, Corey, tell me what you see, you know, mm-hmm, <affirmative>, you know, I would challenge you and you would say what you see.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([15:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=935.96)):

So oftentimes when I'm working with a group of people and I'm working, um, to, you know, heal our communities, most people tell me what they see. I had one person say, I see spaghetti broccoli and scrambled eggs, like <laugh>. And the funny thing is, she's a funny person. So when she said that I just cracked up laughing because I was like, wow, she, she visualized this drawing that I drew as spaghetti. And then somebody said, oh, it looks like wood to me. Or it looks like somebody that's just bent over or somebody that's praying, like everyone sees and proceeds from their own being or their own perspective. Right. Which is, which is so powerful because how do you move forward? Unless you know, how you perceive things mm-hmm <affirmative> unless, you know how you think. So that is a way when I talk about activating, right?

Dena McMillon-Billups ([16:27](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=987.63)):

Thinking, I'm just asking questions to find out what you're thinking, what's in your world, what are your thoughts? And you can totally perceive something different than I do. And so, and we wanna bring that. I believe communities are very resourceful. I don't really buy into programming so much, um, our communities, because if, if we just reach far enough, we can really hear from and give them a voice and they can tell us what they think. And we teach people how to think. And so I love that we're able to do that, utilizing the art of perception.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1026.16)):

Yeah. Yeah. You do mention that. Cause that does tie into, in a way, the connection of the Mar uh, the marginalized communities who need the more established elders in the communities to help them see a better path. Mm-hmm <affirmative>. And then that ties into the art of perception. Because once you do that, then those people can perceive that there's other options. There's more possibilities. Mm-hmm <affirmative>, you know, it's so funny for me. My mom tells me that since I was a, a kid, it began with me trying to get out of my crib. Mm. I was already like, I, I gave me out here. I wanna see what's on the other side to the point where, like, she came in the room, she heard a crash. I had like flipped out of it. <laugh> you know, and the crib was on top of me and I wasn't even crying.

Corey Andrew Powell ([17:52](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1072.28)):

I was still crawling. Cause I was like, well, okay, I'm out. Let me see. Um, it was in innate nature for me to want to see the world. And then I had grandparents who didn't travel to them. Traveling was almost a scary thing. They didn't go anywhere. And so I had this sort of really interesting observation of, you know, how on one hand I was almost like, like stifled by one set because they didn't really have the emotional ability to expand and kind of help me build a bigger, broader picture. And then my mother though said, go see the world, see the world. And you know, and thank goodness, because that's the advice to, you know, to, to give a child, let them think that there's the world's full of possibilities, you know?

Dena McMillon-Billups ([18:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1115.7)):

Absolutely. Yeah. And I'm, I'm sitting here like kinda laughing because that was my son. He would like, we were sitting downstairs and my cousin was visiting from, uh, Atlanta. And she said, I hear something upstairs. And I'm like, no, son's in, he's in the crib. She's like, no, some something's going on. And we go up and he's, we are like, okay, let's, let's sit back. And he's climbing out of the crib. And now that makes me laugh because that is his personality.

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1147.88)):

Well,

Dena McMillon-Billups ([19:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1148.38)):

You know, and he also uses a lot of language that I talk about when I talk about the mindset and the brain and brain health, I do a lot of work on brain health and he'll say, no, mom, my brain is telling me, mm

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:21](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1161.16)):

<laugh>. Like, and, and now his age now let's, let's people let us know. Yeah. He's six years old. Right.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([19:26](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1166.25)):

Six years old. Yeah. And he's like, mom, no, that's not, that's not true. That's not what my brain is telling me. And I'm like, I am not gonna have this like argument with the six year old <laugh>, but

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1175.07)):

I

Dena McMillon-Billups ([19:35](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1175.59)):

Thought I've taught him right. How to think for himself early. Like, I don't know. It could be,

Corey Andrew Powell ([19:41](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1181.94)):

Yeah. It's a curse. <laugh> sorry. Well, you know, I want to talk about that beautiful little son of yours, because he's a, he's a sweet soul on this earth and I love all the, the posts that you share of him on Facebook. He's a little angel and I do want you, if you wouldn't mind to share the story of how he came into your life and, um, you know, what that's been like for you as his mother.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([20:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1206.48)):

Sure. So, you know, one of the biggest things about leadership is you're walking through a journey and you're, you don't really know where that journey is gonna take you, you know? And so I feel like I've lived out this naked book, you know, stripping to the core of 40 days. So <laugh> in 2016. Also when I left my job, my husband and I got a call that we had an hour to make a decision about a beautiful baby boy coming to our home. And so that has been, that was in 2016 and now he's six years old. And so we've been able to not only, um, allow him to come into our home as our child, but he we've adopted him. And, uh, he's, it's just been an amazing journey. Uh, I joke, I laugh because when he first came into my home and I said, well, what's his name? And they, you know, told me his name. And I'm like, did you say Messiah? You know,

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:06](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1266.95)):

That's his, that was his real name. That's

Dena McMillon-Billups ([21:08](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1268.51)):

His real name. And I'm like, okay, you know, God has jokes, but, um, you know, on the other hand, it, you know, people say how lucky he is, but it's really how lucky we are, that everything that I've done in life, that I had this second opportunity to mother again, and, you know, to do it and be a part of shaping his life and giving him a voice. And, uh, all of the things that we talk about, you know, I just knew that when him coming into our home, that he just has, he has greatness in him and that I had this awesome responsibility and job, my husband and I have this awesome responsibility to pull all of that out of him and just love on him, you know, and, and just love on each other. Yeah. So when you see all the posts that I put, um, yep. He's even telling me now when he doesn't want to be posted,

Corey Andrew Powell ([21:59](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1319.35)):

Oh, he's gaining like quite a, quite a following that's you're right. He's he's like, mom, it's too, it's too much for me

Dena McMillon-Billups ([22:07](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1327.76)):

Set up and he has a mind of his own.

Corey Andrew Powell ([22:09](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1329.46)):

So yeah. That's really wonderful. And it's important to mention too, like you mentioned, you're being a mother for the second time. Um, you have an amazing daughter and now she's actually gonna have a baby. Yeah. And so it's fascinating to, you know, for me having known you all these years to see you in this such a, um, a thriving, I wanna a youthful, vibrant existence. Like, I mean, as if we were still, you know, kids basically, and you're a mom and you're about to become a grandma and you're like, just got the energy of like a 24 year old and you're just, you know, an entrepreneur and an author and an artist. I just want, I really wanted to have you on the show because I wanted to show an example of an empowered woman and empowered minority woman who has walked her own path learned from her mistakes, built a foundation for a, a new career path. I mean, you check a lot of boxes. I'm extremely impressed with you. And I just wanted to make sure I said that, cause I just really, really think you are an amazing person. So had to have you on the show for that reason. Thank you so much. Dena McMillon-Billups, author of naked, stripping to the core in 40 days. I so appreciate you. And you're, uh, just, uh, you know, again, your magic and I appreciate your time today. Thank you.

Dena McMillon-Billups ([23:29](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1409.71)):

Thank you. Thank you so much for having me today. And I look forward to just, you know, sharing all of these things with, with your audience.

Corey Andrew Powell ([23:39](https://www.temi.com/editor/t/ntmCcNjD_eIkjwpGyoRm3R79DCHhz0aCHZeDTF2YeLqNZuWOWS7j_BiamT8dhS5CAlTLtp4EXzhHZXgcgC1HByaS7jk?loadFrom=DocumentDeeplink&ts=1419.619)):

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