

## August 1, 2024 Newsletter



“Transform the lives of survivors to a new purposeful life. Inspiring self-worth and empowerment to build a community of advocacy and hope.”

### A Letter From Tiger Lapis

Sometimes God creates those magical moments for people to meet that you can't even fathom how the event happened in the first place. That was what it was like for me when I was connected with Trish Steele of Safe Passage Heals. I was looking for an organization or company to sponsor me for Miss New York USA this year. It was my first time competing in a beauty pageant, and given that they had eliminated the age limit, I'd be competing as a 41-year-old to show the world that beauty is ageless, that nothing is impossible, and beauty comes in all shapes and sizes. I wanted to empower women out there with my story, how I had to overcome heavy emotional and verbal abuse from a mother and abandonment from a father to find myself, take control of my destiny and never give up, and follow my dreams of getting my TV show I had created picked up by a Studio, A show to inspire the world about following your heart and how nothing is impossible. As a Film Director, Actress, Writer, and Content Creator, I had grown my social media following to a total of over 190,000 followers and subscribers, many of them young women who saw me as a role model and were inspired by my journey of overcoming so much trauma and to still get a Top 3 Hollywood studio interested in my TV show on my own with no agent or manager to help me.

I felt Miss New York USA could provide another platform for me to share my messages that can empower women and inspire them. So I spent weeks searching for a sponsor, but couldn't find one, until I was mysteriously led to a website about the MAG Gala, an event that's like the MET Gala but instead of celebrating celebrities, they are celebrating survivors of abuse. I was immediately surprised to find such an event. What a wonderful message! I felt God guide me to look up the sponsors of the MAG Gala. That's when I saw Women of Steele. The logo with the sword caught my eye, immediately invoking in me that sense of empowered women who are warriors. I immediately clicked on it and was led to a website where I saw women dressed as superheroes, including one dressed as Wonder Woman. As a Cosplayer myself who likes to dress up as superhero characters at Comic Book and Anime Conventions, I was immediately drawn in, and learned about Trish Steele and what she did to empower women with her organization, Safe Passage Heals.

I was deeply inspired by Trish's incredible journey of overcoming the trauma and abuse in her life, and how she's now healing others and empowering women with Safe Passage Heals. I felt she would understand my journey overcoming abuse and my mission to empower women, and God pushed me to connect with her.

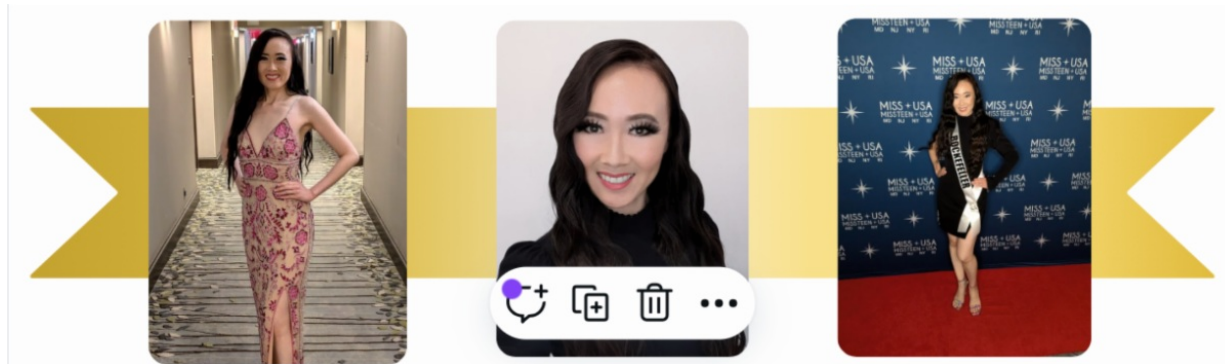
Surprisingly, when we connected over the phone, I found out she had just arrived in New York City from Los Angeles (I'm in New York City) for the MAG Gala! I knew instantly this was Divinely Guided. After another phone meeting with her where she interviewed me and asked me why I was competing in a beauty pageant, wanting to know if I was doing it for the right reasons, and

how I told her my story and my message to empower and inspire other women out there, she agreed to sponsor me! I was shocked. I had prayed that morning to God to secure me a sponsor whose ethics and morals are aligned with mine.

My prayers were answered 4 hours later. I was even more shocked when Trish told me she was a former beauty pageant winner! There was no way this was a coincidence! I knew for sure this was meant to be. God had given me a miracle. For the next few weeks, my life was filled with even more blessings and miracles. Trish introduced me to Luisa Diaz, who organizes the MAG Gala and is also a former Beauty Pageant winner! Now with two women who are both pageant winners, supporting me all the way through, I felt incredible gratitude for the miracles I have been given.

Trish and I met in person at a local juice place in New York. The compassion and healing and understanding she gave me during our meeting... I felt like for the first time I was receiving love from a real mother. I never received that real motherly love before. I had grown up in such toxicity and heavy abuse that I had mistakenly thought that was normal, and it took many years for me to finally realize that's not real love and recognize what real loving people do. Meeting Trish, who held my hands with a motherly grace, I understood, oh, this is what a real loving mother is. I felt really healed from that meeting.

One of the most important messages that Trish gave me was that beauty starts from within. Even though this was a beauty pageant, it's important to understand where beauty truly comes from. It was a message that I truly supported and always wanted people to know as well, and I was grateful Trish was focused on that message.



Luisa Diaz, the founder of the MAG Gala, taught me how to walk the pageant and loaned me a beautiful pink-jeweled dress that cost a thousand. She helped me with the interviews, guiding me on how to speak to the judges and the questions they normally asked. She even gave me a new huge box of makeup as a gift for me! Trish sent me from Safe Passage Heals a box of new clothes, earrings, a pair of beautiful pink heels, makeup, and other items for me to wear for the Pageant. Since I had to be there for 3 days, she wanted to make sure I had all that I needed to dress appropriately and to succeed, especially in the interview with the judges.

I felt like Cinderella with two fairy Godmothers who gave me a beautiful gown and clothes and even new heels to wear to the ball. The love, compassion, and support they gave me brought me to tears sometimes. My life is filled with so much beauty now.

But one of the toughest challenges I encountered during this time was when, after practicing my pageant walk in heels in front of Luisa, she suddenly asked me, "Why do you not feel that you are beautiful?" I immediately froze. It was something that hit hard to the core. I had grown up around an abusive mother who had told me it was too bad I wasn't as beautiful as she was when she was younger. I was made to not feel beautiful as a child and young adult even. I had so much confidence in my skills and talents as a filmmaker/writer. I can confidently direct a \$100 Million movie without a doubt.

But my confidence in my looks and self-love was something I had struggled with throughout my life. And Luisa's question hit me hard because she instantly saw that I didn't feel beautiful. She told me I was beautiful, and I needed to believe that about myself too. I realized I had to confront this about myself finally. Right now. And with full courage, I powered through, remembering Luisa's words and encouragement, and what Trish had told me previously about beauty. Sometimes it really takes that one full confrontation, even though it hurts, to finally decide, "No, I

will no longer think I'm not beautiful. I will love myself, all of me." My life had changed.

I went to the pageant and competed, documenting my experience on my social media with my followers, who were so inspired by what I was doing. Trish and Luisa text me words of encouragement, wanting me to be proud of myself. By Day 3 of the pageant, the winner was crowned. I didn't win the Pageant this year, but I gained so much from this experience, more than I could've ever imagined! I felt so much gratitude, especially with the supportive loving messages from Trish and Luisa on how I did my best, and they wanted me to be proud of myself for having the courage to do this. And then, I received a surprised text: Luisa told me to keep the thousand-dollar gown as a souvenir for my experience in the pageant. I stared at my phone in shock.

As I reflected on my journey, I realized that God didn't just give me a Sponsor. He gave me more than that. He gave me two Fairy Godmothers who gave me the Cinderella story, who showed me what real love and compassion look like, and made my experience a magical one that I'll always cherish and remember. Most of all, these two women helped me feel beautiful and confident from the inside and out, giving me the encouragement and support I needed for this pageant. And that confidence now stays with me.

Thank you, Trish Steele and Luisa Diaz, for what you have done for me. Your sponsorship and support have brought so much light and beauty into my life and has further empowered me to go further with how I can continue to inspire others on a greater level. I will always be grateful for what you have done for me, for the healing you have given me, and will continue to send light, love, healing, compassion, and kindness to this world.

For those of you reading this, never give up on yourself. Believe in yourself, follow your heart and dreams, and know that you too can do the impossible.

For more on Tiger Lapis's journey, you can follow her on social media:

[tiktok.com/@deadlychessroyale](https://www.tiktok.com/@deadlychessroyale) (my TV Show)

[tiktok.com/@tigerlapis](https://www.tiktok.com/@tigerlapis)

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