

CELEBRATE YOUR

Diamond Days

Ideas for Reclaiming Your
Joy & Autonomy After Trauma



@TiaLevingsWriter

How I Started Finding My Diamond Days

I've found on my journey to heal from religious trauma and domestic violence, and through the excavation process of my behaviors and patterns, that there are occasional "diamond days."

I call them diamond days because they are moments discovered like gemstones in what otherwise seems to be hard rock. They're unexpected, recognized when I'm in the middle of one, or sometimes, after the fact. Because experiencing a Diamond Day counteracts what came before. A Diamond Day is a contrast. They're filled with so much healing redemption that it's like finding the super-points in Pac-Man. I level up and gain new life.

Examples:

Getting chosen for a role by someone who sees my value and ability (when I've been struggling with imposter syndrome.)

Scheduling and keeping self-care appointments (when I'm tempted to put everyone else before my needs.)

Accomplishing a goal that started as a dream (after years of religious conditioning that ambition was "bad.")

In that moment, the pastors who wanted me silent and invisible become mute. The man who beat words of worthlessness into me is powerless. My ex-communication becomes a joke. Lack of confidence becomes a smile. Hurtful words and ill-fitting roles fall away like shed skin. The naysayers are proven wrong.

Diamond days are a step forward into myself, my true self and calling, healthy and here for a reason—and I know we all have them in our path. The key is to stay here and do the work of finding them. To break out of abusive patterns and fight for yourself. You gain more life when you do.



**DIAMOND DAYS HELP ME
CELEBRATE SURVIVAL
AND RECLAIM MY JOY, WONDER,
PRIDE, AND ACCOMPLISHMENT.**

**THEY ARE THE BEST PART OF
MAKING IT OUT OF
FUNDAMENTALISM AND
YEARS OF ABUSE.**

How You Can Find Yours

For survivors of purity culture, obedience culture, religious trauma, and high control environments, what looks like a "win" is individual. We each ride our unique Struggle Buses through life. And, we're all fighting battles no one knows anything about.

Diamond Days don't have to be grand by anyone's standards but your own. One of my DiamondDays was when I successfully sat still through the "puff" test of an eye exam! Plenty of people have no trouble at all staring at the little red barn while the technician blows air into your eye. I practically pass out or run from the room saying I have to suddenly go and will reschedule some other day. But the day I was able to hold still, keep my eye open, and BREATHE, was an accomplishment. My chest expanded with relief, pride and gratitude. I walked on sunshine when I left the store.

That LIGHT is how I knew it was a Diamond Day.

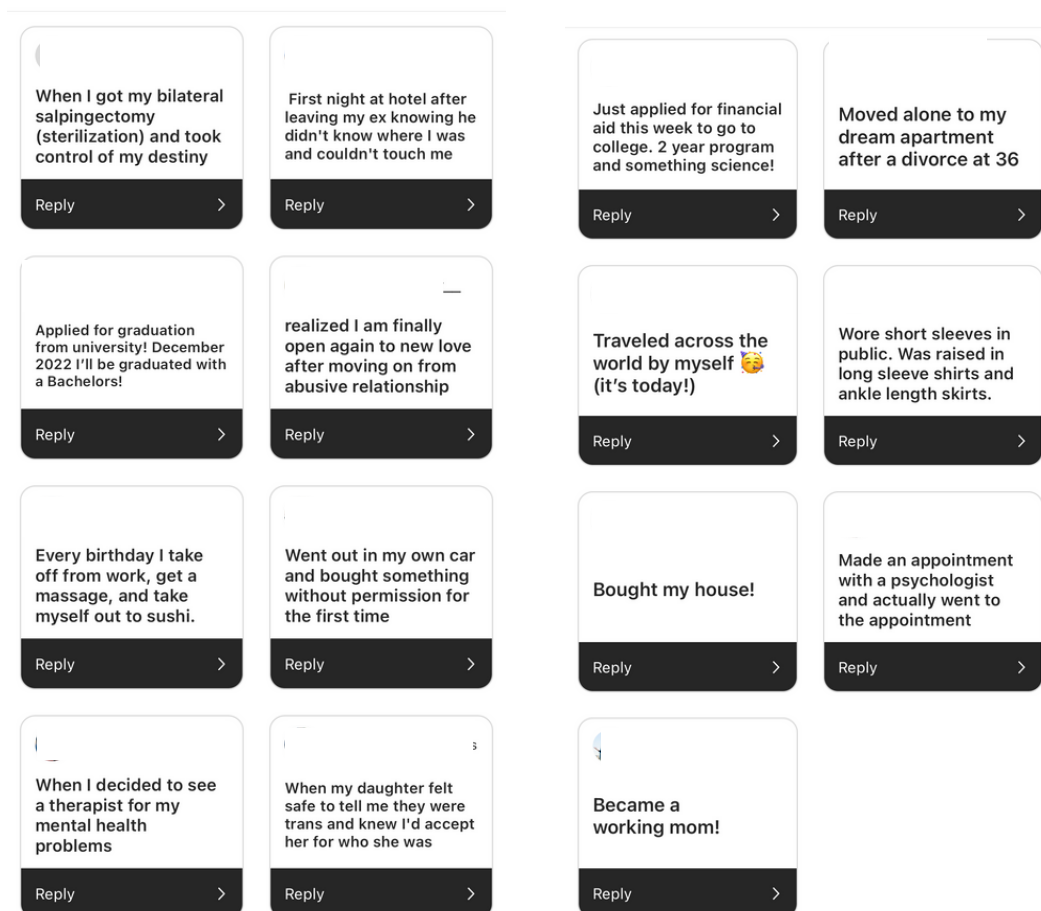
My birthday is in June, as is Pride, and this year (2022) I found myself in a chain of Diamond Days unlike any other time of my life. It's like a tennis bracelet of happy wins. A sparkle and pivot point of so many dreams come true that the sunshine spilled right out of me. I decided to celebrate, which requires a party, and a party requires people. So that's a glimpse at the backstory of how the **FIRST ANNUAL DIAMOND DAYS GIVEAWAY** came to be on Instagram.

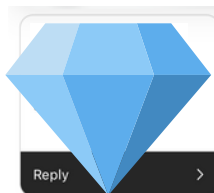
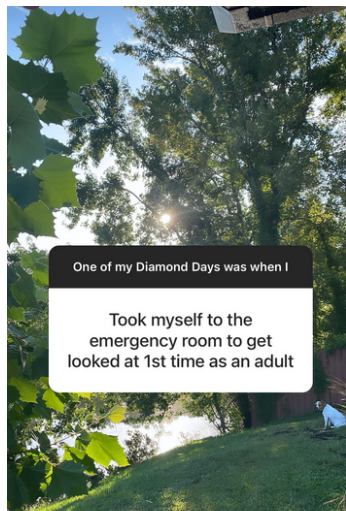


Your Diamond Days

I shared many of the responses on Instagram Stories (and saved them in a highlight.) But what no one else could see is the impact your shares had on others! My DMs blew up with thank you notes and love to those who'd shared their victories. I wanted to find a way to share that with you and still protect your anonymity. I also wanted to include the many I couldn't include in Stories due to space.

There was one little tech glitch where a day's worth of contributions were lost, but for the most part, they're all here. I created this PDF so you can be inspired, celebrate one another, find ideas for your own goals and wins, and most of all: see that while we may all be on our own Struggle Busses and unique journeys, we do have common experiences along the way. We're *not* in this thing alone—we have each other.





Had my first kiss, and it was with my now fiancée ❤️🏳️‍🌈

Reply

Reply

quiltermis

Leaving haughty church attitude behind. Listening and learning from others.

Reply

When my son's father took me to court and got less time

Reply

Finally got my ears pierced...

Reply

Realized I was no longer ruled by fundy destiny and I got to choose my own life.

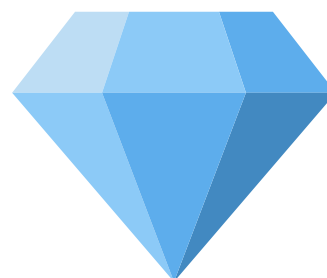
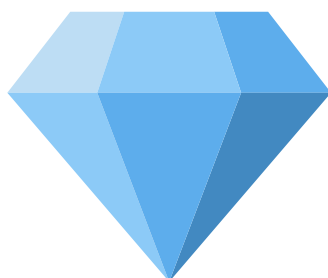
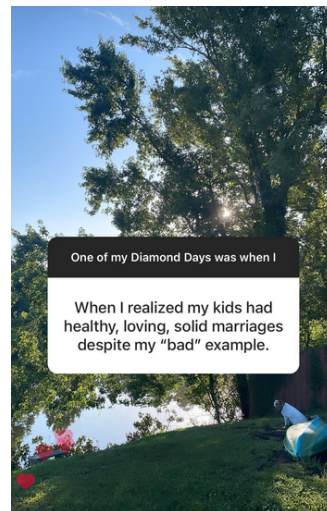
Reply

Finally after almost 30 years of being a fan saw a Tori Amos concert this week!

Reply

Got married without a preacher, prayer, or mention of god. Just love and happiness

Reply



found out I beat Cancer. I found out yesterday!

Reply

left him.

Reply

Started dating online. Buh bye courtship!

Reply

Moved to a major city, for a career job and got an apartment as a single woman.

Reply

Going to a PRIDE PARADE today!! Got to hold a gay flag last night! 🌈💕

Reply

Got my university entrance score at 28 after being denied education from 13. 🥰💕

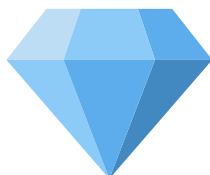
Reply

Very upset so a friend made me chop wood then stuck a baby in my arms...love and purpose

Reply

Put my daughter & I on hormonal BC due to migraines - and we haven't had any since!

Reply



Let an unhealthy friendship go without concern for how she would portray me to others

Replied

Hung a ceiling fan with the help of my daughter 🙌

Replied

Saw that the jelly we made yesterday looks pretty darn good!!!

Replied

Celebrated Pride for the first time with my daughter. We went to the CanalParade in the city we live in.

Replied

I get to be the person I needed for someone else, and it's such a deep breath (2/2)

Reply

I work with teens & every day one feels safe to open up to me and be themselves is a diamond day. (1/2)

Replied

Tore up the baby dedication letter for my son to open when he turned 12 that proselytizes

Replied

I knew a woman
COULD be a pastor

Reply >

Overcame the fear of
my ex's threats and
left with my kids

Reply >

Accepted my husband
coming out as bi
without a second
thought. ❤️

Reply >

Answered someone's
question with "I don't
believe in god" and I
did NOT feel any guilt!

Reply >

Cook, Bake, or can
anything like my
grandma did with me
when I was younger.

Reply >

Got my dog and had
someone to pour into.
It's amazing to love her
unconditionally!

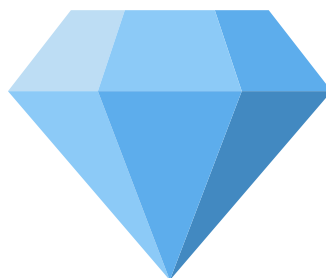
Reply >

Didn't have to fake
being happy

Reply >

I was able to admit to
myself that I was sexually
attracted to my boyfriend
and kissed him.

Reply >



Sent my kids back to
public school.

Reply >

Respected myself
enough to disengage
when triggered

Reply >

Finally bought a car for
the first time after
saving and researching
for almost a year.

Reply >

I started an adult ballet
class @ 40 yrs old -
getting on stage next
week for the 6th time.

Reply >

Started wearing my
crop tops after building
the last 30+ years
around purity culture

Reply >

When I got asked to be
interviewed, after
relearning how to read
again.

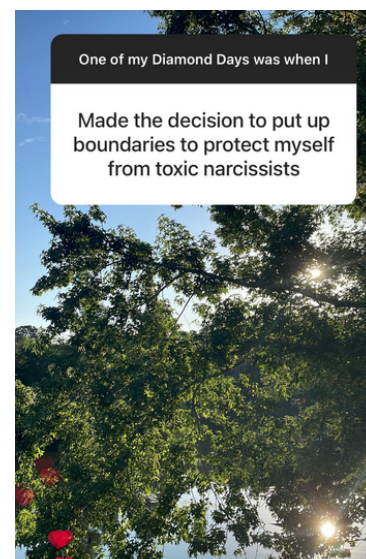
Reply >

Broke up with my ex
because I identified
toxic traits I'd learned to
respect in fundy life.

Reply >

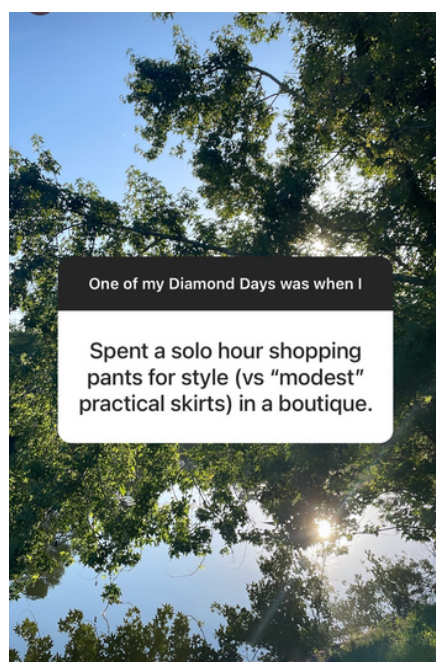
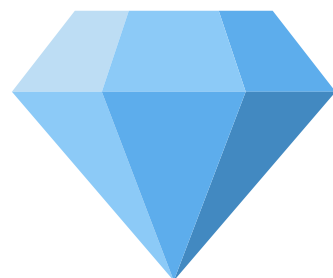
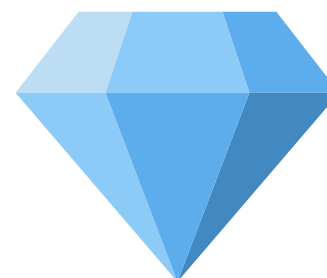
The day I got a giant
hot air balloon picture,
and it ended up being
divorce finalized day

Reply >



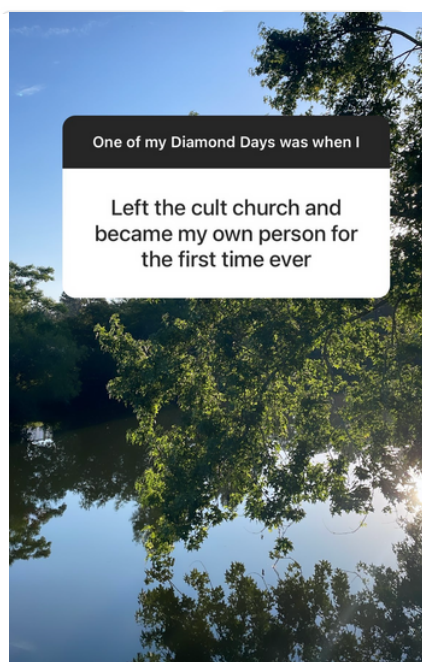
One of my Diamond Days was when I

Made the decision to put up
boundaries to protect myself
from toxic narcissists



One of my Diamond Days was when I

Spent a solo hour shopping
pants for style (vs "modest"
practical skirts) in a boutique.



One of my Diamond Days was when I

Left the cult church and
became my own person for
the first time ever

Decided to stop
spanking my child.

Reply >

2/2 panic attack

Reply >

When I managed a
business mtg, healing
crystal work, 2 walks the
day after an anxiety n

Reply >

eloped without
telling my parents I
was getting married!

Reply >

I had our baby girl on
Sat. I rejoice that she
won't be a victim of the
fundies..

Reply >

2/2 those boundaries
were crossed. "Family"
isn't an excuse for
being manipulative.

Reply >

1/2 Stood up for my kids
and myself by setting
boundaries and
protecting my kids when

Reply >

Graduated college. It
was hard to go from
unschooling to college
but I did it.

Reply >

sry1 more!🦋 the
Irnd Farsi fluently,
lrrning Turk. & Arabic,
dreaming of UNHRC job

Reply

Carved out a fulfilling
remote career w/
flexibility, getting another
degree, & 🧘 nzt yr!

Reply

Quit a corporate toxic
job & moved to 🇺🇸,
started a new life w/my
now fiancé, pt3

Reply

Despite the disapproval
of fam & friends,
withstood their spiritual
abuse & loss pt2

Reply

Div. my abusive ex, dec.
my legalistic beliefs,
chose a healthy &
loving relationship Pt1

Reply

The day I discovered how
working in SpEd was a part
of my heart I didn't know
was missing! Love my job!

Reply

Reopened lines of
communication w/parent
under my terms, knowing I can
close again anytime I need.

Reply

realized I could be a
totally whole, happy
person of faith without
marriage(again) or kids

Reply



Wore shorts above my
knee for the first time.
Joined a church with
drums and guitars.

Reply

Questioned why I
blamed myself for
things outside of my
control.

Reply

Also, reconnecting
with my version of
religion... complicated,
but happy

Reply

Stopped giving a
shit.. and was ok with
saying a "bad word"

Reply

Got accepted into
uni. I could educate
MYSELF🔥💖

Reply

Got my license
at 31!!

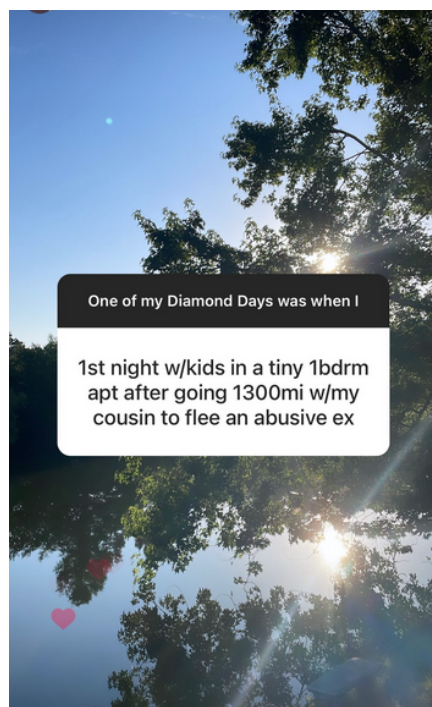
Reply

Our almost estranged
son is letting us fly to
visit him. First time in
years and years. 🥰

Reply

Wore a tank top in
public.. Because they
are my shoulders!!

Reply



Today! I saw my baby
moving & healthy on a
20-week scan after my
first pregnancy/miscari

Reply

When my husband and I
could send a letter to his
lesbian sister and tell her
she is welcome in our home!

Reply

And yes, now I have a
collection. Different types
and brands to different
moments. It's amazing

Reply

I offered a chocolate
from my collection to
my BF. My ex husband
never left any for me

Reply

When I crossed a
marathon finish line:
from fatty asthmatic in
life support to fit runner!

Reply

felt a panic attack coming
on but was able to use my
therapy skills to stop it!
Not had one since!

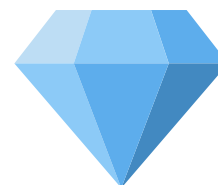
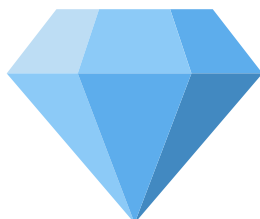
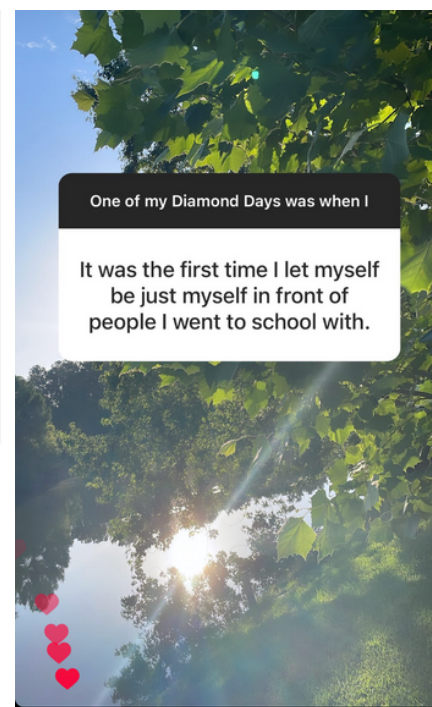
Reply

Went to work at my
dream job after being
a SAHM for 13 years!

Reply

Decided to refocus my
priorities on what
serves me and my
mental health

Reply



I realized that even if I made mistakes or a bad choice I would still be loved by a higher power.

Reply >

Started therapy

Reply >

Could laugh at the ridiculousness of Wisdom Booklets

Replied >

Coming out as bi to my unfazed, unflappable, understanding husband

Reply >

It took me 20 years after leaving the church, but my husband of 4 years and I are homeowners

Replied >

Found your account that put in to words all the stuff I thought was off* about my ex church #validated

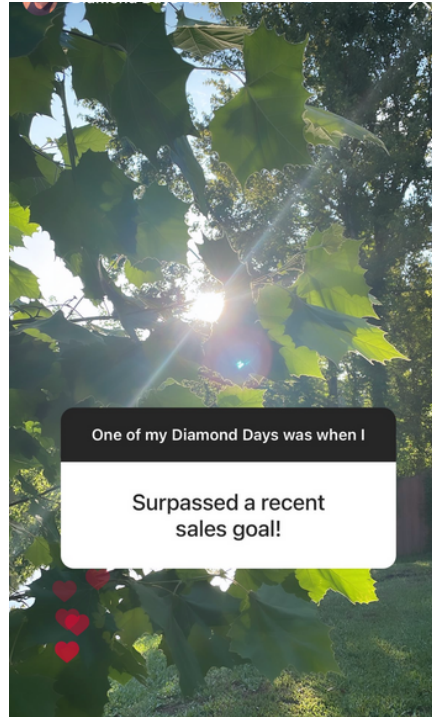
Replied >

Let an unhealthy friendship go without concern for how she would portray me to others

Replied >

Hung a ceiling fan with the help of my daughter 🍷

Replied >



One of my Diamond Days was when I

Surpassed a recent sales goal!

Married a man that was safe, kind, compassionate. And without a catholic wedding.

Reply >

Wrote an email to my ex-cult leader saying I was leaving

Reply >

Reunited with my dad after nearly 3 years estrangement

Reply >

I finally realized I was happier without the pressures of the LDS church

Reply >

Quit my toxic job.

Reply >

I filed for divorce from my and my kids abuser

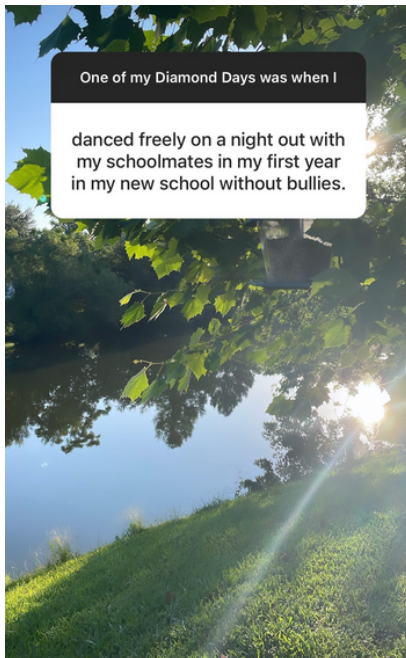
Reply >

Decided to join an adult swim class

Reply >

Graduated college. Going from unschooling to a 3.95 GPA was hard, but I did it.

Reply >



One of my Diamond Days was when I

danced freely on a night out with my schoolmates in my first year in my new school without bullies.

My parents respected my choice to leave the LDS church

Reply >

Didn't feel weird without a head covering on.

Reply >

When I'm cooking yummy food in my kitchen while drinking my favorite wine 🍷

Reply >

When I could pull the Devil card and not feel immediately freaked out.

Reply >

Decided to quit my awful job even though I couldn't start my new one for a month

Reply >

Married someone who wasn't part of my cult church

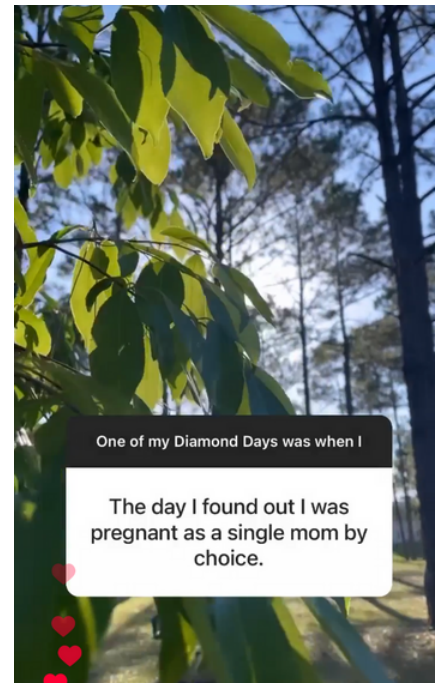
Reply >

Fought back and got meds for my MH when no one else cared or believed me. I won.

Reply >

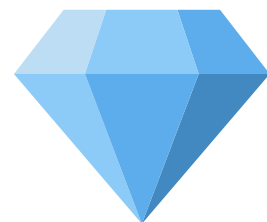
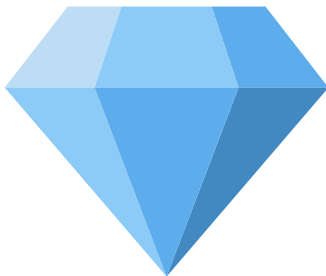
My oldest could say "I'm gay!" And I was just so happy for him. He's autistic too 🌈❤️

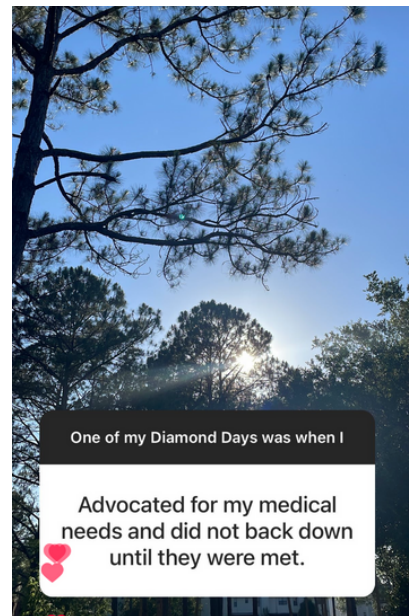
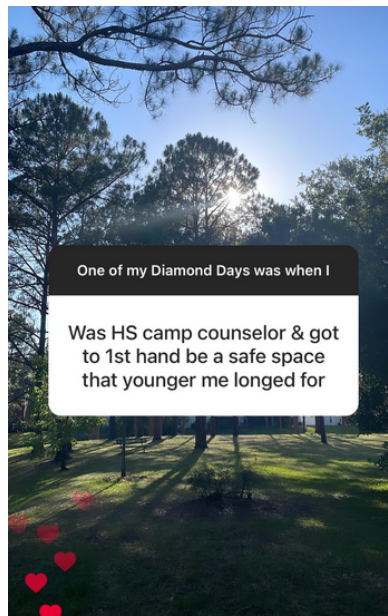
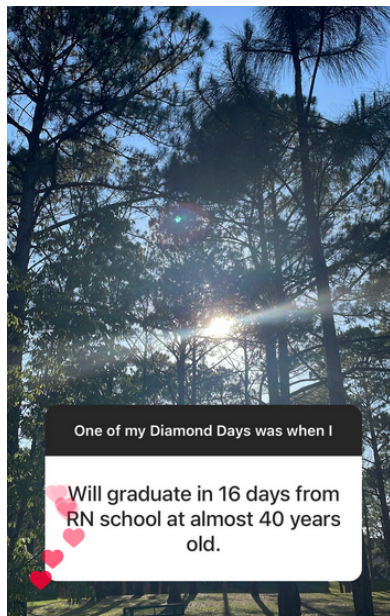
Reply >



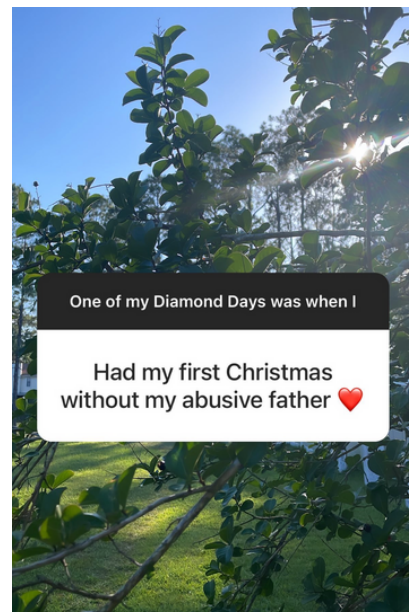
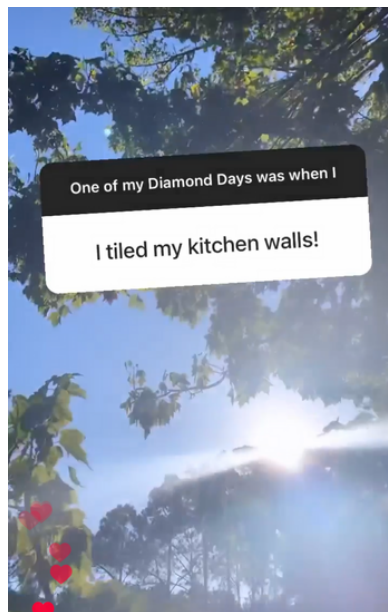
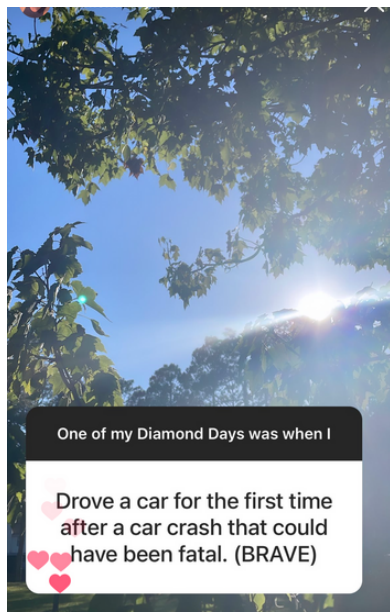
One of my Diamond Days was when I

The day I found out I was pregnant as a single mom by choice.





YOUR JOURNEY BELONGS TO YOU



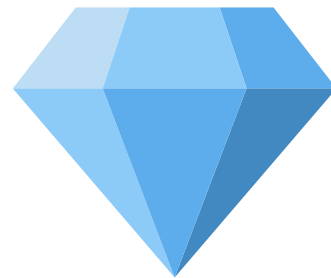
My Hope For You

Recovery is such a long road—and it's also such a worthwhile one.
I hope you take inspiration from your fellows on the journey and mark your hard-earned Diamond Days. If you do, please message me and share—I love hearing about them.
Maybe we can build a whole Diamond Days movement of reclamation and power!
Maybe I can give away actual diamonds someday!
Maybe...(is a word of possibility.)

What do you wonder you can do?



Getting flowers on one of my
shiniest Diamond Days ever!
Story to come! ❤️



Learn more about the hidden realities in Christian Fundamentalism and
find support after high control religion by following me on Instagram, Facebook, and Tiktok

@TiaLevingsWriter