



## SHYQUETTA MCELROY (SHY)

Shyquetta is the mother of four — two boys and twin girls. She was born and raised in Milwaukee Wisconsin on 11th and Burleigh. From a young age, Shyquetta wrote poetry and rap lyrics. At 18 she became a young activist for social justice and change in Milwaukee's communities. In her early twenties she fought to increase the minimum wage for fast food and retail workers, as well as the injustice of cuts to Badger Care because of its negative affect on low income families. Having a son with special needs, she went back to school in 2019 and obtained an associate degree in education to better understand and teach her children. Between juggling two jobs and four children, Shyquetta has over the year been focused and determined to continue the social and economic justice fight.

### MY TOBACCO STORY

I started smoking cigarettes at 20 and would only smoke when drinking. That grew into smoking daily for 12 years. I would feel the guilt of smoking around my children and the affect of the secondhand smoke. Recently I started being more active with my children with their sports and my toddlers. I could barley breath or move for long amounts of time. That's when I really sat down and thought about all the harm I was causing to myself and children. I want to be here long enough to see them grow up and what they become, as well as have grandchildren. So a month ago I made the decision that my family is more important then this crutch that I have let invade my body and life for so long. Now I chew gum, write, exercise and call my mom for support when I feel the urge to smoke. I've realized that the obstacles of life don't stop so I have to be the warrior and choose my own destiny.



Produced by the **Wisconsin African American Tobacco Prevention Network** (WAATPN) in partnership with **The Center for Black Health & Equity**, and **Shyquetta McElroy**.

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# No Menthol SUNDAY



## BOLD AWARENESS: A FIGHT TO THE FINISH

JOIN THE FAITH COMMUNITY ON A  
NATIONAL OBSERVANCE DAY

**MAY 15, 2022**

## INSPIRE

A MOVEMENT  
TOWARD BETTER  
BLACK HEALTH

### ABOUT NO MENTHOL SUNDAY 2022

Now, after a decades-long battle for health justice in tobacco control, we are embarking upon a major win. In 2022, we anticipate that the Food & Drug Administration will finally issue standard regulations that will prohibit the sale of tobacco products with any characterizing flavors like menthol. This is historic! Just as it was written in **Isaiah 55:11, we are now seeing the fulfillment of what we had long set out to accomplish!**

## PARTICIPATE

### DOWNLOAD THE TOOLKIT

Visit [www.NoMentholSundayWI.com](http://www.NoMentholSundayWI.com)

The following poem can be shared with members of your congregation and community in many ways:

- Share this brochure via email or print
- Recite it on video by going LIVE on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube
- Partner with your local radio and ask them to play the provided Radio spots on No Menthol Sunday

## SHY'S POEMS

### THE WAR IS NOT DONE

(60 SECONDS)

That flick of flame follows shortly by the cloud of thick smoke, and the sign of relief on a smoker's face lets me know that I've beat my battle but my war is not done.

As I smell the Menthol aroma coming from the end of the cigarette that burns hot as the sun, I realized that I've beat my battle but my war is not done.

See, the battle was my courageous determination to quit, so I relieve myself of being exhausted and sick, then with

God I delivered myself and made life my new fix, and they say old habits are hard to break,

Well I broke free of tobacco use,

I broke free of lung abuse,

I broke free of the generational curse of ..."baby light this on the stove would you?"

So you see with God all things are possible and what we start he shall finish,

But until the urge and thought of tobacco from my mind has been diminished,

mM and my God will Unite in this fight til the finish.

### A NOTE TO MYSELF

(30 SECONDS)

Dear..... well girl you know your name,

I just wanted to leave you this note to let you know that we are breaking Every Chain.

You woke to a new day, determined to make our life better.

Well sweetie, I'm here to remind you that we can storm any weather.

So when you feel the urge to take that puff or think you alone can't turn this around,

I want you to remember **Isaiah 55:11** and know that God's words never return without for filling its sound.

So together we will have strength to put the Menthol down and Unite with God to fight to the final round.