

Spirit-Filled Power Couple Opens Up About How Faith Healed the Pain of Their Past

Actor, comedian and producer David Mann and award-winning gospel singer Tamela Mann have been a powerhouse duo in the film, television and music world over the last decade. Now, on the heels of the release of their first duet album and memoir, *Us Against the World*, the couple is sharing intimate details about their childhood and how they overcame the baggage each brought into their marriage in a new short film from I Am Second.

"We're a bit dysfunctional, if you ask us," David jokingly says in the film. "We put the 'fun' in dysfunction," Tamela chimes in.

David watched his mom suffer from a number of abusive relationships, which set him on a path of anger toward men. Between David and Tamela, they have three hit TV shows, two No. 1 albums, an independent music and entertainment label, several national stand-up comedy tours and a Grammy. A key element of the Manns' platform has always been family and togetherness, and as they share in the I Am Second film, their difficult, complex backgrounds played a part in forming their principles.

"I could remember at 3 years old saying, 'Nobody else will ever hit my mom again,'" said David. "It became a cycle of always protecting, always protecting. What it did was turn me into a vicious little machine. I know people see today, like, this comedian, funny guy, but that turned me into a machine and I couldn't turn off."

David said he didn't trust men and didn't care.

On the flip side, Tamela dealt with rejection from men a young age. As the youngest of 14 kids, she was the only one of her siblings with a different father, who was also absent from her life. “I always had a bite. I always had a lash out,” said Tamela.

Tamela and David met in high school and married a few years later.

“Coming in with the baggage that [Tamela] came in with, the baggage that I came in with—eventually there’s going to be an explosion,” David said.

Together, David and Tamela made a decision to build their marriage and their family on a foundation of faith that God could heal the pain of their past and lead them toward a future full of love, laughter and goodness. They committed to pushing and encouraging each other to always be greater than they thought they could be, and to face down challenges with Jesus as their center.

“We don’t have a perfect marriage—it’s a work in progress—but what we do have to give is hope. If we can make it through—if God’s grace can get us through—it can help anybody,” said David.