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...there's a reason behind this book...

Welcome to ***Girl Talk!*** This book has been written especially for you, to help guide you through some of the many changes and challenges associated with being a girl.

If you've picked up this book, or been given it, chances are you're already a teenager, and right in the thick of all the emotional turmoil and physical changes to your body. More than likely, you feel like your body has been taken over by an alien — your body is doing many new and amazing things (many of which you are totally unaware of!).

Let me assure you, firstly, of two very important things:

1. You are not alone! Many hundreds of thousands of girls all around the world are, right at this very moment, going through similar changes, emotions and feelings that you are presently feeling. Girls similar to you have the same questions, thoughts and experiences as you. You will most likely find the questions throughout this book really helpful. They were written by teenage girls just like you (not made up by adults or me!).
2. All that you are experiencing right now, or are soon to experience is **PERFECTLY NORMAL!** Though, at times, going through puberty can be a bit scary and unfamiliar, rest assured that all that you feel is right on the scale of normal and you will come through the other side **OKAY; 'Promise'!**

Just remember, you are a gorgeous girl in an amazingly exciting and wonderful time of your life. Try and take each day as it comes and do not worry too much (often easier said than done, I know!).

My hope and prayer for you is that this book, written especially for you, will help guide you through this incredible time.

Sharon Witt



self image



treat your girlhood

**as a thing to be proud of,
and have fun!**

being a **girl** is **great!**

...being a girl is a wonderful and exciting adventure...

It may not always seem that way to you, but it is an exciting adventure. Just think of all the wonderful things you get to experience as a girl. You get to wear gorgeous clothes, dresses and high heels, experiment with makeup and different hair styles.

Best of all, you have the opportunity to become a mum one day and experience the joys of giving birth to your own baby. It's a great thing to be a girl, even if you do need to go through fussy things like periods and pregnancy. Treat your girlhood as a thing to be proud of, and have fun!

Just imagine if you were born a boy... you'd never get to try on as many outfits as you'd like when shopping. You would never get to wear pretty dresses (unless you were dared to). You would have to shave every day once you could grow a beard and you'd always be expected to change the flat tyre!

It's so good you were born a girl.

What a wonderful creation you are!

**Just imagine if you
were born a boy...
you'd always be
expected to change
the flat tyre!**

SELF★esteem

...there's nothing wrong with a bit of self-esteem...

Self-esteem refers to our own feelings of self-worth or the esteem we give ourselves. It's a good thing. In fact, a healthy self-esteem — feeling good about yourself — will reflect on and translate to other people around you.

quote

'Always be a first-rate
version of yourself,
instead of a second-rate
version of somebody else.'

Judy Garland

People with a healthy self-esteem, or self-image, tend to be pretty comfortable with themselves. They know what their strengths are and they understand that they are unique and valued.

People with a low self-image are usually easy to spot. They will usually be those people complaining that they are 'hopeless at this or that', 'aren't as beautiful as Sarah' or 'as cool as

Jack'. They are, more often than not, the people who will gossip, put others down, talk negatively about others or will be a bully.

*"a healthy self-esteem
— feeling good about
yourself — will reflect
on and translate to
other people around
you."*

quote

'How could I have
been anyone other
than me?'

Dave Matthews

poem

'And so I sit and wait for the day,
When I can be seen in my own special way.
Just myself, how should I be?
Not at all perfect-
Just perfectly me.'

Melissa Munro

Developing a healthy self image is one of the most important goals you can concentrate on right now. With a healthy self image, you can accomplish anything you set your mind to!

quote

'Be yourself.
Nobody is better qualified.'

Anonymous

quote

'If I try to be like him,
who will be like me?'

Jewish Proverb

If you can do all that you can to work on your self image as a teenager, you stand a much greater chance of becoming a happy and successful adult!

Life, Love & Longing

By Riana Baensch

The breath of life touches my lips
And I come alive to a world of wonders
Love is everywhere but cannot be given
Until you love yourself.
I am no longer in need of acceptance.
For I am loved, can love and will love
Until His hand rests upon my shoulder and says that
It is time.

poem

a PRINCESS at heart



By 'Sally', aged 13

All through Primary School I was bullied for being fat, ugly, geeky — you name it; I was called it!

So after about one year, that's how I began to see myself and I couldn't change my opinion from what was said.

It just stuck.

When I began High School, I had no self-worth or self-esteem — I just wished I wasn't alive. I got really depressed and began to think a lot about suicide and self-harm.

Whenever someone called me beautiful, I always dismissed it as stupid and them just pitying me.

Now that I am in my second year of High School and have heard what those sort of feelings could do to a person, I began talking to people about how I was feeling, asking for advice and support.

quote

Low self-esteem is like driving through life with your handbrake on.

Maxwell Maltz (1899-1975)
American Surgeon
& motivational writer

It's made me think about a lot of things that I've done to myself.

Hearing stories and advice from my teachers really changed a lot of the ways I'm thinking about my own appearance and self-worth.

Each girl is a princess at heart and she just needs someone to believe in her to say she is worthy.

feeling more
beautiful
than ever before

By 'Jess', aged 14

When I was younger, I had braces, glasses, a hearing aid (that I thankfully do not need any more!) and I was overweight!

My self-esteem was really low.

Even when I ditched my hearing aid, my braces were taken off and I got contact lenses, I still felt ugly.

But I'm now feeling more beautiful than I've ever felt.

I now know to think more about the things I'm good at rather than the things I don't like about myself.

If I continue to do this, I think I will push all the negativity out and the others will see that too. Then I can help others with low self-esteem to think more positively about themselves!



you are **Unique...**

...that's a good thing

You have been created as a unique and amazing girl, capable of anything! You are truly gorgeous, and you need to hold on to this truth for the rest of your life, no matter what others may say to you or any negative experiences you have. Created in the image of God, you are truly worthy and precious. Your uniqueness is what makes you so special. Imagine how boring it would be if everyone was exactly the same. Celebrate the things that are different about you. Be thankful you have crazy freckles or red curly hair. These qualities are the things that make you **you!**

quote

*'If everyone lit
their own candle,
the whole world
would be lit.'*

Mary Moskowitz

There were two versions of me at one stage when I was growing up, all because of a TV show I adored. The show — a soapie called 'A Country Practice' — was very popular. And leading the way was one of the stars, 'Molly'. She was a confident, gorgeous woman who stood up for what she believed in. She dressed in bright colours and

wore amazing, wacky, bright outfits. Molly, the character, eventually died. That episode was watched by millions of Australians, sitting glued to their TVs to watch a most-loved character fade from our screens for eternity.

In front of one TV screen was me, Sharon crying, tears rolling down, thinking how much I wanted to be 'Molly'.

The truth is, there is only one *you* on the whole face of the earth — how incredible is that!? Being created as a unique and amazing individual actually lets you off the hook straight away. You don't have to try and be anybody else but yourself. Actress Judy Garland — the girl who played

Dorothy in 'The Wizard of Oz'
— once said:

***'Always be a first-rate
version of yourself, instead
of a second-rate version
of someone else.'***

The media constantly bombards us with images, telling us what we should look like and how we should act as teenagers. We end up all becoming lookalikes of each other. How boring is that?

That girl I loved on TV — Molly — affected my dress sense, big time! I remember conning my Nanna into making me a copy of a bright jumpsuit that Molly wore. I even put 'Molly's' bright clips in my hair. (The mental images frighten me to this day!)

quote

'Our problem is that we make the mistake of comparing ourselves with other people. You are not inferior or superior to any human being... You do not determine your success by comparing yourself to others. Rather, you determine your success by comparing your accomplishments to your capabilities. You are "number one" when you do the best you can with what you have, every day.'

Zig Ziglar, American motivational writer

quote

*'All of us are stars
and deserve the
right to twinkle.'*

Marilyn Monroe

Sure, I went around dressed as 'Molly' for a while, but it wasn't the real me. I was just trying to copy somebody else I admired.

Trends and fashions may come and go, but don't just buy something or wear an outfit because you are trying to be something you are not. You just end up being very uncomfortable because you're not being real to yourself.

you are a **Star!**

You are a shining star

*Precious
Designed Intentionally
Wonderfully made*

You make this world a better place

You are unavoidably beautiful

*Invaluable
Unique
Unlimited in potential*

**And in you are treasures beyond
measure.**

Be strong and brave

*Dare to be
Realise your beauty
Believe in who you are*

Because you are amazing!

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my **daily** self-evaluation

By Jenny Sharaf

*I stare in the mirror,
Pinching the skin around
my stomach,
Moulding it into the
ideal shape.*

*I wish that I could
look like her,
The girl in the magazine.
I compare our hair and teeth,
Our skin and our lips.*

*With every look my
self-esteem vanishes.
Losing confidence,
my smile soon fades.*

*My flaws seem endless and numbered
As I quickly fall into a state of sadness,
And put on a baggy sweatshirt,
Concealing my imperfect figure,
Letting go of my dreams and pretending I don't care.*

*Slowly and realistically I begin to accept
My image and identity, repeating to myself
That I am the only me, and that is a good thing.¹*



¹ From *No Body's Perfect* by Kimberly Kirberger.
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