



Empowered. Informed. Equal.

Welcome!

You are not "just a girl". You are a human being who has strength, wisdom and a unique mind. You have a million opportunities to grow and learn. You are more than just a pretty face. You are amazing and beautiful and have so much to offer our world. You are equal to every woman, man and boy. Your future is uncharted which gives you the chance to be whoever you want to be, do anything, and go anywhere.

This book is so you can empower yourself and those around you to create a world that is peaceful and educated. We live in a world that is as beautiful as it is cruel. You may have already learned this, but even so don't give up! The most wonderful part of our world is change. Change is inevitable and unstoppable.

Not long ago, the majority of women were only encouraged to get married and raise children. We were not allowed to attend school, to vote or even wear pants. Yes, women were arrested for wearing pants in public! Thankfully hundreds of women (and men) decided this was unacceptable and they took action. These brave women risked their lives. They risked being ostracized by their own families and friends. Bad things happened to women just because they wanted to have the same rights as men. They knew that all people were equal and that society should accept this as law. These were people like Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony in the 1800's who were suffragists and abolitionists. They firmly believed that women and men should be treated equally regardless of race or gender.

Those brave women paved the way for future generations to be liberators and activists like Gloria Steinem, who was a political, civil and women's rights activist and journalist. She gave a voice to women in the media and broke down barriers in journalism that were only open to men. Septima Clark was a teacher and civil rights activist who valued education and community relations. She created a long lasting positive change in her community and in others. Aung San Suu Kyi who is active in civil and political rights for her country of Burma was put under house arrest for years but never gave up. Raylawni Branch was a civil rights activist and was one of the first women to attend the University of Southern Mississippi in 1965.

Recently women have become owners of million dollar companies, presidents of countries and leaders of their people. These are women like Wilma Mankiller who became the first female Chief of the Cherokee Nation in the USA. During her 10 years, she was credited for greatly improving the Cherokee nations government, education and community. Laura Chinchilla became the first female president of Costa Rica, a country in South America, in 2010. Look no further than your TV to see one of the most powerful and influential women in the world, Oprah Winfrey. She has used her influence and income to build a school for women and inspired people around the world to create positive change.

A younger generation of girls are showing that you don't need to be a senator or wealthy to make positive changes in your communities. Chi Nguyen is committed to working with street children in Vietnam and has raised over \$30,000 for these children to have an education, food, clothing and medicine. Severn Suzuki gave a speech at a UN conference on the environment when she was 12 years old and continues to fight for a cleaner planet today.

These women have sparked revolutions and are turning Earth into a friendly place for girls to grow up. In many progressive nations girls have the right to an education, go to any college they want, have a career, live freely, are not forced into marriage and are encouraged to become equal members of society. However in other countries females have little or no rights. They are still oppressed. Some girls are married at the age of 13 or younger! Girls are not allowed to go to school, are beaten by their parents, sexually abused, sold into slavery and told they are stupid and useless. It is not just men that treat females as property. Women are encouraged to accept these conditions as the way they should be and they in turn encourage their children to continue the negative cycle of oppression of females. If you can read this book, you are one of the lucky ones. You can READ! Imagine never being taught to read because your parents don't know how to read. Even worse, imagine if your brothers are taught to read and sent to school while you are only allowed to work or stay at home.

Are you furious about this? Do you want to get active and improve the lives of girls and women? You can start now. YOU CAN CHANGE HOW THE WORLD TREATS GIRLS! Change starts with you. Take little steps. Stand up for yourself and be brave. You have power. Don't fall into the trap that girls should be good and well behaved. Your actions may seem unreasonable or rebellious to others. Do not let that stop you. You are important, your opinion matters and you have a right to become the amazing person you wish to be.

YOU must respect yourself because unfortunately many people will not.

YOU must believe in yourself and show the world that you are more than "just a girl", that you matter!

YOU must learn. Get an education so you can educate other girls. Whatever your favorite subject is, find out more about it than you can learn at school. Go to the library and continue your education.

Try this simple exercise each day as you follow your dreams. Repeat the positive affirmation that is below as often as you want. Write this affirmation in your journal. Decorate a shirt with these words. Post it online where all your friends can see it and use it for themselves.

I AM IN CONTROL

I AM STRONG

I AM SMART

I DESERVE EQUALITY

I AM BEAUTIFUL

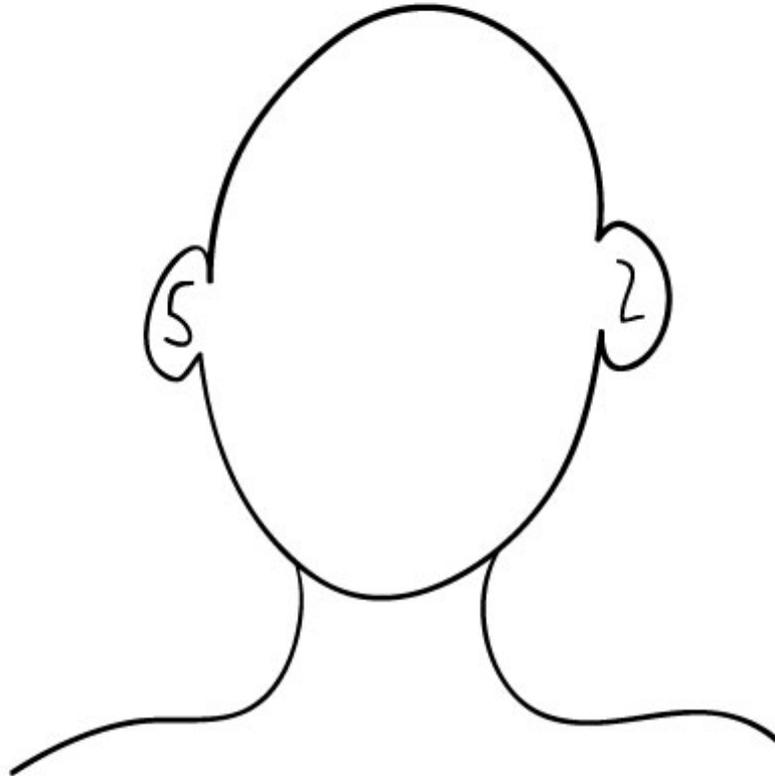
I AM POWERFUL

I AM A SURVIVOR

I CAN CREATE POSITIVE CHANGE

Express Yourself

Use the center head below to draw yourself. You can make yourself up with fun decorations or draw exactly what you see in the mirror. It's your book so draw whatever you want.



YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL

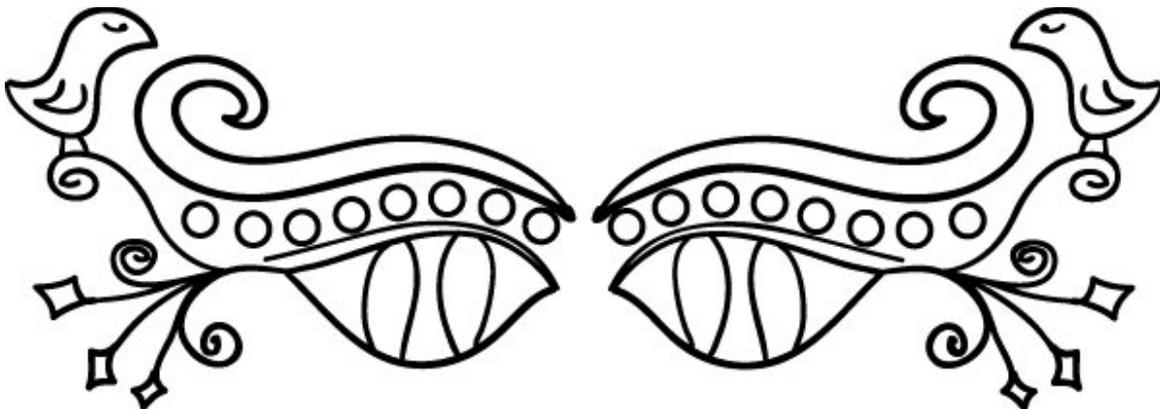
Go to the mirror right now and tell your reflection you love her. Say clearly and out loud "**I LOVE YOU**".

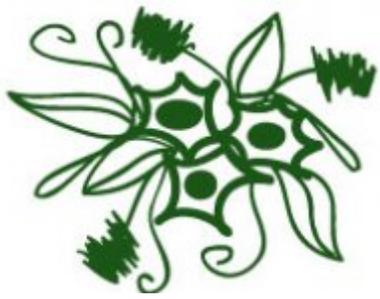
Love your body, it's the only one you have. Be grateful for your body. Tell yourself that you are beautiful. Say clearly and out loud "**I AM BEAUTIFUL**".

There are images everywhere of how people are *supposed* to look. You see models and movie stars with perfectly smooth skin, skinny bodies, wearing revealing clothing, painfully high heels and a gallon of makeup. This is only one idea of beauty. It is not real though. It is an illusion. You are being sold a way of looking and told you will only be beautiful if you look that way. **It is just not true.** You are beautiful. Look around you at your family, friends and strangers on the street. What do you see? Do you see perfection or do you see people who look different and beautiful? We are all beautiful in our own unique packaging.

We have different skin colors, heights, weights, hair colors, and textures. We have scars, some of us have lost limbs or lost hair, but we are still beautiful. We are not all shaped the same way. Some of us are very curvy, some of us not so much. We like to dress in colorful scarves, jeans, skirts, boots, sandals, T-shirts! We are casual, elegant, messy. We stand out! Beauty is up to you, the individual. It is what you see and love. We create our own definition that belongs to each us and it is not the same.

Don't believe that you have to look a certain way to be beautiful.
YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL no matter what anyone says.





I AM BEAUTIFUL BECAUSE...

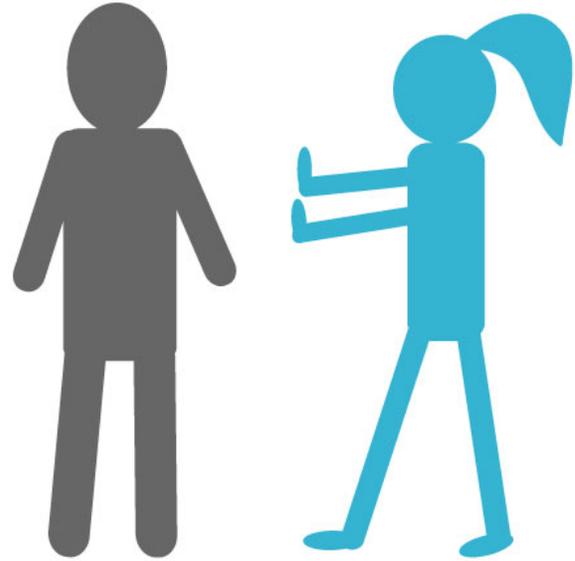
If someone threatens you or makes a move to grab you, use these basic self defense moves and run to safety. Practice these moves with friends. You can hit a tree or have someone hold a cushion up in front to them. Be careful not to hit the person you are practicing with.

The Freeze Stance

Stand with your legs shoulder length apart.

Put your hands out in front of you with arms straightened.

Yell or state in a clear loud voice "STOP" or "GET BACK".



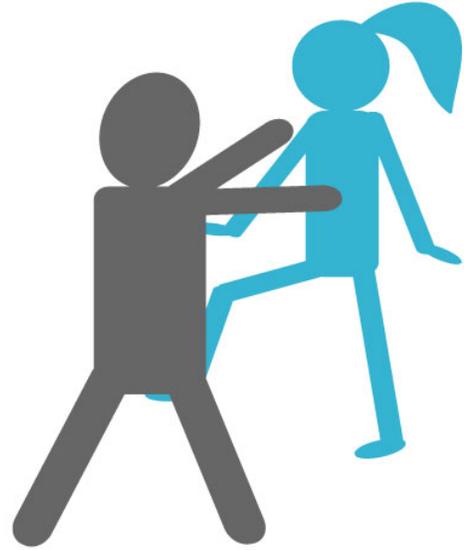
The Palm Strike.

Use the heel of your palm to strike your attackers nose, eyes, cheek or forehead.



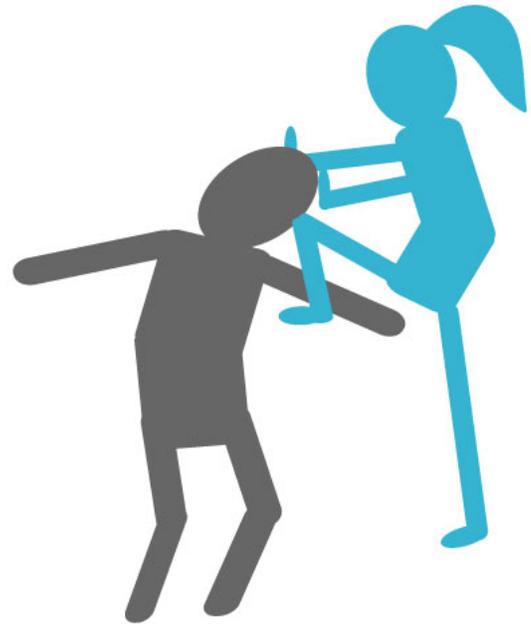
The Groin Kick

Kick your attacker in the groin area. This move works best on men, but can also cause a lot of pain for a woman.



The Head Knee Strike

This works best if your attacker is bent over in pain from step three. Grab the attacker's head and lift your knee to strike their face. Then RUN to safety



EMERGENCY NUMBERS

If someone attacks you, report it to the police. If you need emergency services or are injured dial **911**.

Write the phone number of your local police station here.

Defend Yourself!

Don't be afraid to use your voice. Speak up when someone harasses you. Nobody deserves to be treated badly. If someone hurts or scares you, they are wrong and you have the right to take action. You have the right to protect yourself. Despite what you may have been taught, you can be strong and stay safe. Empowering yourself requires confidence and knowledge. Use the information below to educate yourself and your friends. If you are attacked, report the crime to the police, your boss, a teacher, family member or friend.

STAYING SAFE

Stay with groups of friends when you are out at night and stay in well lighted areas. If drinking keep an eye on your glass or someone can slip drugs in your drink. These drugs can be used in *any* drink because they are colorless and odorless. When you are alone or in an unfamiliar area pay attention and BE ALERT! Carry bags close to your body and hide your jewelry when out alone. Take a self defense class at your local college or recreation center or join a martial arts class.

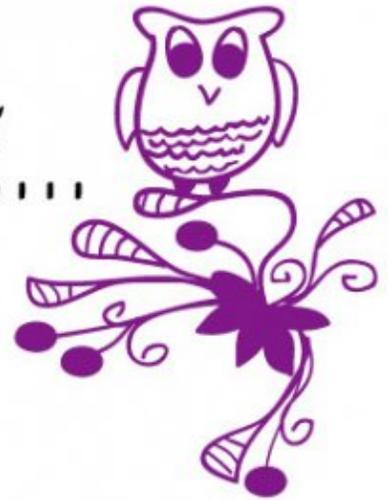
TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS!

EVERYDAY SELF DEFENSE WEAPONS

Roll up a magazine and jab the end into an attackers neck.
Take a brush and rake the bristles across an attackers eyes.
Spray your attacker with mace, perfume or other liquids that will sting when sprayed into their eyes.
Use your keys, pens or nail file to scratch an attackers face and arms or use it to poke them hard in their ribs.
Hit an attacker with your reusable water bottle, a book or bag.

When in doubt yell for help or RUN!

I AM CONFIDENT BECAUSE...



Stress Management

Anger is a healthy emotion, but when you act out violently it becomes unhealthy. Violence can be expressed in an emotional or physical way. Only you can take control of your anger and choose not to lash out at other people. Take the time to think about what is upsetting you.

Ask yourself questions.

What part of this situation is making me feel so angry?

Is there another reason, maybe a previous situation that is causing me to react angrily right now?

What peaceful actions can I take to change this situation?

YOU CAN'T ALWAYS CHANGE HOW YOU FEEL, BUT YOU CAN ALWAYS CHOOSE HOW YOU ACT!

An affirmation can help you control your emotions in a bad situation. When you create an affirmation use positive words that reflect your goal. Leave out negative words like never, no, against or stop. Replace those with words like always, yes, for and go. Create your own or use the affirmation below. Repeat as needed.

**MY THOUGHTS ARE PEACEFUL THOUGHTS
MY WORDS ARE PEACEFUL WORDS
MY ACTIONS ARE PEACEFUL ACTIONS**

When you feel angry try these tips to CALM DOWN.

Walk away from the situation.

Take a deep breath in and exhale slowly. Repeat this step until you feel calm.

Talk to someone you trust. It can be a teacher, mentor, friend or family member.

Count backwards to refocus your concentration. This will give you time to think of what to do next.

Keep a journal and write how you are feeling. Keep track of what upset you and how you dealt with your anger.

What Are You Thinking?

It may sound silly, but the way we think impacts every part of our life. Have you ever called yourself fat or ugly? Do you wish for different hair, a perfect nose, to be taller or shorter? Do you think you are dumb and not good at anything? It is very common for girls and boys to feel the need to be perfect. You have the power to stop this way of thinking. What you don't realize is that you already are perfect.

When we are with our friends it can feel good to talk negatively about ourselves and know that our friends have similar insecurities. This allows us to bond. This is NOT a healthy way to bond and create relationships. When we only focus on the negatives and spend our free time striving to change our appearance and wishing we were perfect, we waste a lot of time. This a big energy zapper. How can we enjoy life when we are complaining about how unfair it is? Instead you can spend your time having fun and loving yourself for all your wonderful qualities.

The next time you think a negative thought or start complaining, Stop! Just stop that thought right there. Banish it from your vocabulary. **Look at your situation and find what is positive. Repeat that positive thought a few times.** When your friend starts saying how ugly or stupid she is interrupt her. Tell her "That is NOT true." Remind her of how beautiful she is. Tell her about her best features. Remind her of how much she has accomplished so far. Don't let your friends be negative towards themselves.

Now is the time to be aware of your feelings in uncomfortable situations. Ask yourself, is this negative feeling necessary? Is it true or am I simply frustrated? What positive feeling can I focus on instead?

Don't let negativity rule your world. Be aware of the words you think and say out loud. Change the way you think and you will change your situation. Your world won't change overnight, but soon you will see changes. You will see how much more confidence you have when you focus on the positives and not the negatives. You will have more energy and time to live for your passions and enjoy life.

Fun ideas for staying positive and motivated.

Motivate yourself with a change jar. For every positive thought you have, put a quarter in your jar. See how much money you can earn by being positive.

Keep an awareness journal. For every negative thought counteract it with a positive thought and write both in your journal. Look at your thoughts and be aware of how often you are negative. Look back in a month and see if you still believe any of those negative thoughts. What has changed since then?

You can use a positive affirmation when you feel scared and incompetent. Use the one below or create your own. Be aware of what words you use in your affirmation. Keep negative words out and positive words in.

I AM BEAUTIFUL.

I AM SMART.

I AM CAPABLE.

I AM IN CONTROL.

Write your affirmation on paper or poster board and tape it to your wall where you will see it each morning. Start your day off with a positive affirmation. Write your affirmation with bright colors and include photos of things that make you happy. Include positive images with your affirmation to make it memorable!

Try these fun activities when you need **INSPIRATION**.

Publish a magazine or ezine with your friends. Save money when you up-cycle scrap paper to use in your magazine or set up a free blog or website for your ezine. Write about topics that are close to your heart. Get out in your city and interview local politicians, business owners, community theater actors and people you admire. Create a photo section where you and your friends share your favorite photos with a different theme for each publication. Get in the entrepreneurial spirit and sell subscriptions. You can raise money for college or donate your profits to a charitable organization.

Make a memory box. Decorate the outside of your box with illustrations, photos or paint. Inside the box keep things that make you smile like letters and cards, photos, a great report card, medals or ribbons you won, notes from your friends and anything that makes you smile. Open the box after a hard day to remember the good parts of life.

Create an inspiration board! These are fun to make and will remind you of what you love today, inspire you to be even more amazing tomorrow and lift your spirits when you feel low. Your board can include inspiring and encouraging words, photos of people you admire, places you want to go and the things you love. Cut pictures from old magazines or print out photos you find online. You can also illustrate your own images.

Inspirational Word Board



Keeping a journal can relieve stress, preserve important memories and give you an outlet when you don't have someone to talk with. The blank pages in this book are just for you. Use these words when you write in your journal. Look in a thesaurus and dictionary to find new words.

Get creative and make up your own words.

Brave + Beautiful = Braviful

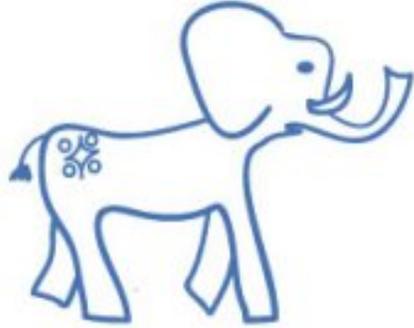
Totally + Amazing = Tomazing

Intelligent + Adventure = Inteligenture

Girls are...

INCREDIBLE **EQUAL** *Liberated*
Wonderful **Energizing** **Intense**
BRAZEN *Innovative* **Proud**
Unstoppable **Informed** **WISE**
INDEPENDENT *Special* *Optimistic*
FEMININE **STRONG** **PEACEFUL**
BRAVE *Empowered* *FANTASTIC*
Couragous **BOLD** **EDUCATED**
Nurturing **ADVENTUROUS** *Smart*
Serious *Outspoken* *Beautiful*
Compassionate **ENCOURAGING** *Intelligent*
Loving *Amazing* *Talented*

SOME OF MY WONDERFUL QUALITIES ARE...



There is a saying that ALL women should be treated like queens.
You are amazing and you rule.
Listen to your inner voice.
Is it telling you that you are as important as any queen?
Because you are.



Empower Yourself

Empower yourself by following your passions. What inspires you in your life? Do you have a passion for math, art, science, journalism? Do you want to save the environment, work with animals or help people? There are so many options available it may seem overwhelming, but you don't have to do just one thing your whole life. Many women have changed careers or started a business at least once in their lives. You have the power to change your mind.

Get started on your dreams TODAY.

Start or join a club at school around your passion. Ask your friends to join and meet new friends who have similar interests.

Organize a beach or neighborhood clean up.

Create a community garden and grow your own food. Gardening can be very therapeutic and healing for our bodies and minds.

Try out for a sports team. Recreational exercise is fun and one of the best ways to lift your spirits and keep your body healthy.

Volunteer!

There are so many volunteer opportunities and if you are considering going to college they also look great on your application.

At a soup kitchen or an animal shelter.

At the library and teach someone how to read.

With a community theater group and learn what it takes to put on a production.

Protect the environment with a local environmental agency.

Meet amazing women at a senior citizens center who have seen and done so much, they want to pass on their knowledge with the next generation.

Keep Learning

Expand your experiences by learning new skills. Take a class and learn something new.

Learn a new language, a musical instrument, build furniture, garden, learn chess, karate, ballroom dancing, oil painting, sewing, knitting, kayaking, origami, website design or writing.

The more you learn the more confidence you have.

Visit a library or community center and see what books and classes they offer.

Confidence + Self Respect = Empowered Girls!

Your future is uncharted and full of surprises. The career you want to have now may change as you grow up. The place you want to live may change. Even though you may change, go ahead and live for your dreams that you have right now. The future is fun to imagine, but you live in the present and do not know what the future will hold. You don't always get a second chance to take a shot at your dreams so get out there and make the life you dream of a reality today! It's okay to fail. Failing is as constant as change. Lots of successful people fail, but the trick is not to give up. You may need to change how you get there, but don't let the fear of failing stop you. There is a popular saying that when one door closes another one opens. This means that just because one opportunity does not work, it is not the end of your journey. There will always be new doors that open.

Do you want to live in another country someday? Learn the native language and read about the national and cultural customs. There may even be an organization associated with that country in your hometown. They probably meet up and puts on a festival every year. Contact them and ask how you can get involved. Take the time you have now to learn as much as you can about your future home.

Do you want to be an architect, computer engineer, fashion designer, senator, own a business or train horses? Whatever your passion, find a mentor in that industry who will teach you about what they do and how they got started. Learn from them and take your time listening and absorbing all the information you can. Ask about an internship after school or during the summer. Now is a great time to find out if this is a career you would like to have.

Ask your schools guidance counselor about any programs available. Your school may offer a work study program. This is where you can earn credit for interning with a business while going to school. Attend take your daughter to work day with your parents. If you have an aunt, uncle or family friend that is not taking their daughter to work, than ask if you can go with them.

While it is important to prepare yourself for the career you want, don't let it consume your whole life. Balance out your time with fun activities that you enjoy. There is a wise proverb that says simply, "Work smarter, not harder". This does not mean that you should never work hard. What it means is figure out a way to work so that you are not always struggling. You are smart and you can teach yourself a better way to do anything.

You can be an activist and stand for a cause that you love by writing and calling your senators and congressional representatives. You can also be an activist by volunteering in your community.

Any career you choose gives you an opportunity to help others. You do not have to be the CEO of a million dollar company. Anyone can take time to volunteer and give back to their community. You can work within an organization or if you have a job, donate a portion of your income for that organization to fund much needed programs and research.

Your school may also have a program that will give you a chance to volunteer within a community partnership. You may even be able to get school credit for volunteering. Donating your time to help others looks great on college applications and is attractive to employers.

Your employer may already have a relationship with a charitable organization with which you can become involved in. If your employer is not affiliated with a charity then you can suggest that your employer partner with one.

The first step is to ask questions. That's all it takes to start down the road of change.

Be the spark that inspires others to get involved and give back .

CHANGE STARTS HERE

Let yourself feel free
Be the change that you want to see
Don't say there's nothing that you can do
The power is there inside you
Every first step is small, but you can grow, Make strides that are tall
Take a leap and reach for what you believe
Listen to what you need not the people that say how you must be
You can be brave because inside you are strong
Pay attention to what is going on, Let your light shine
Take this as your time to be the change you want to see
Make it a world where all are free
If you want change, start here
Listen to your needs and soar past your fear.



This is YOUR page. Use it however you want!

Take Care of Your Body and Mind

Stress makes us physically ill. It disrupts our lives. So take care of yourself and learn ways to relieve stress before it becomes too much to handle.

When you are stressed out and feel extra hyper, perhaps so energetic that you can't sit still, choose activities to slow yourself down. Take a bubble bath and read a book, sit down and drink some hot tea, practice yoga stretches to increase circulation throughout your body or meditate to loosen your muscles.

Meditation is a wonderful way to relax. Find a comfortable quiet place where you can sit for at least 15 minutes. If you have a timer set it when you sit down. Start with deep breathing. Inhale deep and exhale slowly. Repeat 3 or 4 times to calm your body. Continue to breathe slowly, but not as deep. Focus on your body and how you feel. Don't think about your troubles, just focus on your breathing and your body. It can help to imagine places that make you feel safe and warm. You can imagine you are in a quiet forest with a stream nearby or sitting next to the ocean with waves breaking. Meditation can be done anywhere once you learn how. Practice meditation before a big test, before work or school and to wind down at the end of each day.

If you are feeling tired and need some energy try something that will get your blood pumping. Go for a walk or run, listen to upbeat music, dance around your room, meet up with a good friend and make a craft together, or go hiking together.

Laughter is a great way to cheer you up. Have you ever laughed so hard you cried or laughed until your stomach hurt? When was the last time you laughed? Was it something funny your sister or brother did? Was it someone at school or a story you were told? Write down funny memories and keep these in your memory box to pull out when you need a laugh. Watch a funny movie or read a book of jokes and let laughter melt your problems away.

If you are frustrated than you may need to vent and let loose your frustrations. Talk to a trustworthy friend, punch a pillow scream into your pillow (to muffle the sound) or go somewhere alone and ROAR like a lioness as loud as you can! **Learn to listen to your brain. Be aware of when your body signals it's time to eat, relax and move faster or slower.**

Sexual Assault

Sexual Assault is not the most comfortable conversation, but it is a conversation that you need to have with someone. Millions of girls and women and boys and men have been sexually assaulted. It is a crime that hurts all genders, though it is mostly females that are sexually assaulted. This is because many cultures enforce a gender biased belief that girls are inferior to or only alive to obey a man.

It does not have to be this way though. You can fight sexual assault by starting conversations about why we must put an end to it. We cannot continue to ignore when a person is molested, raped or assaulted. You first must accept that sex is an undeniably important part of life. It is good, not bad. Sex is an act you should enjoy when and only WHEN YOU ARE READY. Sex should not be an act that hurts.

Words can cause as much harm as violence. There is a disgusting trend of calling a girl a slut, a whore or easy when she has sex. This is a terrible act of verbal abuse. When you use these words you are perpetuating a gender bias that punishes girls while rewarding boys. We have a completely opposite view of boys and sex. Boys are called a stud or manly and considered to be cool when they have sex. This double standard is one reason girls are wary of admitting to sexual assault. In the case of sexual assault, girls are often blamed for being a tease or dressing in revealing clothing. Girls are told that they "were asking" to be assaulted or raped because of how they acted or dressed. This is just not true! **The only person to blame in a case of sexual assault is the attacker.**

You have a right to protect yourself from sexual predators and you have the right to be protected if you report an assault. There are trained emergency responders who can assist you in reporting a crime.

After an assault there are steps you can take to help police identify and arrest your attacker. While it may seem scary to admit to being assaulted or raped, your report can help police prove someone is dangerous and keep them from hurting someone else. Even if you decide not to press charges, reporting a rape can assist police find serial rapists and keep them off the streets. If you are assaulted there are actions you can take to get help. Counseling and the tools to continue living as a survivor are available.

If you are assaulted, do not take a shower. Stay in the clothes you wore during the attack. If you are raped you need to have a physical exam. You need to be tested for STD's (Sexually Transmitted Diseases). A nurse or doctor will collect any DNA such as hair or blood samples off your body and clothes for what is called a rape kit. This will be used if you decide to press charges.

Free counseling and supportive services are available to victims of sexual assault.

Sexual Assault National Hotline

1-800-656-4673

Do not waste your time in a relationship with someone who disrespects you. Whether you date a boy or a girl, your partner should treat you with respect. You should feel safe and loved when you are in a romantic relationship. If your partner pressures you into activities or puts you in situations that make you uncomfortable tell them. Communication is vital to a healthy relationship. If your partner refuses to change, leave them now. Their behavior will only become worse. You are too important to date someone who does not truly care about you. Your feelings are equally important. Your partner should never make you feel inferior or control you.

Whether your relationship is romantic or platonic, you have the right to say NO! You choose to say yes or no to sex, drugs, smoking, drinking, shoplifting, teasing or hurting others and any activity that causes you to be scared or uncomfortable. YOU HAVE THE POWER to surround yourself with people who treat you well.

Domestic Violence and Bullying

A peaceful, loving home is a right we expect to grow up with. Unfortunately some people use violence at home to control their family. This is called *Domestic Violence*. Most people think victims of domestic violence are obvious to spot because they often have bruises and broken bones. However abuse can also be emotional. Your abuser at home may use hurtful words and be manipulative or put your health and life in danger. They may control you with money and refuse to allow you access to money. They will convince you that you are wrong and they are right. This is not acceptable behavior.

Empowered girls are NOT victims. You are STRONG and BRAVE. When you fight back and defend yourself YOU ARE A SURVIVOR.

There are options if someone at home is hurting you. There are resources in your community that can stop your abuser. Your first step is to tell someone. This may seem terrifying because you are afraid your abuser will find out and get mad at you. But it is a step you must take before anyone can help you. Tell someone you trust such as a friend's parent, a teacher, a coach, a counselor, a neighbor or a relative. If you keep quiet the abuse will continue.

Domestic Violence National Hotline

1-800-799-7233 or 1-800-787-3224

No person has the right to hit you or verbally abuse you.
Not your parents, your siblings, your teacher, your coach your friends or anyone.

Your life matters. YOU ARE IMPORTANT!

If other girls or boys bother you, tell your parents, a teacher or a counselor. Bullies are a real problem that affect millions of girls and boys. Sometimes it gets so bad that the person who is bullied and tormented tries to hurt themselves so they don't have to be around the bully. Hurting yourself will not make your problem go away. If you feel suicidal, talk to someone. You are not alone. Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. There are people who would miss you so much if you took your life.

National Suicide Hotline

1-800-273-8255 or 1-800-784-2433

I RESPECT MYSELF BECAUSE...



Helplines you need to know and share with your friends.

Alcohol and Drug Hotline 1-800-527-5344

Alcoholics Anonymous 1-888-425-2666

Homeless Youth Hotline 1-800-999-9999

Runaways Hotline 1-800-621-4000

National Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-422-4453

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children 1-800-843-5678

National Eating Disorders Association 1-800-931-2237

Planned Parenthood, Health questions and treatment
1-800-258-4448

Pregnancy Hotline 1-800-942-6466

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Hotline 1-888-843-4564

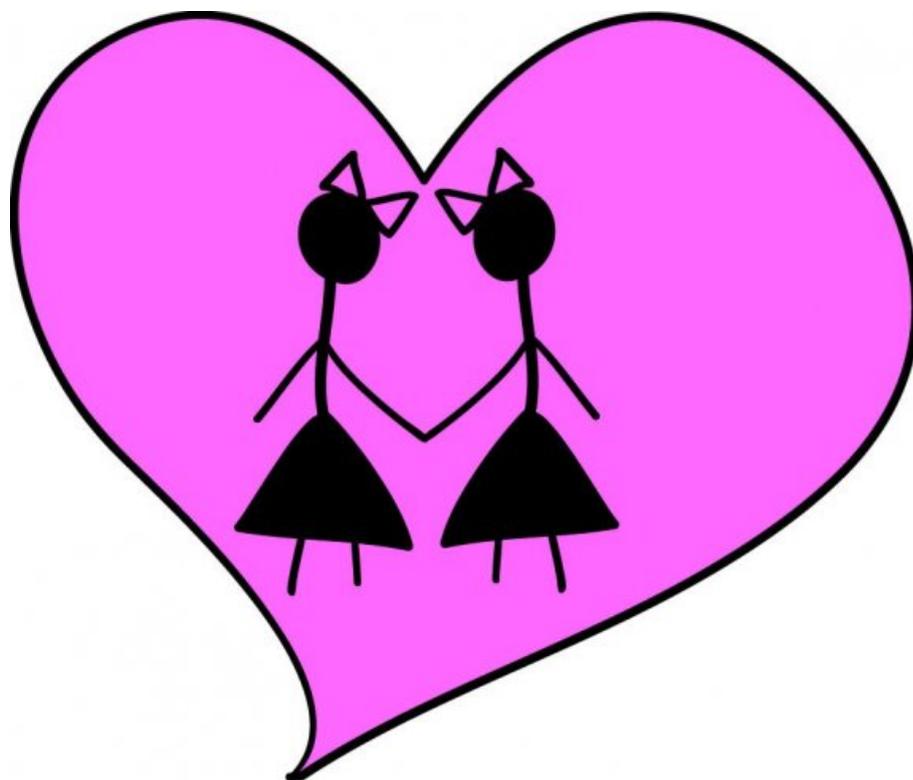
Self Abuse Hotline, Cutting and other self harming actions.
1-800-366-8288

Sexually Transmitted Diseases Hotline 1-800-227-8922



I want you to know that you are loved, just the way you are. Your family loves you, your real friends love you. As you meet new people they will love you too. Others will see how you shine and how strong and wonderful you are. **You are Loved!** Sometimes the family we are born into are not able to love us in a positive way. You may be a person who makes your own family out of new people you meet that love and support you the way you are.

Whatever your sexual orientation, you are important and YOU MATTER. Do not listen to people that say it is wrong to love another girl. You may also like girls and boys. Maybe you feel like a boy in a girls body. This is all just fine. It is part of you and you should be able to live unafraid of the prejudices others may harbor. Your skin color, race, culture, religion, place of birth, economic status or gender does not define you. Be strong and proud of who you are and show compassion for others so they may do the same.



I LOVE YOU

I Am More Than Just A Girl: Empowered. Informed. Equal.
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Leah is an artist, activist and community volunteer in Southern California. Her background includes work with foster and homeless youth, domestic violence, sexual assault and environmental protection.

Learn more at MoreThanaGirl.webs.com

Acknowledgment

Thank you to my family, friends, mentors, coworkers and co-volunteers. An extra special THANK YOU to my mother, older sisters and brother for teaching me so many life lessons and encouraging me to be intelligent and independent.

Love You, Mean It.

Dedicated to Faith, Justin, Isabel, DJ, Chance, Chloe, Lucas, Katika and all the amazing children I have met and will meet.

Purchase a copy of this book at www.Bookemon.com Discounts are available for educators.

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Did you know that you have the power to stand up and speak out on issues that affect you? You do! You are not “just a girl”, you have power to change how you and your friends are treated. You have power to change how the world treats you.

Do you deserve respect? Absolutely! Use the tools in this book to make informed decisions. Empower yourself to create and enforce a culture of equality for girls in every corner of the world. The choice is yours. Others may have power to punish or control you, but the choice to do something is always yours. You will never know until you try. Don't worry if your first attempts don't work out. Failure is as much a part of life as success.

