

# STAY AWAKE SELF-COMPASSION

## TRUE OR FACT?

You will be a crown of splendor in the Lord's hand.

**Isaiah 62:3 (NIV)**

### TRUTH: YOU ARE LOVED!

**Cindy Shanks** [Lancashire, United Kingdom]

**W**hen we are self-critical and insecure, we often have difficulty discerning what the truth is. What would God say to you in these times? Perhaps something like this:

*Dear \_\_\_\_\_,*

I created you. The truth is that in my eyes, you are precious beyond measure. You are unique—from your fingerprints to the number of hairs on your head. Your personality makes you an individual.

Magazines, TV, and social media try to sell us the “perfect image.” But you are more than a superficial photo. Lies taunt you, whispering that you are not good enough, that you are too short, too tall, too quiet, too loud—but this isn’t true. I didn’t create you to become a copy of someone else. Instead of comparison shopping, look within your heart for the truth: You are loved. You are precious to me. I have wonderful plans for you. <

*Love,  
God*

### **Journal:**

**Make a list of your positive qualities and God-given gifts. When you start to feel inadequate, read this list and remember that God loves YOU, not a copy of someone else.**

**Truth: You are a masterpiece.**

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HYPER CRITICAL

WEEKEND!

## 19 who tells you who you are?

### LISTEN TO THOSE WHO SEE GOOD IN YOU

As a teenager, I never thought I was good enough—not smart enough, cool enough, handsome enough, tall enough. People picked on me; but I did the worst damage to myself, beating myself up for every little mistake, bad grade, awkward exchange with a girl I liked, or feeling that I didn't fit in. Feeling shortchanged, I prayed that I would get all of the things I wanted to make me cooler—athletic ability, good looks, smarts.

A few months ago, I ran into a high school classmate who said he always thought I was a really nice and funny guy. I realized I had spent so much time being critical that I missed what was good about me. This encounter reminded me of Paul praying to be relieved of the thorn in his side, to which God replied, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Corinthians 12:9a, NIV). God loves me for who I am! I need to stop clobbering myself and listen to people who see things in me that I can't see. If you think you are not good enough, I pray you will discover that God's love is enough for you too.

**Joseph Greene** [Larchmont, New York]

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# STAY AWAKE SELF-COMPASSION



HYPER CRITICAL

WEEKEND!

## BE CAREFUL WHAT MESSAGES YOU LISTEN TO AND PASS ON

I grew up with someone who was very critical of her body. She constantly pointed out the flaws and everything she wanted to change. Those comments were frequently made in front of me, which skewed my perception of my own body. I began to see my body as the enemy, to see everything wrong with it, everything I wanted to change. That self-criticism led to an eating disorder that took years to defeat as I learned to see myself differently and found courage to speak God's truth into my life instead of lies (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

I have committed not to make self-destructive comments in front of others, especially my own children. I don't want to cause them to see their bodies as flawed but rather as a gift from God, a vessel to use to accomplish God's will. <

**Tynea Lewis** [New Holland, Pennsylvania]

## 20 NEXT DAY STRETCH

### LISTEN TO GOD'S VOICE

Stepping into high school propelled me into uncharted territory: dating. As freshman year faded into sophomore, I noticed that all of my friends had someone vying for their attention—and I didn't. I blamed myself for not having a relationship. In an attempt to impress others, I subjected every part of my personality and appearance to some major remodeling. Yet, again and again my efforts left me alone and empty.

Looking back, I realize that I had it all wrong. Psalm 139:14a (NIV) says, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made." How incredible is that? Each one of us is an irreplaceable and perfect gem handcrafted by our Maker. Now, every time I look in the mirror, I am amazed. God loves each one of the quirky characteristics that make me who I am, and for that I will praise my Creator.

The world has a million voices telling us who we are; but there is One who says, "You are altogether beautiful, my darling; there is no flaw in you" (Song of Songs 4:7, NIV).

**Whose voice will you listen to?**

**Holly Gaskill, 17** [Berne, Indiana]



Listen to "More Beautiful You" by  
Johnny Diaz at [devozinemag.org](http://devozinemag.org)

[www.devozine.org](http://www.devozine.org)

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