



On Butterfly Wings

Beautiful, Vibrant, Wonderful You



Objectification

Heather Embree

The other day I was sitting in the car with a dear friend of mine who is 13 years old. We were talking about things like spending time in the morning doing makeup and looking good for her friends. She said that she was bullied when she was younger and that people didn't like her, but now that she is dressing up there are a whole lot more people who are paying attention to her.

This deeply saddened me. I explained to my friend, in ways she could understand, that my experiences when I was 13 years old were similar to hers. I left my "unpopular" friends and joined the ranks of the popular girls based entirely on how I dressed and looked. I chose fashion magazines over hanging out in nature and by the time I was 15 years old, I was doing hair modelling and walking down runways and joining the local beauty pageant. It seemed like I was living the life that many teen girls would dream of. But it was actually a trap. Because in that world, you are judged on whether or not you have a pimple, if you've gained 5 extra pounds, or if your hair is cooperating that day.

I shared with her that over time, I lost myself. I didn't know who I was because no one really cared to ask about my feelings. I was wearing a façade which hid my deeper emotional pain. In the modelling world I was seen as beautiful, I was considered a somebody, even if that was a fake somebody. But there, I had no voice – I was just hired to be a pretty face. It became a lonely experience, too, because many people have certain perceptions of the "good-looking girls", as if they are flaky, airheads or they don't have any problems. There would be weird competition with other girls and hidden jealousies. Little did everyone know I was jealous of the girls who didn't care about their looks and instead did fun things like art and writing and enjoying each other's time together.

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I told my friend that though it may seem glamorous to be around other models, it was clear that their self-esteem was shaky, based entirely on whether they were good enough or pretty enough in someone else's eyes. A whole host of problems came in for these young women, including eating disorders, inappropriate comments, and feelings of worthlessness.

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I emphasized to her that there is a dark side to the fashion and beauty industry and that creates a hollow experience for most girls and women who are in it. It is a short-lived industry, one that leaves many psychological wounds on the models who either don't make it or have to retire when they're in their 20s. Many of the girls identify only with their bodies and haven't spent the time cultivating other aspects of themselves to know that they are loveable, intelligent and good people. So when they leave that world either by choice or being rejected, their tender hearts can be torn to pieces because they've based their whole identity on being seen as pretty. They become disconnected emotionally from themselves and others and can walk through life as a shell. Of course, there are wonderful cases where these girls would become strong women and they would make a difference in the world. And that is entirely possible, especially if they have the proper role models. However, often times girls who get into this industry will come from unstable homes or have parents who encourage them to be objectified.

When my 13-year-old friend and I finished our chat, her younger brother, in all of his infinite 7-year-old wisdom piped up from the back seat – "I don't care what people think of me or how I look – I just want to be ME." And I smiled, realizing that this is exactly the attitude we need in this world that wants us to believe that everything is about our exterior beauty. I do hope he holds onto that perspective as he grows older. Because as his older sister says "wouldn't he make a great boyfriend to someone someday?" Yes, he would. We need more boys and men to see girls and women this way. But mostly each girl and women needs to see herself as wonderful, talented, beautiful simply for existing, knowing that when high school ends there are great rewards for all the time and energy one takes to stay true to oneself because inner happiness lasts a lifetime.



image from <http://hersocialapp.tumblr.com> specifically [here](#).

What Would You Do?

Lisa Ivaldi

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I have a really big crush on one of my guy friends. He told me that I am one of his best friends and confided to me about some family problems he's been having. My friends tell me I should tell him how I feel but I don't want to ruin the friendship that we have. What should I do?

Kat says:

I've been in the same position many times. Do what your gut tells you. If you feel that you can't live without telling him and that he may feel the same way then tell him! But if you feel that it will ruin the friendship just leave it. If he feels the same way he may make a move or he may tell you how he feels. Personally, I usually tell boys how I feel because if you ask for what you want or say how you really feel the outcome may surprise you. If you really like him and want to be more than friends then tell him! If he's really your best friend then that shouldn't ruin the friendship. It may be awkward at first if he doesn't feel the same way or even if he does but at least you said what you needed to say. Just go for what feels right, you never know what could happen! Also, don't let your friends pressure you into doing something you will regret or that you don't want to do! Good luck and I hope it all works out!

Mom says:

Sometimes Kat and I have different takes on things, but not this time. I agree with what she said. I will add – and this comes from personal experience – that many times you think you know what a situation is or how a person feels but you really do not have a clear picture. He may be thinking the same thing about you. The only way to find out is put your cards on the table. That said, you have to be prepared to deal with the answer no matter what it is. Also, keep in mind that sometimes crushes don't last very long. I know Kat is still good friends with some of the boys she had big crushes on over the years. Like Kat said, do what feels right for you.

Have a question for Lisa and Kat? Email us (butterflies@onethousandtrees.com) or tweet us (@obwofficial) and your answer may show up in the next issue of OBW!

Lisa Ivaldi is a writer and the mother of a teenage girl. You can follow her blog at www.InsightClarityGrowth.com. Kat is her teenage daughter.





I have a lot of passionate opinions about self-esteem and body image. I've struggled with it my whole life (I know, clichéd much?) and I still do. Bathing suit shopping? It is literally my nightmare come to life. But rather than tell you about my struggle (but go ahead and ask, my Twitter handle's totally in the "Who We Are" section) I'm going to ask you to do A Thing.

This thing is going to seem ridiculous. It's going to seem useless and stupid and like literally the most time consuming, impractical thing to do with a flat surface and post-its. So I'm asking you to hang in there, because there will likely come a day where you will need The Thing.

I want you to build a self-esteem board.

Here's what you need:

- A writing utensil. Or plural. Go ahead and get yourself a box of 100 crayons if you'd like.
- Paper. I'm going to suggest post its in as many colours as you can get your hands on, but something to use that writing utensil on will do.
- Magazines (optional). Make sure you double check with their 'real' owner because you're going to destroy them. This is one of those situations where you ask permission, rather than beg forgiveness.
- Scissors, which you will really only need if you're not using post its and if you are using magazines.
- An adhesive. Glue, tape, gum. Again, like with the scissors, only if the situation calls for it. Also? I'm kidding about the gum, that's disgusting
- Wallpaper/wrapping paper/scrapbook paper for optional gorgeous and stunning background.
- A flat surface. The wall, a corkboard, white board, chalkboard, Bristol board, chart paper, get creative. If you're just going to use something like your bedroom wall, I'd suggest sticking mostly to the post its unless you're using either painter's tape (which doesn't hold weight very well) or sticky tack, which can also damage the paint.

What to do:

Get on Google, grab your favourite books, destroy those magazines. Find things that make you feel good about yourself. Did you take an amazing Instagram selfie last week? Print that off. Regular white paper'll do it, or you can take it to most photo places these days. What about that awesome meme you saw on Tumblr last week? Print it off too. Cut out pictures of people you find inspiring, write down your favourite things about yourself on those post its and stick 'em to that flat surface. **No negativity!**

Hang it up where you can see it. That part's pretty important. Because one day, probably one day someday soon, you're going to get up and you're not going to like something about yourself. Maybe you're not going to like anything about yourself, though I sincerely hope all of you only go through the former. On those days, get up (because there are days even that will seem like a monumental effort) and take a look at that board. Remind yourself of why you are the most awesome person you know.

And if you need extra encouragement, take those post its to school and ask your friends what their favourite thing about you is. Pull aside your favourite teacher and ask them to write down their favourite mantra (my fave is Eleanor Roosevelt's "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."). When you get home, stick those things to that wall or board or whatever you've used and remember that there are people out there who like you, who need you, and who think you're the coolest person they've ever met.

Even if, temporarily, you don't agree with them.



Who We Are



Emily Savage

Managing Editor

Emily is a university graduate still looking for her place in the universe. She is also apparently a fan of dating cliches and romantic turns of phrase. She's been writing for more years than she'd like to count. You can follow her on Twitter (@esavage3) where she mostly posts about her love affair with books.

Heather Embree

Articles Editor

Heather is a metaphysical healer and soul intuitive practitioner in Guelph, Ontario. She has been a regular writer and editor of various genres over the past 15 years, as well as a human and earth rights activist. For more information visit www.blossomingheart.ca.



Lisa Browning

Publisher

Lisa is the publisher of One Thousand Trees, a monthly online magazine devoted to facilitating wellness through connection, creativity and community service. She also offers writing, editing, and publishing/pre-press services, and has recently launched a children's book division called Saplings. She is inspired to make a difference in this world, and to help others realize their passion and their gifts. For more information visit www.onethousandtrees.com.

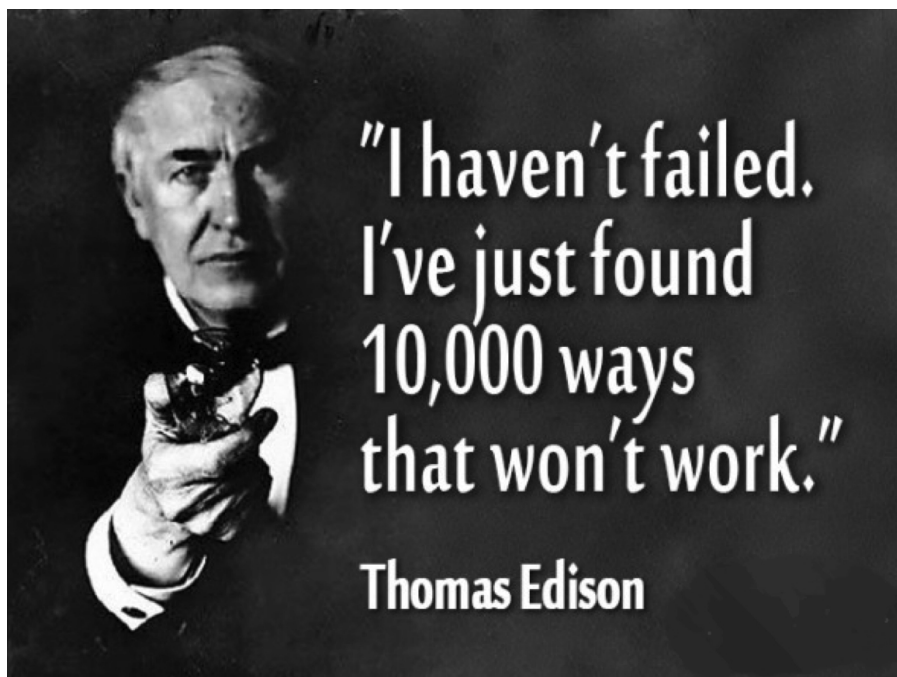


Lisa Ivaldi

Q&A: What Would You Do?

Lisa Ivaldi is a writer and the mother of a teenage girl. You can follow her blog at www.InsightClarityGrowth.com. Kat is her teenage daughter.





"I haven't failed.
I've just found
10,000 ways
that won't work."

Thomas Edison

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Next Issue

Learning

So many different things, so many different ways! We're celebrating the start of a new education year by looking at all of the different ways and things we learn.

Submit your stories to the e-mail in our submission guidelines (below)!

What Would You Do?

Is there something in your life that's been nagging you for a while but you're not quite sure who to talk to?

In each issue we'll be submitting your questions to our mother/daughter team to answer.

Submit your questions to:
butterflies@onethousandtrees.com or
@obwofficial



Submission Guidelines

Are you Artistic?

Do you have an interest in writing?

Do you want to make the most of your life?

"On Butterfly Wings" is a newsletter for girls. We are always looking for artistic submissions from our readers expressing the issues that girls go through. Our vision is to empower girls to become strong and confident, and to create a safe place where they feel free to express themselves.

Submit your art, your poetry, your writing by emailing your work to butterflies@onethousandtrees.com

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Access your copy at www.ottbookstore.com.