

## 2 Speak Well

“Fatso.” “Blimp.” “You’re ugly.” “You’ll never be pretty.” “No one wants to be seen with you.” “How can God even love you?”

You would *never* say these horrible things to a friend, but chances are, you trash-talk yourself. Between your pierced ears, your mind entertains lies of your beauty and worth, or lack thereof. Satan tempts you to lie to yourself; sadly, unless you resist him, he’ll con you. You’ll believe the lies and tear yourself to pieces as a wolf rips apart sheep.

I know I have. My mom has too.

So have the women who’ve attended my Inside Out Beauty workshops. In fact I’ve never met a woman so comfortable in her skin that she accepts herself just as she is. Yet God accepts her. God accepts you.

To the question “What’s one thing you’d like to change about your body,” she anonymously wrote: “Everything.”

I hurt for her. Chances are her eyes twinkled, or her eyebrows arched lovely, or her skin pinked healthy or something, anything. I suspect she trash-talked to herself. What about you? Why do you call yourself names?

How can you stop?

What replaces these ugly names?

These are the questions to ponder in this chapter as you discover how to quit trash-talking and befriend food.

## Why Do You Call Yourself Names?

Trash-talking begins young, on playgrounds, in tree forts and especially on school buses. Each morning, kids enter a war zone where grenades of hateful words and devious comebacks fling back and forth.

The other day my junior higher told me a guy on the bus called her a fag and me a whore. Where did *that* come from? Do his parents rail on him? Was he trying to look tough? Be a macho “man”?

All I know is it bothered my daughter. . .and she *knows* his words spoke lies. This is the same beautiful girl who wonders if she’s fat. She’s not. When pimples pop up like unwanted guests, she furrows her brows and asks, “Mom, do you still think I’m pretty?”

“Yes, honey,” I reply. “You are beautiful on the inside and the outside.”

Compared to buses, some homes stink worse than a diaper pail. A father calls a son “failure. You’ll never amount to anything.” He looks at his daughter. “You call that a report card! Why do I even send you to school?”

Do you remember the first time someone called you a name?

It hurt.

You may have not believed the lie the first time. . .but over time, as one name piled on another, as pretty faces smirked at you from magazine covers, you may have unwittingly embraced the lies and repeated them.

You joined the chorus of ugly voices, and you didn’t even audition.

## How Can You Stop?

To stop ugly self-talk, you need to do three things: Recognize the lies, identify your triggers and replace them with something very, very good.

Recognizing the lies isn't as easy as it sounds. If you've accepted them and repeated them to yourself, they may appear truthful. Don't be duped. Line up what you say to yourself with God's truth.

A helpful Bible verse: "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable – if anything is excellent or praiseworthy – think about such things."

*(Philippians 4:8)*

Another is, "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful. I know that full well." *(Psalm 139: 14)*

As an example, let's take a common lie women struggle with: "I'm ugly." Ask, Is this true according to God? Really think about it. Would God say, "Lucy, you are ugly. Eeeww." Down deep you know he'd never say this because God is love and all his works are wonderful. Including me. Including you.

Try it with another lie, such as "No one wants to be around me because I'm overweight." Would God agree? No. God is in you; clearly he wants to be near *(Colossians 1:27)*. And consider Oprah. This mega-star has gone up and down in weight her whole life, and everyone wants to get on her show, be seen with her, watch her in person, share an elevator, anything.

You're probably thinking, "Well, I'm no Oprah." Bingo! You are uniquely the woman God made you: hair texture, eye color, height, general body shape, and skin tone, and God loves this about you. Even better, he loves you just as you are.

You can stand against your triggers in his strength. Look over your *Food as True Friend* Food Diary, page 20. Note patterns. For instance, you may link loneliness or anger with overeating or with choosing unhealthy foods like potato chips. Do you eat more on the weekends, at get-togethers, while drinking alcohol? These are other clues to your triggers.

Choose to handle negative emotions before they side-swipe your desire to befriend food. Phone or text a friend when lonely. Pour out your heart to God when angry; he'll guide your next steps. Plan ahead on how to handle triggers like get-togethers. Examples: Eat only veggies as appetizers, limit yourself to one serving of the main dish, pass on butter, drink club soda in place of Coke. You get the idea.

### **What Replaces the Ugly Names?**

In a word, truth. To help you put this in practice, follow this short exercise.

Write an ugly name or phrase you call yourself. \_\_\_\_\_

Cross it out. Now, write a new *true* phrase about your identity from Scripture, something like "I am God's child" or "I have great worth in God's eyes because Christ died for me." Memorize this phrase.

Agree with God that every time you repeat a lie (i.e., I'm ugly), you will speak the truth about you and God (i.e., I am a daughter of the King).

Don't get down if tossing out trash-talk is tough. It has become a habit. Ask God to give you the strength to establish a godly habit in its place. I am fully confident he will do this because it's his will.

*Heavenly Father, I praise you. You are love. You want me to experience abundant life in your Son Jesus. Give me the desire and the strength to stop my bad habit of negative self-talk and begin a godly habit of speaking your truth to my soul. I can barely wait to see what this change will make in me. In His name. Amen.*

### *Refection Moment*

1. What names were you called in childhood?
2. Did your mom or dad or another important adult in your life also call you names? How did you feel?
3. How is negative self talk related to the concept of self worth?
4. How can negative self talk prompt you to overeat or make poor food choices?
5. What phrase have you chosen to use in place of the names you call yourself?

### *A Food-Friendly Step*

On a sheet of paper, make two columns. Label the first: The Lie. Label the second, The Truth. Over three days, write down the lies you

say to yourself in “The Lie” column. Then write a biblical truth that counters the lie in “The Truth” column. Ask God to help you exchange the lies for the truth.

### *Soul Speak*

Memorize John 3:32 and meditate (think) on it.

“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”