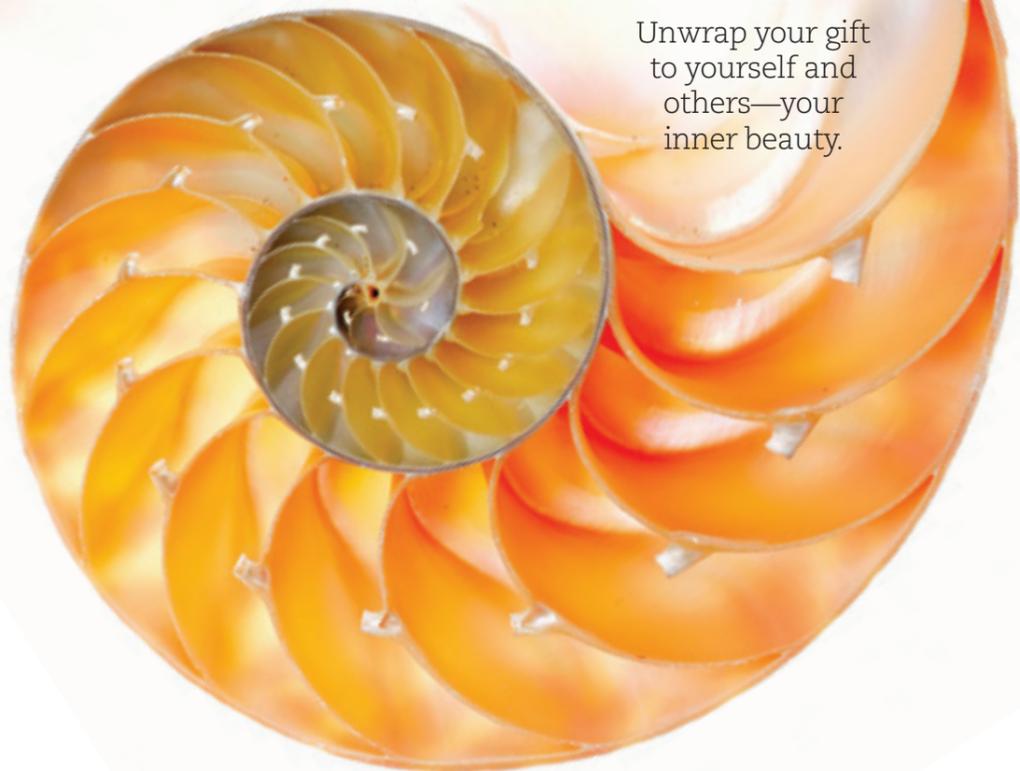




# True Beauty Lies Within

Unwrap your gift to yourself and others—your inner beauty.



**W**elcome to a surprise celebration. What I love the most about this type of celebration is that the special occasion is you!

It is so easy, now more than ever, to compare ourselves to others through the images and messages coming at us in a constant stream of media. This has a major effect on how we feel about and view ourselves. Much of what you see in mainstream media are unrealistic expectations about beauty—but

somehow everyone seems to accept it as

real and strive for it. I want our young women to be encouraged by their inner beauty and celebrate it proudly.

When I speak about beauty, I am not talking about facial features and body types. I am speaking of enduring beauty: inner beauty. I have worked with teen girls for more than 10 years, and their greatest complaint about how they feel about themselves is, "I am too...short, skinny, dark, chubby, (fill in the blank)." Many girls have conformed to a poor mindset about what it is to be beautiful. They don't understand that what seems different and awkward to them is what

makes them special to others. In my program, *Crowning Daughters for Success*, the most popular awards are given for character, academic achievement and appreciation, but never looks. These are all awards that recognize what truly makes someone beautiful.

### CELEBRATE SELF-LOVE

Our inward qualities bring out the best in all of us. It is imperative that young women understand and embrace the total essence of who they are. When you establish unconditional self-love and value yourself, other relationships will benefit. A

lot of people wait for a certain day, achievement or event to celebrate. I believe women can celebrate being themselves daily by sharing their inner gifts of love, service and compassion with others.

What exactly does it mean to value yourself? Does it mean you think you are better

*“Valuing yourself is equivalent to the Golden Rule.”*

than everyone else? Does it mean you think that you know it all? Absolutely not! To value yourself is the most crucial aspect of your life. It is about appreciating yourself enough to make healthy decisions, take care of your well-being and filter that love to others. We can't expect anyone to love and respect us if we have not made that our No. 1 rule for ourselves. It's equivalent to the Golden Rule: Treat others how you want to be treated. I've noticed that most bullies are not evil people; they are people who do not value themselves, so they do not see value in other people.

### CELEBRATE EACH DAY

Here are my inner beauty tips to assist you in your daily celebration:

- Look at inner beauty as if it is a gift. When someone gives you a beautiful box dressed up in colorful wrappings, you admire the shiny ribbon but you want the gift. This is the exact same way you should think of yourself. Be that fab girl you are but don't miss the gift that abides within.

- Inner beauty is the best form of attractiveness because it causes people to connect with you authentically. When people connect with you because of what you have or the way you look, it is easy for that person to push you aside for someone they feel looks better or has more.

- Self-love is not solely about you. It is about building a healthy awareness, love

and appreciation about yourself so that you can treat others the right way—and signal to others the way you want to be treated.

Your outward gift wrapping may not look like everybody else's wrapping. Your wrapping may be a different color, shape or size. The present is inside of you: Your personality, character, standards and values are a gift to yourself and others. The image

and the way we present ourselves is important because it results in a good or poor impression of our total selves. However, the image, or the wrapping, cannot assist when someone needs encouraging words, a helping hand or a good friend.

### THE INNER BEAUTY CHALLENGE

I challenge *eBella* readers to the *Crowning Daughters for Success* Inner Beauty Challenge. All you need is a notebook or journal. Each day, write about how you dressed your inner beauty. For example: I dressed my inner beauty today by caring for my grandmother who was sick. Email some of your journal writings to [editor@ebella.com](mailto:editor@ebella.com). Let the celebration—and challenge—begin! ✨

*TaSheekia Perry is the founder of Crowning Daughters for Success. For 10 years, she has used multiple platforms and venues to motivate, equip and liberate young girls and women.*

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