

me, myself,  
& lies  
for young women

JENNIFER ROTHSCHILD



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS  
EUGENE, OREGON

All Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Verses marked NASB are taken from the New American Standard Bible®, © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission. (www.Lockman.org)

Verses marked NLT are taken from the *Holy Bible*, New Living Translation, copyright ©1996, 2004, 2007, 2013 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

Verses marked NKJV are taken from the New King James Version®. Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Verses marked MSG are taken from THE MESSAGE. Copyright © by Eugene H. Peterson 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.

Verses marked KJV are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

Cover design by Rightly Designed

Cover Image © nikiteev / Adobe Stock Images

## **ME, MYSELF, AND LIES FOR YOUNG WOMEN**

Copyright © 2017 Jennifer Rothschild

Published by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97402

[www.harvesthousepublishers.com](http://www.harvesthousepublishers.com)

ISBN 978-0-7369-6421-0 (pbk.)

ISBN 978-0-7369-6422-7 (eBook)

**All rights reserved.** No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, digital, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

**Printed in the United States of America.**

17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 / BP-KBD / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# Contents

---

## **Part 1—Talking Truth to Yourself**

- 1. Go Through Your Closet . . . . . 9
- 2. Keep or Toss? . . . . . 23
- 3. Perfectly Imperfect. . . . . 39
- 4. Tune In . . . . . 55

## **Part 2 —Seven Must-Have Pieces for Your Thought Closet**

- 5. Piece #1: Daily Maintenance . . . . . 73
- 6. Piece #2: Hope . . . . . 89
- 7. Piece #3: Water . . . . . 105
- 8. Piece #4: Memory . . . . . 121
- 9. Piece #5: Chill . . . . . 137
- 10. Piece #6: Perseverance . . . . . 155
- 11. Piece #7: Heart . . . . . 169
- An Invite . . . . . 181



Part 1

# TALKING TRUTH TO YOURSELF

Let's get real here—right from the start! Have you ever talked to yourself? Either out loud or just in your mind? (You know, that little voice in your head that whispers questions and doubts and random ideas?) It's okay to go ahead and admit it, because we all talk to ourselves. The thing is, talking to ourselves is so natural that we usually don't even think about it. And because we don't think about it, we don't take time to think about what exactly we're saying to ourselves.

I have a name for this kind of talking to yourself: *soul talk*.

I like to call it this because the soul is that inner part of you that makes you, *you*. It's the deepest part of who you are. It's what makes you unique and special and different from everyone else. Your soul is also what connects you to God.

Soul talk can be a really great thing. But it can also be very negative and damaging if we don't stop to consider whether the things we're telling ourselves are even true. And that's a huge problem because a lot of what we tell ourselves is actually false. Of course we don't set out to tell ourselves lies, but every day we take in tons of messages from the world around us that make us start doubting our own value...and then we lie to ourselves about who we are. And even worse, we believe them.

If we start believing these lies, our lives can get kind of messed up. But if whatever we tell ourselves is real and true—if our soul talk consists of words of truth that line up with what God's Word says—we experience joy and encouragement and hope and peace and a lot of other good things.

Our soul talk is incredibly powerful! Whatever we tell ourselves goes straight to our hearts and our minds. Those words—even if they aren't true—shape the way we think about ourselves. They influence our emotions, our thoughts, and our decisions. They affect our relationships with other people. They can make a big difference in every part of our lives—family, friends, school, activities, church...even our hobbies and interests.

When it comes to your mind and your heart, though, there's no room for lies. You only want truth there! And that's what we're going to discover together—some awesome ways to make sure the words you're telling yourself are words of truth that God Himself would also say to you.

Things like...

*You matter.*

*You are special.*

*You're the beautiful girl God created!*

You know, the truth!





# GO THROUGH YOUR CLOSET

Haley pulled her favorite purple T-shirt over her head and slipped into a well-worn pair of jeans. But when she looked in the mirror, she noticed that the shirt had a toothpaste stain right in the front, and the jeans... Well, most girls weren't wearing that style anymore—but they were so comfortable!

She was going to be late for school if she didn't change quickly, but Haley couldn't find anything in her closet she wanted to wear. The last time she'd worn a dress, a few kids had made fun of her—even though it was a simple T-shirt dress—and told her she looked too dressed up. Her other shirts seemed too bright and colorful. Neutrals were the thing now at her school. And she couldn't find another clean pair of jeans.

*All my stuff is wrong, Haley thought.  
And nothing looks good on me anyway.  
How could it? I'm just not as pretty as the other girls.  
Come to think of it, I'm not as smart either.  
Or as talented. Or as popular.  
I'll never measure up!*



Have you ever had a getting-ready-for-school morning like Haley's? Have you ever stood in front of a mirror and told yourself all the specific ways you don't measure up? And then maybe you picked up your phone and started scrolling through Instagram or Tumblr and started comparing yourself—your unfiltered, no-makeup, dirty T-shirt self—to the seemingly perfect images captured on camera (which, by the way, are filtered and fully edited pictures of women who are completely made up). Those pictures can make us crazy with the standards they set for us.

And that can happen even when you're just talking to the self you see in the mirror. This craziness gets even worse when you throw in the things other people are saying about you—or the things you *think* they might be saying! Believe me, sometimes—a lot of the time—we misread a situation. We see someone whispering to someone else, and when they glance our way we think, *It's obvious they're talking about me*. Or we read something online and guess, *This is totally referring to me*.

Guess what? More untruths.

Yep. More lies.

More stuff we need to clean out of our thought closets.

Because you know what the truth really is? You *do* measure up. You *are* talented. And pretty. And smart. And even if you're not popular, you're still nice. And kind. And so many other good—and true—things!

## Struggle

When I was a little girl, I felt like no matter what I did or how hard I tried, it just wasn't good enough. I was a *complete* perfectionist—and I was painfully self-aware. I was always wondering what people were thinking or saying about me. So many

times, all of my “I’m-not-good-enough” thoughts washed over me like a waterfall. That can make life really hard for someone who wants to please others and do everything right and make everyone happy.

When I became a teenager, I changed a lot—and that’s totally normal. The words I was regularly telling myself also changed. They got worse!

I actually started calling myself names when I didn’t measure up or when I made mistakes or when—in my mind—I said or did or even wore the wrong thing.

When I was 15—you know, the year before I was supposed to get my driver’s license—I became legally blind due to a disease called retinitis pigmentosa. Even though I received that difficult news with grace and resolve (God alone made that possible!), this new development in my life opened the door for even more negative thoughts and confidence-destroying self-talk.

*I’m never going to be independent.*

*I am so awkward.*

*People are staring at me.*

*Gays will never want to date me.*

And statements like those just went on and on. Forget that waterfall of negativity washing over me! Now I was swimming in an *ocean* of self-criticism! I felt frustrated. I lacked confidence. And I struggled with insecurity.

But I didn’t spend all of my teen years unhappy or depressed or miserable. On most days, I felt just fine. I was active and involved and had friends. I even eventually met a great guy and got married and had kids and a career and all that amazing stuff.

But until I sorted through the closet of my mind and tossed out everything that didn’t fit or wasn’t flattering—the destructive self-talk, the lies, the thoughts that weren’t really helpful—I was never totally free to live my life the way God wanted me to live

it or to experience the joy He wanted me to experience. I also wasn't really able to be *me*.

Because here's the truth: *What you think and say to yourself will impact the texture, color, and music of your life.*

The things you say to yourself—about yourself—will shape the life you live by shaping your friendships. Your use of your gifts and talents. Your studies. Your interests and pursuits. Your walk with God. Your relationships with your family. Even your future!

Words are extremely powerful—even (and maybe especially) the ones you speak to yourself.

That's why we're going to dive headfirst into this crazy-sounding business of talking to yourself. Because soul talk really does make a difference in your life.

When you speak truth to your soul—to the inner you—that's when you become the girl God wants you to be. That's when you become more comfortable in your own skin. That's when you're able to reach out to others and live an amazing life of confidence and grace and truth and beauty.

## Fill Your Closet with Truth

There are good ways to start your day.

- Waking up as soon as your alarm goes off.
- Having your clothes picked out the night before so you don't waste time figuring out what to wear.
- Placing your backpack or school bag right by the front door, loaded up and ready to go, and knowing that you completed your homework and studied for the day's tests or quizzes.
- Spending a few minutes getting ready for your day by reading a devotional or your Bible.
- Eating a healthy breakfast that will give you energy and make you feel good.

And then there are bad ways to start your day.

- Sleeping through your alarm.
- Digging through your dirty clothes basket for something—*anything!*—to wear because nothing in your closet seems right.
- Realizing you totally forgot to do your math homework—and having no clue where your math book even is.
- Checking your Instagram instead of talking to God.
- Skipping breakfast and realizing your stomach is going to growl and you're going to have a headache until the bell rings for lunch.

Can you guess which scenario leads to more awful self-talk, *what's wrong with me* thoughts, and feelings of insecurity?

Yep, it's the second scenario, that picture of total unpreparedness!

When you don't take the time to get ready ahead of time and do the things you need to do, you can be in for a rough day.

It's the same way with your thoughts. When you don't prepare the closet of your mind by filling it with truth, it fills up with negative thoughts, feelings of insecurity, lies, and confusing ideas. And when you're feeling down, it's easy to grab those junky feelings and beliefs...

*Everyone is always judging me.*

*I'm literally not going to be able to get through this day.*

*My life is just a mess...and it's not getting better.*

Yet none of those thoughts are even remotely true—and the accompanying feelings are never helpful!

Why is it so important to clean out your thought closet regularly?

*Because if you don't control your thoughts, your thoughts will control you. And they'll control every single part of your day.*

That's why you need to constantly monitor the feed of your own self-talk. That's why you need to keep scrolling through the words you're telling yourself. That's why you need to delete the negative blog posts and replace them with positive ones.

## Truth

Okay, by now you've probably admitted that you talk to yourself. And you might be the kind of girl who has a full-blown conversation with yourself right out loud. Or maybe you're more the say-it-under-your-breath type. But you do have those talks with yourself, right? We all do!

If you want to have the right kinds of things in your thought closet—if you want to fill those shelves and bins and hangers with gorgeous pieces that will always look and feel fabulous on you—you need to tell yourself the right kinds of things.

My favorite place to shop for those right kinds of things is the Bible. And telling myself the truths I've found in the pages of Scripture has turned my thought closet from a hot mess of items that don't fit right and will never look good on me to a picture-perfect display of gorgeous colors and styles that are just right for me.

Now, you'll find almost as many kinds of closets and preferences and styles and organizing techniques as you'll find people on this planet. And you'll also find all kinds of self-talk—both good and bad. Because the pages of the Bible are filled with real flesh-and-blood people, you'll see it there too. But did those people in the Bible talk to themselves like we do today? Did they experience fear and frustration and insecurity and doubt? You bet they did! Some of them were even recorded having conversations with themselves. Keep reading and you'll see!

## Wise Words

It's interesting to read some of the words people stored in their thought closets long ago. Here's a sampling of wise words that filled the closets of people way back in Bible times:

- "Awake, my soul!" (Psalm 57:8).
- "My soul...put your hope in God" (Psalms 42:5,11; 43:5).
- "I have calmed and quieted my soul" (Psalm 131:2 NKJV).
- "O my soul...forget not all His benefits" (Psalm 103:2 NKJV).
- "Return to your rest, O my soul" (Psalm 116:7 NKJV).
- "O my soul, march on in strength!" (Judges 5:21).
- "Praise the LORD, O my soul" (Psalm 146:1 NKJV).

In modern-day language, these seven soul-talk statements might sound a little like this...

*Tune in.*

*Look up.*

*Calm down.*

*Look back.*

*Chill out.*

*Press on.*

*Lift up.*

Unlike our friends in the Bible, we don't usually make "O my soul" pronouncements aloud when we talk to ourselves. (That would be kind of weird if we did!) But we use silent words—a *lot* of silent words. Science proves it.

Psychologists and neuroscientists have discovered that everybody has a stream of self-talk that consists of between 150 and 300 words a minute. That's a lot of talking! In fact, that adds up to 45,000 to 51,000 thoughts each day. Most of these thoughts are the not-that-thrilling variety, like *Where did I leave my flip-flops?* or *What chapter of this book am I on?*

But another small yet powerful percentage of this self-talk is way more intense. These are thoughts that can be true or untrue. Helpful or unhelpful. Right or wrong. And they're about things that matter a whole lot more than where we put our flip-flops. I'm talking about the words we tell ourselves about who we are. About how much we matter. About what we think of ourselves. These are the words that directly affect how we live our lives.

Every day, we fill the closets of our minds one thought at a time, one silent word at a time, one comment at a time. Those powerful, life-changing thoughts and words and comments stay in our closets, and they're stored there for us to grab today or tomorrow or a year from now. Whenever we grab them and put them on, they influence both our feelings and our actions. The reality is this: Once in the closet, forever in the closet.

Unless we intentionally clean out that closet and replace less-than-helpful ideas and flat-out ugly lies with new words. Words of beauty. Words of encouragement. Words of truth.

By now you would probably agree that our words are powerful. Especially the words we say to ourselves. That's why we need to take a peek into the closets of our minds and see what's filling those shelves and bins and hangers.



And if your closet is a total disaster, don't worry about it. We can work with that!

## Crammed

Have you ever cleaned out your closet to get ready for a new season? You know, like packing away your winter clothes to make room for the spring and summer stuff. (Yay!) Or getting rid of things you've outgrown so you can fit your new back-to-school clothes in your closet. Whenever you do this, you probably discover a lot of things you're not totally in love with—and even some things that you've never, ever worn!

I remember going through my clothes one time after I moved and promising myself I would never again buy clothes I wasn't totally in love with just because they were on sale. I have this weird thing where I feel strangely attached to the stuff I buy, even though I might never wear it, just because it's *mine*. (Fuchsia and orange flowered pants, I'm talking about you!) I figure that once something is in my closet, it's forever in my life.

Our thought closets? Same. They're crammed with everything we've stuffed in them over the years. Some of it is cute and classy. But lots of it is ugly and unflattering. And because the items—the thoughts and words and comments—are *ours*, we can have a hard time getting rid of them.

Smart shoppers fill their closets with good pieces—clothes that fit well, are flattering, and will be worn again and again because they're cute and comfy and classic. We need to be smart shoppers when it comes to our thoughts. We need to choose wisely the things we say to our souls because all our self-talk gets shoved into the closet and stays there until we recall it. We need to speak truth to our souls so that it's truth that gets stored away and recalled. And truth always feels good and is in style! It's a wardrobe must-have!

## *Wardrobe Must-Haves*

---

What are the top ten items—clothes or accessories or both—on your wish list? These could be things you want for your birthday or Christmas or your back-to-school wardrobe. Write them down here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Now, create a top ten list of true statements to and about yourself that you'd like to place in your thought closet. Or maybe it's easier to imagine some compliments you would love for someone to say to you. Either way, write down those encouraging truths right here:

- 1.
- 2.

- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.



Why did I want you to make that list? I'll explain.

When you're super busy with school and friends and activities, it's easy to forget things, isn't it? Things like homework. Or chores. Or taking your vitamins or putting in your retainer at night.

We forget the simplest things when we're busy, but when we're getting into our thought closets and sifting through what's in there, our minds are like steel traps. Nothing has been forgotten or misplaced. We have the unfortunate ability to remember all the wrong things at all the wrong times. Like a GPS, we can locate just the right memory of failure, the perfect insecurity, or the timeliest untruth—just when we *don't* need it most!

That's why we need to peek into the crammed closets of our minds and go through what's hanging and stuffed in there. As you sort through the contents, take the time to ask yourself a few questions about the specific thoughts and words and comments you find stored in your closet:

- *Do these thoughts and words and comments fill me with truth?*
- *Will the things stored in my closet help me live the life I want to live and be the person I want to be?*

If your answer to either of these questions is *no*, don't stress. Together, we're going to sort through your stuff and give away the negative so you'll have a whole wardrobe of the positive.

## Sort Through It

We've admitted that we talk to ourselves. And we've learned that some of the things we tell ourselves aren't very helpful. So the next thing we need to do is sort through all the thoughts and words and comments we already have stored in our minds. If something isn't a good fit, we can get rid of it. If something doesn't look good on us, we can toss it out. If something is stained or ripped or ruined, we can throw it away. We're only going to keep the good stuff.

And after we've gotten rid of the stuff we'll never wear, we're going to update our wardrobes. We're going to fill our closets with timely, attractive truths with which we can clothe ourselves—fashionable, well-fitting, freeing, and fabulous truths.

Romans 12:2 says, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”

The key word there is “renewing.” And what's in the middle of that word? *New*. Instead of choosing our thoughts from a closet full of too-small, worn-out, not-in-style pieces, we're going to be choosing from an amazing selection of fits-just-right, classic, encouraging, joyful messages.

Girlfriend, you are a reflection of the way you think. Wise King Solomon put it this way: “As he thinks within himself, so

he is” (Proverbs 23:7 NASB). Whatever you hang in your closet is what you will wear every day. It’s what other people will see on you. It’s often the first impression you make on others. And it’s what you see in the mirror when you look at yourself.

Your soul talk will affect who you are.

Because your thoughts have such a major influence on your life, you can learn to control them—and sometimes change them—with some truthful soul talk. When you start thinking things that are true, you’ll start believing them. When you stand in front of a mirror, you’ll look at yourself with joy and contentment and a new amount of confidence. You’ll be much more accepting of that girl who’s staring back at you—that girl who is going to head for school or sports practice or play rehearsal with a light heart and a genuine smile. You’ll be ready for whatever comes your way as you learn and grow and become the girl God created you to be.

If you keep a journal, this exercise makes for a great entry. You can look at the words from your thought closet and ask yourself, *Are these words I want to keep in my closet? Do I want to save them, or would it be better to let them go?* If you don’t keep a journal, now would be a terrific time to start. You can write down all you’re learning about yourself and about God, and you can start separating the truth from the lies.

When you say words of truth to yourself, you start living out that truth. Seriously! It really does work that way. So start speaking to yourself words of kindness. Words of truth that reflect who you really are. Words that make you feel just plain good about yourself and about the people around you. Words that affirm that you’re God’s much-loved daughter who’s in the middle of a major thought-closet makeover!

## **THINGS TO THINK ABOUT**

- If you made a playlist of things you say to yourself, what would it sound like? Would the tone be upbeat? Sad? Angry? Something else? Or a combination? Why?
- Using terms you would use for clothes, describe the thoughts, words, and comments that are hanging in the closet of your mind. Also, are those thoughts, words, and comments giving you what you need to live the kind of life you want to live? Explain.
- What do you think God says in His Word about talking to yourself? We'll learn more about this later, but for now write down anything you can think of.