

Are You a Compliment-Killer?

You'd think that we girls—girls who want others to think we're beautiful—would be thrilled to hear a compliment, especially from a member of the opposite sex! We are thrilled, aren't we? But in one of the great upside-down mysteries of life, girls have a really hard time accepting compliments. In fact, we are notorious compliment killers.

With sniper-like skill, we assassinate compliments from guys, girls, parents, teachers, grocery clerks, internet friends and random people on the street. No compliment is safe from our calculated prowess.

It's true, isn't it? When someone tells us that we look nice, did well on a test or have a beautiful personality, we think of all manner of comebacks to dodge, down or deflect their words. So what is the right response? I mean, if we don't want to appear prideful, or maybe we really don't think that we're _____ (pretty, smart, funny and so on), what can we say?

How to Accept a Compliment

I do think there's a way to respond to a compliment that will show we are 1) confident in who God says we are and 2) humble. I once saw a perfect example of it at one of my favorite eateries.

At the table next to me, a mom and daughter were enjoying breakfast together, lost in conversation. As they were talking, a young man walked over and said to the daughter, "I'm sorry to interrupt you while you're eating, but I just wanted to tell you that I think you're incredibly beautiful."

I held my breath. How would she respond? He was definitely right. The girl he was admiring was beautiful, with caramel-brown skin, big brown eyes, and a head of curly, honey-highlighted hair. But would she see it? Would she tell him he

was crazy or ask if he needed glasses? I was overcome with relief when I heard her words: "Thank you."

Her simple response was exactly right. They exchanged names and a handshake, and then her admirer left the table with a simple, "Have a nice day."

I can pretty much guarantee she's going to have better than a "nice" day! Because she received his words gracefully instead of shoving them back in his face, she was able to take his gift with her all day long.

A simple, heartfelt thank-you does wonders. It . . .

- Gives the person offering the compliment the joy of giving.
- It acknowledges *God's* handiwork in your design. (Accepting a compliment doesn't make you prideful; God's the one who made you, after all!)
- Eliminates the awkward silences that come when we down, dodge and deflect compliments.
- Increases the chances that the person will be brave enough to compliment someone else.

I challenge you this week to humbly accept any compliment that comes your way—no matter how big or small and no matter who gives it to you—with those two simple words: "Thank you." And then look for ways to pay it forward to others, because "Pleasant words are as a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and health to the bones" (Prov. 16:24). And "a gracious woman gains respect ... Your kindness will reward you" (Prov. 11:16–17 NLT).

So how 'bout we show a little mercy and let the compliments live, ladies?

PS: This post adapted from Jessie's book *Backwards Beauty: How to Feel Ugly in 10 Simple Steps*.

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