

The Last Person Who Gets Compassion

I asked a woman to look in the mirror and stare in her eyes. To really look in them and then tell herself, "You are strong."

Strong because that was the word she picked—that she wanted to be. Three more 'truth words' is what I asked for her to find. She was able to easily list a sheet of lies that she'd bought into and held onto for the last four decades of her life but to come up with a truth she could say to herself in the mirror was difficult.

Rationally she can do it. She's highly intelligent, well spoken, and quite captivating. She realized on a surface level she can admit the lies she's been giving into and she knows the truth that she *should* receive ... so what keeps her from doing so?

Shame. Shame that she allowed the lies to keep her down for so long. Shame that she, an educated woman, respected in her field, allowed herself to be so weak as to fall 'victim' to such abuse. Shame that her support system of family and friends would find her a fool if they knew what she'd suffered through for all of these years.

I listened to her words of compassion for the men who'd been in her life that torched her spirit with these lies and I finally asked, "Where is this compassion for yourself? Do you not deserve the same?"

Her eyes widened.

"If another woman in your same predicament were sitting here and telling you this very same story would you tell her she is a fool for staying? Or would you give her hand a squeeze and

let her know how courageous she is to be here, to talk about it and to get help to know her true worth?"

She teared up. "I just keep thinking about looking at myself in the mirror. I don't think I've ever really looked into my own eyes. Why does it sound so hard?"

How many of us have gotten ready in the morning, rushed to put on make-up, blow dry our hair, shave your face (more for men ...) and failed to really see your reflection?

To look in your eyes and think, ***"You are worth all the blessings God has in store for you today."***

Show a little compassion ... for yourself.

Our priest gave us a directive this weekend to try and do something 'virtuous' for 30 days ... with the thought that after 30 days it wouldn't have to be a chore but something that is innate within you. My suggestion to those of you who can relate to this woman's story is to look at yourself in the mirror every morning. I mean look at yourself in your eyes and offer a kind word of compassion.

My bet is before the 30 days is up you'll begin to recognize many more truths about yourself and extend the same grace to others.

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