REAL Beauty
A global study, The Real Truth About Beauty: A Global Report, revealed that only two percent of women around the world would describe themselves as beautiful.

(Etcoff, Orbach, Scott, & D’Agostino, 2004)

Yet, our unique differences are a call to celebrate.

**Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder.**

We are real women. We are all women. All women are “real” women.

**Real beauty is embracing and loving yourself.**

Real beauty comes from within.

“Beauty is about being comfortable in your own skin. It’s about knowing and accepting who you are.”

- Ellen DeGeneres
The definition of "real beauty" for me is presented through the inner persona of every single human being out there; it has nothing to do with the way you look. You find true beauty when you open up that book and see what is inside of it. All the beauty that someone has is complemented by their values, their culture, their sense of humor and passion for life. Therefore, "real beauty" is portrayed through the women who are alive and are actually LIVING, they face change, they fight for what they really want, they are confident and do not give up. They are always striving to find beauty and happiness in life."

"Real beauty is CONFIDENCE"

- ADAM CHOINSKI

- ALBA PAZMINO
It means the beauty in which I am most comfortable. It means the beauty I have when I take off my shackles of being “pretty” and let myself think of something else for the time being. It means the beauty that I feel when I achieve something, the firecracker in my heart sizzling, bursting bright and coming out of every pore. Real beauty is a feeling, it’s a state of being, it’s something I’ve forgotten for a long time but I’m trying to learn again.”

- DOMENICA LAROCCO

“To me, real beauty is not physical, it’s in your character – real beauty is and tenacity.”

- GRACE MAUTE
I don’t think there is such a thing as real beauty. Beyoncé can walk by and people feel that she has real beauty because of her skin complexion and her body. But, if an ugly stranger can do the same, someone could say that person has real beauty as well, no matter the features, because we don’t know what “real” beauty is. However, I do believe that real beauty is embracing and loving yourself. Being confident in the skin you’re in and not changing anything about yourself; whether it’s your skin, your smile, your personality, etc. Real beauty is within you and not expressed to others. Real beauty is shown on the inside more than the outside, which benefits more.”

“Real beauty is radical, unconditional self-love.”

-JENNA REGENTHAL

“DOMONIQUE JARRETT
Real beauty is not defined by what is on the outside, but what is on the inside. A person could be the most attractive person on the outside, but if their soul is not warm and caring, they are not considered beautiful to me. Elaine Himmelberg and I have decided to take our photo together, because I believe that our friendship defines real beauty. I began working at Ramapo College when I was 15 years old through a Native American Youth program and shortly thereafter, Elaine became one of my supervisors. From the beginning, Elaine looked at the young girl inside and always reminded me of my capabilities. It wasn’t long after meeting her that Elaine took on the “second mother” figure role to me. She not only was my friend, she became my family, her family became my family. Elaine has a very rare quality because she is not only beautiful on the outside, she is beautiful on the inside. She has taught me so much over the past 20 years... she was there when I got married, one of my visitors after I gave birth and stood by me through some of the most horrific tragedies in my life. I’m so very lucky to have a beautiful friendship like hers. Real beauty cannot only be defined by appearance, but by the relationships, friendships and families formed over time.

- ELAINE HIMMELBERG AND IVY PAYNE

“Real Beauty is a person putting effort into bettering the lives of those around them. Sincerity is visible.”

- KIRA ABRAMS
As a result of some digestive issues, I am very thin. I sometimes have trouble acknowledging that I am still beautiful despite this. So, I would like to take a picture that demonstrates how thin I am, but still makes me look beautiful.

To me, “Real Beauty” is accepting your flaws and insecurities. It’s accepting who you are. Real beauty is the confidence and intelligence one holds.

- GISELLE RUIZ

- ELIZABETH BURCH
Real beauty is who you are. Everyone is beautiful in different ways. Like Einstein once said: “If you judge a fish by its ability to climb a tree, it will live its whole life believing it is stupid.” In the same manner you cannot judge people by a set standard for beauty. Beauty is subjective. What is beautiful to some may not be for others.”

― GEORGI PETKOV

Real beauty means strength, kindness, respect, and joy. It means an awareness of others and the way in which you make them feel.

― SUSAN AUGER
Real beauty is comfort, not only within your own skin, but also with your personality — realizing that flaws are natural and make us unique and make us grow. Real beauty is not having to justify choices, especially with appearance and interests. Personally, I am a woman who competes in a male dominated sport, and I don’t show up attempting to be a man. I show up comfortable with my femininity — knowing that does not make me less, that does not make me wrong, and that I shouldn’t have to change or justify that.”


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“It’s just like the cliché: real beauty comes from within. No matter what someone does to make their physical appearance nice, it is how they treat themselves and others that is the true test of beauty.”

— KAYLA KOZAK

— MARIA LIZZI
To me, real beauty is being confident about who you are and recognizing that the world would be substantially less beautiful if we all looked the same. Beauty also comes from love. When you care about someone, they always look beautiful to you.

-KRISTIN KENNEAVY

To me, “real beauty” entails accepting and embracing both abstract and concrete qualities about myself. It is a feeling that radiates from the inside out. It promotes self-respect, integrity, compassion, and numerous other empowering traits. “Real Beauty” allows me to be healthy, happy, and confident in my looks and abilities. In addition, insecurities are part of human nature. Acknowledging my flaws and imperfections continues to make me that much stronger. Accepting and embracing these qualities in others has helped me define “real beauty.”

-MARGARET KLEIN
I am a true believer that beauty comes from the inside; I believe in order to have real beauty on the outside you need to have a beautiful soul on the inside. I have met so many people who were beautiful on the outside, but I didn’t find them attractive because they had such an ugly soul. I believe inner beauty is way more important than outer beauty.

-JESSICA NACINCIK

Real beauty is recognizing the cognitive, physical and emotional strengths of an individual. It’s a holistic perspective of moving beyond comparison of you to others and recognizing yourself as beautiful.

-MEGAN KEARNEY
To me, real beauty means being absolutely comfortable in your own skin. You’re not striving to be something you’re not. You’re not affected by the media, peers, or society to conform to the socially constructed definition of “beautiful.” Real beauty, to me, means that you know you slay and you’re never going to stop.”

- JESSICA LOWRIE

“Being happy and thankful for what you have.”

-MARISSA STELLACCI
Real Beauty is something that cannot be recreated, it is something that either you (or others) must create in the moment and if uninterrupted it will become even more beautiful.”

- PETER ECHEVARRIA

“Real beauty is BEING YOUR TRUE SELF!”

- MOUNIRA ELSAMRA
A Special thank you to everyone who made the “Real Beauty” Photo Exhibition possible and played a part in bringing an idea to life.

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