

A priceless present. A positive post by a positive person.

Guest post on [Talking Frankly](#)

Today's post is a guest blog by Natalie Wills, a UK based friend who is passionate about life to the point where sometimes I think she is in danger of being permanently positive. Big on love and empowerment she can be professionally introduced as a Publishing Consultant and Writer with almost 20 years of experience in the publishing industry. She forged a successful career in international sales & marketing, including product development before she started her own business in 2011.

NSW Consulting is her business consultancy which specialises in flexible, focused and affordable project management support to book publishers.

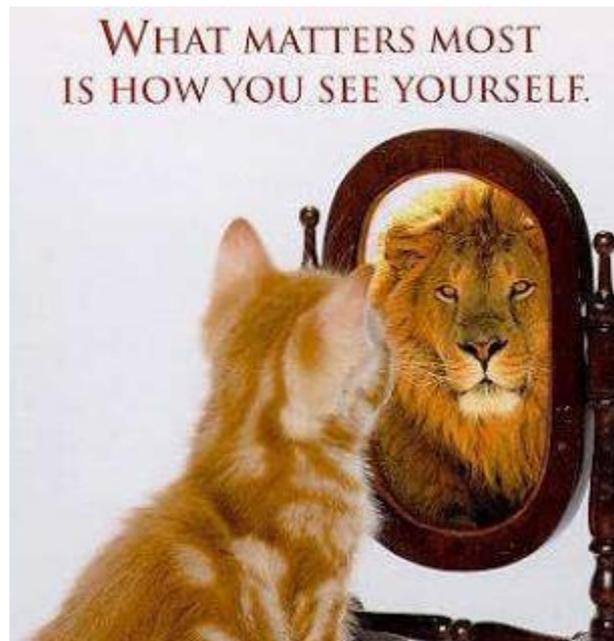
And then she started another one. She's one of those.

Unbeknownst to me she was also into healthy living (I know), her 'other' business is a health and wellness business called Nataloe. She is building a team who are passionate about the health benefits of aloe vera. It's not a cult but people are really into it.

However, back to the blog, it's Christmas - and she's reflecting on what the best gift she ever got from her parents was and why she still values it today.

I spend a great deal of time telling my children how amazing AND beautiful AND handsome AND talented they are. It's not because I think my children are brilliant at everything - it's down to my absolute determination that they'll go through life with good self-esteem. It's a gift I can give them that costs nothing and can never be taken away.

I am shocked by just how many people confess to suffering with low self-esteem, especially other Mums I meet. Test my theory out by paying a simple compliment to a few of your girlfriends today. You may simply say, 'that colour really suits you' or 'your hair looks nice'. How many of them will simply smile and respond with an unchallenging 'thank you'? All too often a compliment garners a response more like 'ah, thanks, I really wasn't sure if this colour suited me' or 'really, but I haven't had my hair done in ages'. Go one step further and compliment one of them on a nice outfit and you'll probably be told how cheap it was to buy! Come on girls, take a compliment please!



Every morning I tell my daughter she is more beautiful than she was yesterday. She encapsulated my thoughts on self-esteem perfectly this morning. She told me I was more beautiful this morning too. Like a fool I replied, 'but I haven't got any make-up on'. She didn't understand the connection and simply said, 'you're more beautiful without make-up Mummy'. My son backed her up by adding, 'because it's your normal you'. I was really touched by this magic moment and simply said 'thank you'.

I was struck by their love and innocence at 4 and 7 years old. I was happy with the beautiful compliment they had given me and it didn't matter whether I believed what they said. I applied make-up anyhow – they don't need to know about how make-up can help a woman's confidence and they don't need to know I've called it 'war-paint' for years. My Mum always used to prompt me to re-apply my lipstick just before my husband was due to arrive home from work. She told me, if nothing else, it would just make me feel better about myself. I was having a tough time at work some years ago and my dear friend and colleague used to nudge me before meetings and say, 'it's time to put your war-paint on'. Kind words and good lipstick really can help a woman!

On the school run I always admired how cool, calm and collected (and body confident) one of the Mums appeared to be. Carrying off hot pants and low cut tops on the Summer school run can't be done by many. She made it look graceful and effortless and, from where I was standing, she oozed confidence.

We're now good friends and she recently told me she didn't feel confident enough to wear the dress she'd chosen for an evening out. It's such a shame beauty is in the eye of the beholder. I can tell her she'd look stunning in any dress she chooses but, lacking in self-esteem, she's not going to believe me is she? I view self-esteem different to confidence, even confident people can suffer with low self-esteem – it's hidden just that bit deeper than confident behaviour.

I run two entirely separate businesses, one in publishing and one in the health and wellness arena, and I'm spotting a common thread with many of the women I speak to. There is a big

problem out there with low self-esteem and it is inhibiting people with great potential from believing in their talent.

If I give just one gift to my kids it will be good self-esteem. They will encounter both failure and doubters in life but with good self-esteem I firmly believe they will not be inhibited. I know they'll pick themselves up again, push a little harder and reach their goals. My parents relentlessly fostered good self-esteem into me. I am eternally grateful because I know I'd be nowhere without it.