

## Beauty Begins with You

You're scrolling through Instagram after waking up late in the morning. Almost every picture you see shows a person with perfectly sculpted abs captioned #workoutwednesday or a perfectly contoured face captioned #iwokeuplikethis. There are two ways to respond to these photos. Either hate yourself for not looking like a model, or you can smile about how unique your body is. And I suggest you do the latter. Instead of feeling down that you don't look "pretty enough," you should think about how amazing you are instead. You, better than anyone, know exactly that when you wake up, your hair is sticking up straight in all directions, the slight bulge in your stomach is peeking out under your shirt, and that the corner of your mouth is wet because you drooled while dreaming about pizza last night.

In a world where social media takes on the global population by storm, it can be difficult for people to accept and love themselves when they are constantly being shown images and articles that include messages of different beauty expectations and rules. But you should be completely okay with not following them. Does it really matter that you have a deeper, darker skin tone than some of your classmates? Or that your arms are hairier than most people you know? Or that your eyebrows are uneven? Trust me when I say that nobody's going to judge you if you don't have perfect eyebrows. Not even you, yourself, should judge you by your eyebrows, or your appearance in general. The people who spend their lives accepting and loving everyone the way they naturally are, including themselves, are the ones who are truly beautiful.

In more technical terms, beauty is defined as a *combination* of qualities that pleases the intellect or moral sense. So just by going off of the definition, beauty isn't even solely based on appearance. It's also based on the way you carry and present yourself to others. The best way to show off your beauty is by being kind, caring, and loving to everyone regardless of their backgrounds. Equally as important, you should love yourself because you have an amazing heart and the power to allow others to see their own beauty as well. Don't focus on all the little imperfections that you have, but embrace them! Embrace the fact that your shoes are untied half the time or that you don't always smell pleasant after coming home after a long day out. Embrace your imperfections, because they're the things that make you perfect. Love yourself, love the way you love others, and love the way you take on life.

So the next time you look at yourself in the mirror, smile at how beautiful you are. And don't worry about your slightly crooked teeth. Focus on what's important: loving every little detail about yourself. Because you are full of unique details, which means that nobody else is quite like you. And I think that's the most beautiful thing about you.