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Chicken Soup for the Soul Tells Women to “Be You”

101 stories of affirmation, determination, and female empowerment for women of all ages

COS COB, Conn. – Katie Kennedy goes on a vacation by herself each year, away from her family, and free to make her own choices. Mary Guinane took a ten-month journey around the United States with her dog, picking the new place she would live. After a boyfriend broke up with her, saying she needed to figure out who she was, Aleksandra Slijepcevic realized he was right. She had been putting *his* needs first, adopting *his* likes and dislikes as her own. Through yoga practice and a lot of introspection, she now understands who she is and what she wants and deserves.

Those are three of the stories in *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Be You* (April 6, 2021, 978-1-611590654, \$14.95), a new collection of 101 stories and poems written by women of all ages about how they found their own truths, the best versions of themselves. “You need to honor and embrace what makes you unique,” says Amy Newmark, author of the book and Chicken Soup for the Soul’s editor-in-chief and publisher. “We’ve created a source of affirmation and inspiration for women, to help them find their courage, their confidence, and the best paths for themselves.”

The book opens with a poem by Rebekah Iliff in which she describes a woman happily sitting by herself in a restaurant. She’s confronted by a waiter who can’t believe that she’s okay with being alone. Yet she is—she’s comfortable in her own skin. “And that’s what we aim for in our lives, right?” says Newmark. “Happy with who we are, or at least happy with the vision we have for who we want to become. When we have goals—getting fit, raising children well, getting promoted at work, finding love, being adventurous—those goals should not involve a wholesale change in who we are. They should just involve being more of who we *already* are and knowing that we *are enough*.”

The 100 or so women who contributed their personal, revealing stories to this new Chicken Soup for the Soul book are role models. Some of them explain how they juggle raising children and running their households, and maybe even working, but only barely “having it all.” Others explain how they broke new ground, becoming pilots or stunt doubles or glassblowers, traditionally male professions. Some of these women overcame sexual harassment or stood up and spoke out for other women. And some women relate how they managed to prevail after divorce or widowhood and learned how to repair things around the house or find new love.

Being brave is a big theme in these pages. It wasn’t until her mother died young that Rachel Dunstan Muller decided to shake up her life, explaining, “For most of my adult life, I’d chosen to stay safely anchored in a series of sheltered harbours, both literally and metaphorically.” She made a resolution to live by the word “fierce” for an entire year, and say yes to all the things that she would normally turn down, and she proudly reports on how that has changed her for the better.

ABOUT CHICKEN SOUP FOR THE SOUL

Chicken Soup for the Soul publishes the famous *Chicken Soup for the Soul* book series. With well over 100 million books sold to date in the U.S. and Canada, more than 250 titles, and translations into more than 40 languages, the phrase “chicken soup for the soul” is known worldwide and is regularly referenced in pop culture. Today, 28 years after it first began sharing happiness, inspiration and hope through its books, this socially conscious company continues to publish a new title a month. It has also evolved beyond the bookstore, with a podcast, education programs, dog and cat food, licensed products, and video, television and movies through its subsidiary, Chicken Soup for the Soul Entertainment.

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For a review copy of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Be You* or an interview with Amy Newmark or one of the contributors, please contact Shelby Janner at (512) 638-6379 or shelby@zilkermmedia.com.