

# Reach UP

The Magazine to Empower and Enrich Today's Woman

Fall / Winter 2018

*Lifestyle*

There's a Word for that Feeling

*Faith*

Wrapped in the Light

Dear Beautiful Friend,

I hope you smiled when you read that. You are beautiful. And do you know who created beauty? God did.

God created beauty.

God placed beauty within each of us.

God made us to appreciate beauty.

When I lived in the inner city, I had to train my eyes to see beauty – the colors of a sunset, flowers bursting through cracks in the sidewalk, and snow settling on razor wire – all of these made designs of beauty.

What beauty have you trained your eyes to see?

And speaking of training, what about your words? What are you training your thoughts to dwell on? What about the words you let slip from your lips? Are they beautiful words?

Words can be beautiful too, you know.

I love words and I also love looking at beautiful things. That's why from the beginning of publishing *Reach UP*, we included beautiful graphics so you could let your eyes enjoy what you were seeing.

And in this issue, we have such a big surprise that you can't possibly miss it. April McCallum created coloring pages just for us! Have fun making some beauty. Maybe you can use them for decorations around your room.

We also hope you try out creating something beautiful out of what once was considered trash, as Danette shows you in her article.

*Reach UP* women, let each one of us make our world a little more beautiful than we found it. When we do that, we give God glory. Wow! That's another whole subject. But your beauty – inner and outer – matters to God.

Love you,

*Crystal Knapp*

Editor-in-Chief

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# TRASH



by Danette Davis

# Treasures

## MATERIALS NEEDED

Hot glue gun, or other strong adhesive



Bottles

\*Paint, permanent acrylic works best + brush



\*\*Mod-Podge + brush

*I love making things. And maybe because of what I've been through, I like taking things that have been tossed away and thought of as trash and making something beautiful out of them. That's kind of like God, you know. Hope you try it and have fun.*



## HOW TO MAKE TRASH INTO TREASURES

- 1 Collect bottles.** Try a recycling place to find bottles, or dumpster dive at restaurants. Your family will save them for you, too.
- 2 Gather materials to use for decoration.** Anything and everything can be used for this: Flowers, ribbons, beads, string, letters, barbed wire, chains, and more can be used to create your special designs.
- 3 Wash and soak the bottles, then peel off the label.** Goof Off or Goo Gone can also be used for stubborn labels, but soap and water usually works just fine. Plus, it's cheaper!

**4 Dry thoroughly.**

**5** Leave the bottles natural or \*paint with any color you desire.



**\*\*Seal with Mod Podge, matte (dull) or gloss finish.** Another option is to water down white school glue and apply it over the paint.

**7** Use the glue gun to attach your decorations. I made the tags out of file folders someone threw away, and I had the string lying around.



Send us pictures of your trash to treasure art to [info@reachupmag.org](mailto:info@reachupmag.org) or post on our FaceBook page, <https://www.facebook.com/ReachUP>. Tag #reachupmagazine on Instagram or Twitter.



FROM THE

IMPOSSIBLE

TO

THE

POSSIBLE

by Agueda Alvarado

**D**ear Woman, who do *you think* you are?

I've asked that question to myself many times.

Now, who am I? I am a woman who lives to feel. I am a woman who has grown to be happy. I am a woman who loves and serves others. I feel. I dream. And now I believe. But this wasn't always my life.

I was raised to be obedient without any chance to offer my opinion or ask a question. I grew up thinking that the man was dominant over the woman and children. Not only that, but my upbringing instilled fear that God was out to punish us and that He played favorites. Because I believed that lie, I thought He would give lot of things to some people, and to others like me, he would be stingy.

Like many other little girls, I had dreams. Yet I was made to believe that my dreams were never possible for me to reach. I grew up thinking that every woman was smart – except me.

Because I grew up in Mexico and now live in the United States, my life seemed to have these invisible walls. I felt like I was neither from my old country and culture, nor from this new country and

its culture.

Along with all the negative thoughts and emotions, I was also falsely taught to feel that I was just a dreamer. Nothing more.

Then one day I discovered that my thoughts determined the direction I would go. That is how I was able to wake up!

So how did I get there? I asked myself, *Could it be possible that whatever I think of myself and feel toward myself could actually happen in my life?*

I was reminded of what the wise man Job said, *"What I have most feared has come to*

*me"* (JOB 3:25). It was time to start watching my thoughts!

The ugly truth was, the lies I had been taught to believe was what I became.

I remember when one of my teachers asked me what came to mind when I looked at myself in the mirror. In reality, I had never asked myself that question. But at that moment I realized that all I saw were my flaws and imperfections. Over and over throughout my childhood my flaws were pointed out and repeated. "Look at your big nose! Look at

Can I say nice things to myself?

What is true?

Who am I when I look in the mirror?

Start watching my thoughts!

My thoughts determine the direction I'm going!





Dreams + Reaching UP =  
Dreams Come True

I can dream again.

I'm making little changes in my  
speech every day.

I'm making little changes in my  
thoughts every day.

Do I dare believe that I am  
beautiful?  
Inside and out?

Do I dare believe that  
I am worthy?

what ugly hair you have!" And on and on....

Startled, I began to understand that I needed to look at myself in the mirror and point out my beauty!

Sadly, at first it was just not possible for me to say anything positive out loud. I had a deep sense of embarrassment. Even in my room by myself, I'd have to remind myself that I was alone and there was no reason to feel embarrassed. I kept my focus on the urge to keep trying. Every time I was in front of a mirror, I would again try again and again to say anything positive, but I could not.

Finally, after seven days I succeeded. I was finally able to look at myself in the mirror and, with a deep stare, tell myself out loud, **I AM BEAUTIFUL!**

All I could feel was a smile that turned into joy that just took over every sense of my being. This was the beginning of an internal discovery. I had tried to hide from who I really am for many years.

It's been two years since that turning point, and every single day I become more aware of my own thoughts, making changes little by little and renovating my way of thinking about what defines me.

I am a human being of great worth, just like everyone else on this earth. I am a woman worth all the value I give myself. Every morning when I wake up, I seek to be grateful and focus on all the great things I have. I continue to focus on those good thoughts throughout my day. If there is something I have not yet obtained, I remind myself it is on its way. I have decided to love myself plus love and respect God and others. I have decided to become the woman created me to be, the woman I always dreamed about.

*Since 1995, Agueda Alvarado has been helping women, single mothers, and young couples in the Latino communities move from merely surviving to thriving in the two cultures in which they live. She has been married to Yovani for 30 years and has two married sons.*

# There's a WORD

## for What You Are FEELING!

by Amy Wedel



LOL!

Oh! Why are they so emotional? I often find myself saying this about my daughters. Women have a bad reputation of being overemotional or overly sensitive. However, I know some men who are emotional too. They just don't dare express it the way women do.



The fact of life is that every single human has emotions and experiences ups and downs. Emotions need to be identified and processed to have better emotional health. It takes time and practice to go from emotional immaturity to emotional maturity (or **emotional health**).

I have found it very helpful to teach my kids better words for emotions so they can name their feelings and communicate them better. The chart gives you an idea.

The first thing to remember is that **feelings are not facts**. Feelings come from a response/reaction to a situation. Feelings are temporary. They are not cold, hard facts. Feelings can change.

Second, **feelings are not needs that others need to meet**. Just because you are feeling something doesn't mean someone else needs to do something to change that feeling. An example of that is saying, "I am feeling stressed, so you need to get out of my face." Instead, say something like, "I'm feeling stressed, so I need to go for a walk."

Take ownership of your emotions since they are how you are responding. Your emotions do not come from someone else. When you feel thirsty, it is not someone else's fault. It may be true that someone's words or actions can lead to a certain emotional response in you, **but they did not give that emotion to you**.

Here are three great reasons why taking time out for yourself and learning more specific words to express your feelings will benefit you:

1) You will better understand yourself.

Nothing is more frustrating than feeling like a crazy person when your emotions are all over the place. Take time to be aware of what is really going through your head and in your heart. Then give each feeling/emotion/attitude a name. Just call it what it is. (Swear words don't count either.) Keep it simple. *I'm feeling lonely. I'm feeling nervous. I'm feeling excited.*

2) You will be more understood by others.

Nobody likes to be misunderstood. It is especially hurtful when someone assumes the worst in you. Practice sharing and voicing your true emotions.

If you ask my kids, they might admit that I can be a yeller. I yell when I'm having an overwhelming gush of negative emotions. So I too am working on naming my emotions so I can be understood clearly. "Kids, I'm feeling stressed and under pressure to get supper finished, so I need you out of the kitchen." Or when I feel my husband is too focused on his phone, I need to give voice to my feelings, "I'm feeling ignored and unimportant because you have been looking at your phone so much this evening." Now he understands why I've been upset all evening.

3) You will have better communication with others.

Great communication can be defined as what was understood, not what was said. When other people know how you are feeling, they can better understand what lies behind your behavior or



ARGGGH



WHATEVS!



\*SIGH\*

actions. It goes both ways. When you understand what others are feeling, you can understand why they do what they do. Ask them questions to find out what they are feeling.

The following questions can help you and your family and friends become emotionally healthy. If after doing this exercise for a while you still struggle with your feelings, find someone you trust to talk with. Show them the chart and find a word that best explains how you're feeling. Then talk about what led up to you feeling like that. You may find it easier to process your feelings better through talking with someone else.

## THE *nEXt* step

Do this for 2-3 minutes at the end of each day. Then, when an emotional situation happens during the day, you will have the tools you need to handle it well.

First, take a deep breath. Quiet yourself so you can reflect and think back. Fill in the blanks.

"Today my main feeling was \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_"  
\_\_\_\_\_."

It could be simple like "Today my main feeling was **accomplishment** because I got four loads of laundry washed, folded and put away."

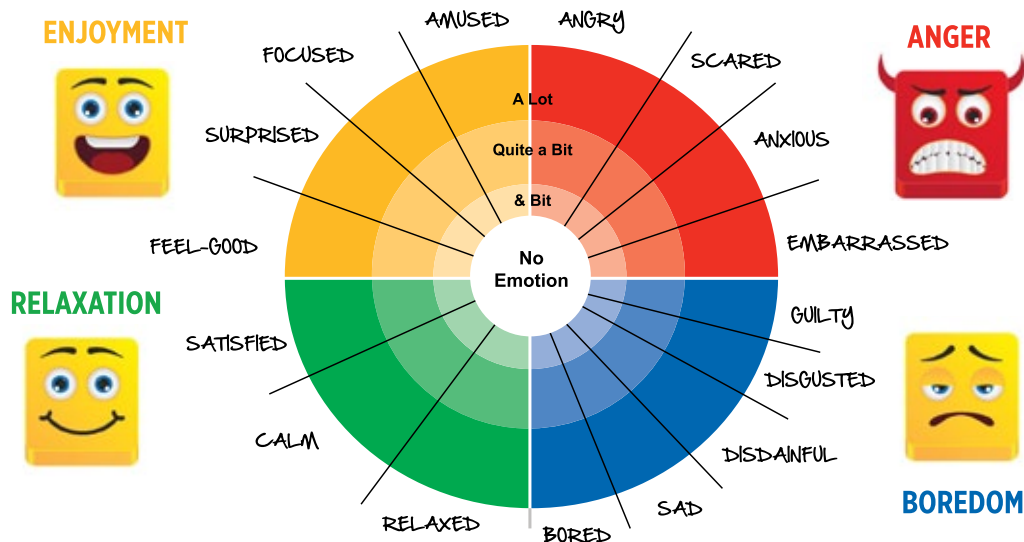
You could take it a step further and list all the emotions you remember feeling throughout the entire day.

"Today I felt \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_."

For more specific situations that you would like to see a change or have better control of your emotions, you could use this phrase, "Next time...."

"When \_\_\_\_\_ (name the situation) \_\_\_\_\_, I usually feel \_\_\_\_\_.  
Next time, I want to feel \_\_\_\_\_."

And that's an example of how giving your emotion a name as soon as you recognize will greatly help!





# Wrapped in the LIGHT of HIS Love

by April McCallum

There's something warm and welcoming about light, especially during the holidays. We're drawn to Christmas lights hugging houses and draped around trees. We take a second look at shiny objects as they reflect light in a holiday window display. We look up at the sparkle of starlight that decorates the winter sky like a jeweled necklace. The soft glow of a fire wraps us in comfort. Light from a lamp post or a front porch reassures and welcomes us.

Light brings our hearts joy.

For some, light comes in another form. Reading God's Word brings illumination. Its glow warms, encourages, and enlightens us because it is God's love letter to us.

Light in the darkness seems to give us a sign, a glimmer of hope.

As we consider the meaning of Christmas, we can't help but celebrate God's gift of his Son, Jesus. God himself reached down from heaven because He wanted relationship with us. He wanted to share himself, the gift of light and life, with us through his Son. As the lyrics of a song say, "*Light of the world, you stepped down into darkness.*" (Written by Michael W. Smith and Paul Baloche.) What a game-changer!

That act of love is the very reason we take time to express our gratitude at Thanksgiving and celebrate heaven's gift at Christmas. The light of Jesus is the hope for all people everywhere. We are loved. We are wanted. We are wrapped in the light of His love.

*"...I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*  
John 8:12

*"For thou wilt be my candle: the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness."* Psalm 18:28

*"...God is light and in him there is no darkness at all."*  
1 John 1:5

*"You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light."* Ephesians 5:8

*"The Lord is my light and my salvation – whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"* Psalm 27:1

*"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."* James 1:17

Given to you by:

