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The Fragrance of a Girl's World

Donna Kristine Manley

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Reviewed by Tammy Ruggles for Reader Views (02/2022)

"The Fragrance of a Girl's World," by Donna Kristine Manley, is an award-winning, encouraging guide to help girls recognize their uniqueness and enjoy life. Comprised of 33 meaningful affirmations ranging from "The Fragrance of God" to "The Fragrance of a Great Work Ethic," this book serves as a beautifully conceived self-help tool. As you read this compact book full of golden petals of life advice, you are reminded to recognize and savor the simple yet profound things around you. In today's challenging times, this book serves as a way for girls to become grounded in who they are, embracing and savoring their individuality and using their gifts and attributes to the fullest.

Manley brings a positive message to girls who may not receive guidance from parents or other invested adults, and who may not have access to good role models. For girls who are confused, have doubts, fears, or who just need a compass in life, this partially faith-based book brings attention to the unique qualities in each and every one, and encourages girls to appreciate family, friends, and the ability to make choices about who they want to be and become.

I like the analogy that the author uses, which compares girls to being flowers in a land full of weeds. Weeds represent the negative things girls may encounter in life: Bad relationships, self-esteem, bullying, abuse, etc. In bad times, it helps if girls know who they are, know their worth, and can find strength within and without to meet and navigate challenges. Ideas about integrity, honesty, self-worth, among others, are ideas every girl needs to hear, but so many never do, for many reasons, be it a neglectful home life, or lack of positive guidance.

There is a strong message that girls can use their talents and skills as a tool to a good life and successful future. Some of the ideas may sound foreign to girls, like the idea of taking responsibility for your actions. But these are lessons girls need to hear if they haven't already.

The many references to flowers and their unique fragrances brings to mind the diversity found in girls. No two girls are alike, and this book celebrates that. Besides containing nuggets of wisdom and encouragement, this book offers resources and concrete tips, like learning about other cultures through travel, and even a poem, "Lovely, Lovely". Even though the book has the word "girl" in the title, it can also be enjoyed by adult women too, or mothers of young girls wanting to instill positivity in their daughters. "The Fragrance of a Girl's World", by Donna Kristine Manley, shows girls how to make the most of girlhood.