

## Do You Love Yourself?

**Carmen Jimenez**

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"You empower yourself whenever you think 'outside the box' and choose to behave in a genuine way which best meets your own physical emotional and spiritual needs and accords with your personal values—your beliefs about what is important and what is not" asserts Carmen Jimenez.

A licensed clinical social worker with a degree from Columbia University Jimenez was moved to write this slim volume for those seeking to accept themselves and overcome feelings of inferiority because she herself felt that "something was missing" in her otherwise successful life.

Readers will have to overlook the heavy use of clichés—self-love being comfortable in your own skin authentic self and more—but the message is clear in this "short snappy and to the point" book: we have been persuaded by media and cultural expectations to feel that we are unable to meet the ideal of beauty and success. Such beliefs lead to counterproductive coping techniques and feelings of not measuring up.

"We are conditioned by society to think that there is something wrong with us period" Jimenez claims. She speaks internationally on personal growth and readers may feel they are benefiting from an inspirational lecture. Emotionally engaging this book like so many of its genre inspires readers to make a change but arms them primarily with platitude and Jimenez's encouragement. It's left to the reader to apply the lessons the book offers.

She begins with instruction in "the art of decision-making" and moves through a series of chapters offering readers ways to accept themselves. The simplicity of the text and the anecdotes Jimenez chooses to share give the sense that the book was written for a youthful reader.

"If someone would like me to look like Madonna let him go and ask Madonna out on a date but stay away from me" she writes. Later she admonishes "...when you are constantly on the phone sending out emails or instant messaging you need to ask yourself what void you are filling what emptiness you are running from."

Perhaps her strongest exhortation is this: "There is a lesson in every circumstance you experience. There are no accidents but 'it is all in the divine order.'" This provides a comforting albeit paradoxical thought. Change but in the meantime you are just where you were meant to be she explains. Drawing freely from Christian (she calls it "Catholic tradition") Jewish and Buddhist ideology Jimenez concludes "You and the universe are exactly as you were meant to be."

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