

Rachel Simmons: Raising Authentic Girls with Courage and Confidence

Contributed by James Sorrells - The Positive Observer
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“What does society expect a good girl to be?” was asked by Rachel Simmons to a group of mostly young girls and their parents at St. Mary’s Academy in Denver, CO Thursday night. Simmons is the author of a new book titled: “The Curse of the Good Girl.” Responses from the crowd included the typical adjectives: polite, popular, skinny, well-dressed, organized, good manners, etc.

According to Simmons, “A lot of girls, continuing into their adulthood, feel as though they have to do everything right all the time; that they always need to be nice. Girls are afraid to be judged and are very cautious not to stand out too much.” But, says Simmons, “no one person can do everything right all the time, know everyone and be nice to everyone every moment. To try to do so can be very self-defeating.”

In her new book, girls are shown how and why it is ok to take risks, to take chances and even make some mistakes, all of which are healthy things to experience and learn from. Avoiding taking risks and experiencing mistakes, can create limitations for the individual and inhibit the level of “growth” that they would achieve otherwise.

Simmons discusses various new strategies and perspectives on how each individual girl can sort through the roller coaster of emotions people face through the course of a day or any future social, personal or business setting. Having awareness on the range of emotions, both inside and outside, and their purposes can be extremely powerful. This is especially important when the truer, inside emotions are addressed and openly utilized.

Simmons referenced a recent presentation to 1st grade girls in which she asked, “Who is the FASTEST runner in the class?” Every single girl raised their hand. But when the question was presented to a recent high school class of girls, not a single girl raised theirs. Why such a swing?

“The Curse of the Good Girl” and Simmons’s public speaking engagements (much like her presentation in Denver Thursday night), offer wonderful insights to the challenges that many girls and young woman face in the twenty-first century. Culture, our environments and our own personal beliefs are all contributing factors on what Simmons describes as a “Good Girl” and a “Real Girl.” There are vast differences between the two.

Parental foresight and guidance is highly suggested early in a young girl’s life. Parents and their daughters can actively identify and discuss strengths and vulnerabilities in relation to current events surrounding the child. Parents, especially mothers, should also be aware of the examples they, themselves, exhibit around the child. Simmons offers nice alternatives and solutions for girls

today to find their voices and gain a greater sense of "self";

To learn more about Simmons's book "The Curse of the Good Girl" or previous books by the author, visit: [Rachel Simmons](#) . You can also visit: [The Girls Leadership Institute](#) which Simmons founded to see what programs are available for girls around the country.