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LET THE GIRL CHILD BE.



The book serves as a beacon of hope, a call to action, and a celebration of the girl child's potential to shape the future. In essence, "Let A Girl Child Be" is a journey of self-discovery, resistance, and empowerment, encapsulating the mantra - let the girl child be, just be.

Disclaimer

The e-book “Let A Girl Child Be” is focused on empowering the girl child to live her truth and resist societal expectations.

While it shares some common goals with the feminist movement, such as advocating for equality and challenging societal norms, it is important to note that this book is not explicitly aligned with, endorsing, or disapproving any specific feminist ideology.

The primary aim of this book is to provide a supportive and empowering narrative for the girl child, irrespective of any political or social movements. It is about individual growth, self-discovery, and the freedom to be oneself.

Any similarities or differences with the feminist movement or any other ideology are coincidental and not intentional.

The book stands on its own merit and its core message of letting every girl child be herself.

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The Unseen Burden

There lived a girl named Ada. Ada was like any other girl her age – full of dreams, bursting with energy, and brimming with potential. But there was something that set Ada apart. She lived in a society that had a peculiar tradition. From the moment a girl child was born, she was handed a backpack. This wasn't just any backpack; it was a special one.

It was invisible to everyone but the girl who carried it.

As the girl child grew, so did the weight of the backpack. Each societal expectation, each unspoken rule, and each silent pressure added a stone to the backpack.



CHAPTER 1

“Be polite, be pretty, be quiet, be good” – each ‘be’ was a stone that weighed heavily on the girl child’s back. And so, Ada, like all the other girls in her society, carried her backpack with grace and strength, even when the weight threatened to crush her spirit.

But Ada was a curious child. One day, she asked her mother, “Why do we carry these heavy backpacks?” Her mother replied, “It’s tradition, my dear. It’s how things have always been.” But Ada wasn’t satisfied with this answer. She wanted to understand why things were the way they were. Why were girls expected to carry these burdens? Why were they expected to conform to society’s expectations at the cost of their dreams and desires?

CHAPTER 1

Ada decided to embark on a journey to find answers. She traveled far and wide, meeting girls from different walks of life. She met Aisha, a brilliant scientist who was told she should be a nurse because it was a 'more suitable' profession for a woman. She met Clara, a talented artist who was discouraged from pursuing her passion because it wasn't 'practical'. She met countless other girls, each with their own unique backpack of societal expectations.

Through her journey, Ada realized that the backpack wasn't just a burden; it was a symbol. It represented the unseen pressures that society placed on the girl child. It was a silent reminder of the expectations that were imposed on them, often at the expense of their individuality and freedom.

But Ada also discovered something else. She found that despite the weight of their backpacks, these girls were not just surviving; they were thriving. They were breaking barriers, challenging norms, and defying expectations. They were proving that they were more than just the sum of society's expectations.

As Ada returned home, she felt a strange lightness. Her backpack seemed a little less heavy. She realized that while society could add stones to her backpack, it was up to her to decide how to carry them. She could let them weigh her down, or she could use them as stepping stones to reach greater heights.

CHAPTER 1

And so, Ada made a promise to herself. She vowed to live her truth, to chase her dreams, and to never let the weight of her backpack define her. She decided to let the girl child be. Just be. Because in the end, isn't that what we all want? To just be ourselves, without the weight of societal expectations holding us down.

THE UNSEEN BURDEN. THE BURDEN THAT EVERY GIRL CHILD CARRIES. BUT REMEMBER, LIKE ADA, EVERY GIRL HAS THE POWER TO TRANSFORM THIS BURDEN INTO A STEPPING STONE.

The History of Expectations

In the grand tapestry of human history, woven with countless threads of civilizations, cultures, and societies, there lies a common pattern. A pattern that has persisted through the ages, transcending geographical boundaries and cultural differences.

This pattern is the societal expectations placed on the girl child.

Let's take a journey back in time, to the dawn of human civilization. In the early societies, roles were primarily divided based on physical strength.

Men, being physically stronger, were hunters and protectors, while women, capable of bearing children, were gatherers and nurturers. This division of labor was purely for survival and had little to do with capability or potential.

CHAPTER 2

As societies evolved, so did these roles. They became more rigid and more defined. The hunter became the warrior, the king, the leader. The gatherer became the homemaker, the queen, the supporter. And thus, the first stones of expectation were placed in the backpacks of the girl child.

Fast forward to the Middle Ages, a time of knights and nobles, peasants and serfs. Women were expected to be gentle, obedient, and virtuous. They were confined to the domestic sphere, and their worth was often measured by their ability to bear children and maintain a household. More stones were added to the backpack.

Then came the Industrial Revolution, a time of great change and progress. But even as the world was rapidly transforming, the expectations on the girl child remained largely unchanged. Women were still seen as caretakers and homemakers, even as they joined the workforce in factories and mills.

CHAPTER 2

The 20th century brought with it waves of change. Women's suffrage, the feminist movement, the fight for equal rights – these were monumental steps towards challenging and changing societal expectations. Women began to break free from the traditional roles that society had imposed on them.

They became leaders, scientists, artists, and more. But even then, the backpack of expectations was not entirely discarded. It merely changed form.

Today, in the 21st century, we live in a world that is more progressive and inclusive than ever before. Women are CEOs, astronauts, presidents. They are breaking barriers and shattering glass ceilings. But the backpack of expectations still exists. It's no longer just about being a good wife or mother. It's about being the perfect woman – successful, beautiful, strong, yet nurturing.

CHAPTER 2

The history of expectations is a testament to the resilience and strength of the girl child. It's a story of how, despite the weight of the backpack, girls have risen, time and again, to challenge and change the status quo. It's a story that needs to be told, to remind every girl that she is not alone in her struggle. That the weight she carries is not just her own, but that of countless girls who have come before her.

And most importantly, it's a story that serves as a beacon of hope.

A hope that one day, the girl child will no longer carry the backpack of societal expectations.

That she will be free to be herself, without the burden of 'should be' and 'ought to be'. That she will, truly, just be.

Let's remember this – it's not just about understanding where we've come from. It's about envisioning where we're going. It's about creating a future where every girl child can be free to be herself. A future where every girl child can, truly, just be.

The Impact on the Girl Child

Imagine a bird, a beautiful, vibrant bird, born to soar high in the sky.

But what if that bird is given a weight to carry from the moment it's born?

A weight that grows heavier with each passing day.

How high can the bird fly with that weight?

This is the predicament of the girl child in our society.

LET A GIRL
CHILD BE...



The weight of societal expectations, like an invisible backpack, can limit her flight.

The impact of these expectations on the girl child is profound and multifaceted.

It's like a ripple effect, starting from the individual and spreading out to affect every aspect of her life.

On a personal level, these expectations can stifle the girl child's individuality and self-expression. She is taught to conform, to fit into a mold that society has created for her.

This can lead to a loss of self-esteem and self-worth, as she constantly strives to meet these unrealistic standards.

On an emotional level, the pressure to conform can lead to stress, anxiety, and even depression. The fear of disappointing others, of not living up to expectations, can be overwhelming. It's like walking on a tightrope, constantly balancing between who she is and who she's expected to be.

On a physical level, the impact can be even more damaging. In some societies, girls are expected to marry and bear children at a young age, often at the expense of their health and education.

This not only limits their opportunities but also puts their physical well-being at risk.

On a societal level, these expectations perpetuate gender inequality. They reinforce harmful stereotypes and norms, creating a cycle of discrimination and bias that is hard to break

But here's the thing. Despite these challenges, the girl child is not a victim. She is a survivor, a fighter, a changemaker. She is the bird that learns to fly, despite the weight she carries.

AN ICON

Take Malala Yousafzai, for example. Despite being shot by the Taliban for advocating for girls' education, she continued her fight and became the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate.



Or Greta Thunberg, who despite being a teenager, has become a leading voice in the fight against climate change.

These girls, and countless others like them, are proof that the impact of societal expectations is not just negative. It can also be a catalyst for change. It can inspire girls to stand up, to speak out, to challenge the status quo.

It can turn the girl child from a passive recipient of expectations into an active agent of change

So, as we delve deeper into the impact of societal expectations on the girl child, let's not forget this. The girl child is not just carrying a backpack of expectations. She is also carrying a torch of hope, a beacon of change. And with each step she takes, she is lighting the way for others to follow.

CHAPTER 3

In the end, the impact of societal expectations on the girl child is not just about the challenges she faces. It's also about the strength she shows, the resilience she displays, the change she inspires. It's about the girl child learning to fly, despite the weight she carries.

Breaking the Mold

THE MOLD MAKER

I'm certain you haven't heard the tale of a peculiar shop known as the "Mold Maker". This shop was famous for its unique molds, each one designed to shape something into a perfect form. People from far and wide would come to the Mold Maker, seeking the perfect mold to shape their lives.

Among the many molds, there were some that were more popular than others. These were the molds for the girl child. They came in various shapes and sizes, each one representing a societal expectation – the perfect daughter, the perfect student, the perfect bride, the perfect mother.

Girls were expected to fit into these molds, to shape themselves according to society's expectations.

But amidst the sea of conformity, there were some girls who dared to break the mold. They refused to be shaped by society's expectations, choosing instead to carve their own path. These were the mold breakers, the trailblazers, the pioneers. They were the girls who dared to be different, to be themselves.

One such mold breaker was Marie Curie. In a time when women were expected to stay at home, Marie chose to pursue her passion for science. She faced numerous challenges and obstacles, but she never gave up. Her determination and perseverance led her to become the first woman to win a Nobel Prize, and the only person to win the Nobel in two different sciences.

Another mold breaker was Amelia Earhart. In an era when flying was considered a man's domain, Amelia dared to take to the skies. She faced skepticism and doubt, but she proved her critics wrong by becoming the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean.

CHAPTER 4

Then there was Rosa Parks, who refused to give up her seat on a bus, sparking a movement that would change the course of history. There was Malala Yousafzai, who stood up for girls' education, despite facing threats and violence. There was Greta Thunberg, who started a global movement to fight climate change, despite being just a teenager.

These mold breakers were not just women who achieved great things. They were girls who dared to be themselves, who dared to break free from societal expectations. They were girls who showed the world that a girl child is not defined by the mold she fits into, but by the person she chooses to be.

CHAPTER 4

Looking at the stories of these mold breakers, we find a common thread. They were all girls who dared to dream, to aspire, to strive. They were girls who believed in themselves, who believed in their potential. They were girls who showed the world that a girl child is not just a mold to be filled, but a canvas to be painted, a story to be written, a journey to be embarked upon.

So, as we turn the pages of this chapter, let's celebrate the mold breakers. Let's celebrate the girls who dared to be different, who dared to be themselves. Let's celebrate the girl child who chooses to break the mold, to live her truth, to be herself.

The Power of Self-Acceptance

THE MAGICAL MIRROR

Once upon a time, there was a magical mirror known as the Mirror of Truth. This wasn't your ordinary mirror. It didn't show you your physical reflection. Instead, it showed you who you truly were, beyond societal expectations and norms.

One day, a girl named Maya came across the Mirror of Truth. Maya was a girl who had always strived to meet societal expectations. She was the perfect daughter, the perfect student, the perfect friend. But despite her efforts, she always felt like something was missing.

As Maya looked into the Mirror of Truth, she saw a reflection that she barely recognized. She saw a girl who was vibrant, passionate, and full of dreams. A girl who loved to dance, even though she was told it wasn't ladylike. A girl who loved to explore, even though she was told it wasn't safe.

A girl who was so much more than the 'perfect' image she presented to the world.

For the first time, Maya saw herself not as society wanted her to be, but as she truly was. And in that moment, she realized the power of self-acceptance.

Self-acceptance is about acknowledging and embracing who you are, beyond societal expectations and norms. It's about recognizing your strengths, your weaknesses, your passions, and your dreams. It's about understanding that you are enough, just as you are.

The power of self-acceptance is transformative. It liberates you from the need to conform, to fit into a mold. It gives you the freedom to be yourself, to live your truth. It empowers you to break free from societal expectations and to carve your own path.

But self-acceptance is not always easy. It requires courage, resilience, and perseverance. It requires you to challenge societal norms, to question expectations, to defy conventions. It requires you to stand up for yourself, to advocate for your rights, to fight for your dreams.

Yet, the journey to self-acceptance is one of the most rewarding journeys you can embark on. It's a journey that leads to self-love, self-respect, and self-empowerment. It's a journey that allows you to live your life on your own terms, to be the author of your own story.

As Maya stood in front of the Mirror of Truth, she made a promise to herself. She vowed to accept herself, to love herself, to be herself. She vowed to break free from societal expectations, to live her truth, to be her own person.

The girl child is not just a reflection of societal expectations. She is a unique individual, with her own dreams, passions, and potential. She is a girl who has the power to accept herself, to love herself, to be herself.

So, let's celebrate the power of self-acceptance. Let's celebrate the girl who dares to be herself, who dares to live her truth. Let's celebrate the girl child who chooses to accept herself, to love herself, to be herself.

Tools for Resistance

THE SECRET GARDEN

There is a secret garden known as the Garden of Resistance. This isn't like the ordinary garden we all know. Instead of flowers and trees, this garden is filled with tools. Tools that can help the girl child resist societal expectations and norms. I know it sounds funny but wait... it's just an illustration.

The first tool in the garden is the Shield of Self-Belief. This shield is made of a material stronger than any metal – self-belief. It is a shield that could protect the girl child from the arrows of doubt and criticism. When society tells her she can't, the Shield of Self-Belief reminds her that she can.

The second tool is the Compass of Self-Discovery. This compass doesn't point north or south. Instead, it points inward, guiding the girl child on a journey of self-discovery. It helps her explore her passions, her strengths, her dreams. It helps her discover who she is, beyond societal expectations and norms.

The third tool is the Torch of Knowledge. This torch can light up the darkest corners of ignorance and prejudice. It empowers the girl child with knowledge and understanding, enabling her to challenge societal norms and expectations.

The fourth tool is the Hammer of Persistence. This hammer is a symbol of resilience and determination. It reminds the girl child that change doesn't happen overnight. It requires persistence, patience, and perseverance.

The fifth tool is the Bridge of Empathy. This bridge connects the girl child with others who are going through the same struggles. It fosters a sense of community and solidarity, reminding her that she is not alone in her journey.

The final tool is the Key of Courage. This key can unlock any door, overcome any obstacle. It gives the girl child the courage to stand up for herself, to live her truth, to be herself.

As the girl child explores the Garden of Resistance, she realizes that these tools are not just objects. They are symbols of her inner strength, her inner power. They are reminders that she has the ability to resist societal expectations, to carve her own path, and to be herself.

CHAPTER 6

So, let's celebrate the tools for resistance. Let's celebrate the girl who dares to resist, who dares to challenge, who dares to defy. Let's celebrate the girl child who chooses to resist societal expectations, to live her truth, to be herself.

The Role of Education

THE SCHOOL OF EMPOWERMENT

Again, it is rumored that there is a grand institution known as the School of Empowerment.

Unlike the schools we are accustomed to, Instead of traditional subjects, it taught lessons of self-belief, self-discovery, and self-empowerment. It is a school that aims to equip the girl child with the knowledge and skills to resist societal expectations and norms.

The first lesson in the School of Empowerment is the lesson of self-belief. This lesson teaches the girl child to believe in her abilities and potential. It teaches her that she is capable of achieving anything she sets her mind to, regardless of societal expectations.

The second lesson is the lesson of self-discovery. This lesson guides the girl child on a journey of self-exploration. It encourages her to discover her passions, her strengths, and her dreams.

The third lesson is the lesson of self-empowerment. This lesson empowers the girl child with the knowledge and skills to challenge societal norms and expectations. It teaches her to stand up for herself, to live her truth, and to be herself.

The beautiful thing about this School of Empowerment is the fact that it doesn't just teach lessons. It also provides a safe and supportive environment for the girl child to learn and grow. It fosters a sense of community and solidarity, reminding her that she is not alone in her journey.

What's the essence of this illustration?

Education plays a crucial role in empowering the girl child to resist societal expectations. It provides her with the knowledge and skills to challenge societal norms and expectations.

It empowers her to make informed decisions about her life and future. It gives her the confidence to stand up for herself and live her truth.

But education is not just about academic knowledge. It's also about personal growth and development. It's about learning to understand and accept oneself.

It's about learning to respect and value others. It's about learning to live in harmony with oneself and the world.

As the girl child navigates through the School of Empowerment, she realizes that education is not just a tool for resistance. It's also a tool for empowerment. It's a tool that enables her to carve her own path, to live her truth, to be herself.

The girl child is not just a student of societal expectations. She is also a student of life. She is a learner, a seeker, a dreamer. She is a girl who has the power to learn, to grow, to evolve.

So, let's celebrate the role of education. Let's celebrate the girl who dares to learn, who dares to grow, who dares to evolve. Let's celebrate the girl child who chooses to educate herself, to empower herself, to be herself.

The Supportive Society

THE SOCIETY OF SUPPORT

The Society of Support is a diverse group. It includes parents, teachers, friends, and even strangers. They all have differences but despite that, they all share a common belief – the belief that every girl child has the right to be herself, to live her truth, to be free from societal expectations.

The first members of the Society of Support are the parents. They understand that their role is not to mold their daughter into a societal expectation but to nurture her individuality and potential. They provide a safe and supportive environment for her to explore her interests, pursue her passions, and express her feelings.

The second members are the teachers. They recognize that education is not just about imparting knowledge, but also about fostering self-belief and self-confidence.

They encourage the girl child to question, to think, to dream. They celebrate her achievements, not just in academics, but also in arts, sports, and other fields.

The third members are the friends. They provide a sense of belonging and acceptance. They stand by the girl child in times of doubt and fear, reminding her that she is not alone in her journey. They celebrate her uniqueness, her individuality, and her truth.

The final members are the strangers. They are the people who don't know the girl child personally but still choose to support her. They are the people who stand up against discrimination and bias, who advocate for equal rights and opportunities, and who believe in the power of the girl child.

The Society of Support plays a crucial role in empowering the girl child to resist societal expectations. They provide her with the support and encouragement she needs to stand up for herself, to live her truth, and to be herself.

But the Society of Support is not just about supporting the girl child. It is also about creating a society that values and respects the girl child for who she is, not for who she's expected to be. It is about creating a society where every girl child can be free to be herself.

The girl child is not just a member of society. She is a part of it, a contributor to it, a shaper of it. She has the power to influence society, to change it, to make it better.

CHAPTER 8

So, let's celebrate the supportive society. Let's celebrate the people who dare to support, who dare to empower, who dare to believe. Let's celebrate the girl child who chooses to be supported, to be empowered, to be herself.

The Future is Female

THE FUTURE

Let's look at this as a towering monument known as— the Future. A living, breathing entity, constantly evolving and changing. And at the heart of this monument, there is a powerful message – The Future is Female.

It's a statement, a declaration, a prophecy. It's a vision of a future where the girl child is not bound by societal expectations.

In this future, the girl child is a leader, a trailblazer, a pioneer. She is the CEO of a multinational corporation, the president of a country, and the scientist discovering a cure for a deadly disease.

She is the artist painting a masterpiece, the author penning a bestseller, and the athlete breaking world records.

In this future, the girl child is not judged by her gender, but by her abilities, her potential, and her character. She is respected and valued for who she is, not for who she's expected to be. She is celebrated for her achievements, her contributions, and her impact.

In this future, the girl child is not just surviving, but thriving. She is not just conforming, but challenging. She is not just accepting, but questioning. She is not just dreaming, but achieving.

This future is not just a dream. It's a possibility, a potential, a promise. It's a future that can be realized if we choose to make it so. It's a future that requires us to challenge societal norms, question expectations, to defy conventions. It's a future that requires us to believe in the power of the girl child, to support her, to empower her.

One very important thing I need to state here is that **the future is not just about the girl child.**

It's about all of us. It's about creating a society that values and respects every individual, regardless of their gender. It's about creating a world where every girl child can be free to be herself.

So, let's celebrate the future. Let's celebrate the girl child who dares to dream, who dares to aspire, who dares to strive. Let's celebrate the girl child who chooses to shape the future, to change the world, to be herself.

And as we stand at the precipice of this future, let's make a promise.

A promise to support the girl child, to empower her, to believe in her. A promise to let the girl child be. Just be. Because the future is not just female. The future is the girl child. The future is you.

CONCLUSION

The Girl Child's Pledge

It is rumored that there is a sacred place known as the Pledge Square. It's no ordinary square. It is a place where promises are made, vows are taken, and commitments are honored. And at the center of this square, there is a pledge that echoed louder than any other – The Girl Child's Pledge.

The Girl Child's Pledge is not just a set of words. It is a declaration of self-belief, a commitment to self-discovery, and a vow of self-empowerment. It is a pledge that every girl child makes to herself, a pledge to resist societal expectations and live her truth.

"I, the girl child, pledge to believe in myself, in my abilities, in my potential. I pledge to not let societal expectations define me or confine me. I pledge to live my truth, to be myself, to be free."

"I pledge to discover my passions, my strengths, my dreams. I pledge to explore, to learn, to grow. I pledge to not let societal norms limit me or restrict me. I pledge to carve my own path, to create my own destiny, to be me."

"I pledge to empower myself with knowledge, with skills, with courage. I pledge to challenge societal norms, to question expectations, to defy conventions. I pledge to stand up for myself, to advocate for my rights, to be strong."

CONCLUSION

As the words of the Girl Child's Pledge echo through the Pledge Square, they carry with them a powerful message. A message of self-belief, self-discovery, and self-empowerment. A message of resistance, of defiance, of courage. A message of hope, of change, of a better future.

And so, as we conclude this journey, let's remember the Girl Child's Pledge— even though I made that up. Let's remember the girl child who dares to believe, who dares to discover, who dares to empower. Let's remember the girl child who chooses to resist societal expectations, to live her truth, to be herself.

Nonetheless, let's celebrate the Girl Child's Pledge. Let's celebrate the girl who dares to pledge, who dares to commit, who dares to promise. Let's celebrate the girl child who chooses to make a pledge, to live her truth, to be herself. Because in the end, isn't that what it's all about? To let the girl child be. Just be.

And as we stand at the end of this journey, let's make a pledge of our own. A pledge to support the girl child, to empower her, to believe in her. A pledge to let the girl child be. Just be. Because the future is not just female. The future is the girl child. The future is you.

- AMARACHI EZEUDU