



My Story...

by Mary Margaret Pearman

Last year I was the winner of Relate Magazine's True2You Contest. The year with Relate has been an unbelievable experience. I have met so many kind girls through Relate's events who have been such an inspiration to me. They have taught me what it means to make a difference and have helped me to feel confident in sharing my beliefs with others. These girls have been amazing role models, showing kindness and confidence in all of our interactions.

I have learned more about myself just by being a part of Relate magazine than I ever thought I would. I felt that Relate gave me the courage to state my morals and beliefs without fearing judgment. Being a part of this magazine granted me the confidence to face the world knowing that I had a purpose of being strong not only for myself, but for the girls around me. In staying true to myself, I learned that if people did not like the way I was, it was their loss. If a boy could not respect that I wanted to wait for marriage then too bad, he is not worth it.

I have earned respect from people around me, and I respect all other girls who are able to stay true to themselves and be happy with who they are. It is not always simple. There are days when I do not feel like there is anything about me that I can love. High school is not an easy time; every day is a

challenge. There are constant pressures from society to become prettier, skinnier, have sex, drink, and do drugs. You have to remember that you ARE beautiful. YOU are stronger than a computer generated billboard. YOU have the power to overcome all pressures of society because God made you and you have the dignity and strength to stand up for what you believe is right. Yes, you may be made fun of at first. But, I like to think of it as mind over matter. The people who make fun of me for my beliefs are people who are insecure and jealous because I respect myself so much. I know what I want for myself, and I am not willing to jeopardize any of that just because someone makes fun of me. I am proud of who I want to be, and I know that staying true to myself will bring me happiness.

If I could leave you with some advice it would be this: Find what you love and what makes you happy and do it. Learn to love yourself. The decisions you make now will affect you for the rest of your life. Do not ever allow someone to convince you that you must change yourself. Be who you want to be, and whatever you do, stay true to yourself.

These are my wishes for you: I hope you laugh everyday. I hope you dance to your favorite music, and I hope you sing loudly in the shower. I hope you

do what makes you happy, and I hope you learn to love yourself. I hope you are able to build strong relationships with the people around you, and I hope you are grateful for everything God has granted you with. I hope you respect yourself and establish a set of your own morals to abide by. I hope you never let anyone convince you that you must change yourself. I hope you are kind to everyone and are able to share your special gifts and talents with the world. Most importantly, I hope you can just be yourself.

