

Excerpted from *Opening the Kimono: A Woman's Intimate Journey Through Life's Biggest Challenges* by Theresa Rose. Published by Serious Mojo Publications. Copyright ©2008 Theresa Rose. All rights reserved. Please visit [theresarose.net](http://theresarose.net) for more information.

## AN EPIPHANY IN THE TARGET DRESSING ROOM



**T**HE OTHER DAY a woman inadvertently flashed me in the Target fitting room. No, she didn't accidentally reveal her private parts while trying on the latest swimsuits. Her indecent exposure was of something far more personal: her insecurities.

Most of us have been systematically brainwashed into thinking that we simply aren't good enough as we are. Tabloid magazines barrage us with a double whammy, taunting us with airbrushed glossies of the fifty most beautiful people in the world while simultaneously blasting us with unflattering photos of celebrities and their cellulite, protruding bellies, wrinkles, and other human "flaws". One brief glance at these periodicals while in the supermarket checkout line can leave me feeling like Quasimodo by the time I swipe my debit card.

We have been thoroughly convinced we are the embodiment of failure because some advertisement, article, TV show, or movie tells us we don't have the right look, clothes, body, or life. By constantly comparing ourselves to these fantasies, our inner critics label us as too fat, thin, flat-chested, big-breasted, ugly, short, tall, or defective

in some other way. How else can you explain why high school girls across the country are asking for and receiving plastic surgery as graduation gifts?

Given my history of body acceptance issues as well the hyper-critical social climate in which we live, it is challenging for me to be in my body and love it regardless of its size. I've been using the Law of Attraction to traverse these murky waters of the ego. This universal law suggests that, in order for us to manifest our dreams, we need to stay in a positive emotional state as much as possible, focusing on what we want rather than what we *don't* want. A popular phrase that captures the essence of the Law of Attraction is "what we think about we bring about."

I recently decided to employ the Law of Attraction during an excursion to Target. Historically, shopping for clothes has been a horror show where nearly every item I choose either doesn't fit right or looks atrocious on me. How heartbreaking it is to find the perfect, super-cute outfit to wear at some important shindig only to find that I *literally* can't get my butt into it. This type of wardrobe malfunction has happened to me numerous times, causing me to wallow in self-pity for days afterward.

On this particular day of despair I slowly waded through the racks to pick out the few items that a) were in my size, b) were reasonably appropriate for a 37-year old woman to wear, and c) didn't make me look like a house. After several pass-throughs I settled on a few safe items and entered Satan's Dressing Room complete with triple full-length mirrors and the oh-so-flattering florescent lights. During the zip-up process I began to mutter, "I love myself... I'm beautiful just as I am... I'm joyous as I try on these new clothes." As I earnestly repeated my mantras, there was a part of me that actually believed what I was saying! That's real growth.

At the same time another woman about my age entered the dressing room with her mother. As the daughter tried on her selected items she bitterly complained about how awful she looked. Her voice was rife with self-hatred as she repeatedly referred to herself

as “disgusting” and a “fat pig”, telling her mother that fat girls can’t wear the kinds of clothes she chose. She announced that she absolutely *had* to go on a diet right away and continued her self-abusive rant for several minutes. Shockingly, her mother quietly and ever-so-politely *agreed with her daughter*. I was horrified as I listened to this woman verbally flagellate herself with her mother in full support. Moments later the daughter said, “Last year I was a size 4 and now I’m a bulging size 8!” Whoa . . . hold the phone! This chick was a size 8 and she’s freaking out about being fat?! If she’s a fat pig at a size 8, I couldn’t even fathom what my size 16 made me.

Just then it hit me. Like so many of us, this woman had been manipulated by a society that worships thin and degrades thick, broadcasts television programs about extreme makeovers and big losers, and conditions us to believe that a size 4 is normal and a size 8 is disgusting. The media, pop culture, and, worst of all, her mother taught her to value what’s on the outside more than what’s on the inside. Sadly, she bought into The Lie—hook, line and sinker.

As a quiet witness to this stranger’s growing shame I began to feel great compassion for her. It became painfully clear that she was totally unplugged from her personal power and didn’t recognize her own intrinsic beauty. I silently said a prayer to Spirit that someday soon this woman would wake up from her media-induced haze, realize the Divine perfection that she was, and start to love herself unconditionally. Then I slowly turned toward the full-length mirrors, stared unflinchingly at my reflection, and solemnly said the same prayer for myself.