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Kat James, author of *The Truth About Beauty:* *Transform your looks and your life from the inside out.*

A self-proclaimed “informed layman,” Kat James’ rare personal perspective on self-transformation and real (as opposed to merely apparent) victory over an eating disorder has given her insight into compulsive self-sabotage—and freedom from it—beyond what many doctors and nutritionists can grasp. As someone who actually transformed herself beyond recognition (dropping 10 dress sizes, she also reversed a serious liver disorder, chronic eczema and myriad other problems in addition to banishing a 12-year eating disorder). Kat has faithfully translated her principles and the copious medical references that now support it, into a book and a cruise experience that are as exciting to experience as they are physically rewarding.



photo: charles harris

As Kat explains in the introduction of *The Truth About Beauty*, “My motivation for writing the book runs deep. As a teenager, I developed a compulsive eating disorder that dominated my life for 12 years. That bleak period included the first five years of my career as a makeup artist in New York City, where I worked with celebrities such as Sarah Jessica Parker and Martha Stewart and would eventually act as a spokesperson for cosmetic brands such as Maybelline and Revlon and enjoy the spotlight as a TV makeover guru. But despite my deftness at making others beautiful on the outside, it wasn’t until I was 26 that a physical crisis forced me to face my own biggest beauty challenge: to win the compulsive battle against my body and myself that deprived me of my self-respect, my looks and eventually my health. It took this life-altering event for me to transcend the hair and makeup cover-ups I had depended on for so long and

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change everything I thought I knew about beauty.

“Ironically, my real beauty story began when I finally let go of my superficial beauty goals. Motivated in an entirely new way, I stumbled upon a better world of information and options that not only freed me from my eating disorder but from the selfsabotage, broken diets and physical complaints that came with it. Shedding 10 dress sizes was the most physically obvious sign of my breakthrough, but it was a mere side effect of a greater victory: getting my health and my life back and discovering my real beauty potential for the first time.



“Today the woman I am is unrecognizable from the women I was. The path from the depleted, disconnected life I once lived to the way I live and look today had nothing to do with hard work, sweat or deprivation. My escape from the physical fate nature had never intended for me resulted from a complete reprogramming of my concepts of beauty: how to get a great body and how to live life to the fullest.



“My goal is to awaken your excitement, skepticism, curiosity and hunger for more information so that you may grab the reins and direct your own path to your true, vital health and beauty potential.



“I’m not a doctor, nutritionist or dermatologist and this book is not intended as a prescription or treatment but as a source of information. I encourage healthy skepticism and I present the scientific research to validate each area of my approach.”

She dedicates her work “to the woman I was—for whom this book would have been a Godsend and to all the women and men who seek to regain radiance and mastery over their own physical destinies.”



In his forward, Oz Garcia, internationally recognized expert on the applications of nutritional medicine and antiaging techniques states: “*The Truth About Beauty* presents a timely and powerful departure from standard health and diet practices. I find that too many beauty and health experts—including some of my colleagues in the nutrition field—are disconnected with what really makes or breaks people’s ability to look their best and treat themselves in the most caring and healthful way. Kat James not only uncovers these missing pieces, she gives us the physical tools to look and live better than ever—no matter where we start from.

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Garcia continues: “Kat and I share a connection because we both bring a personal story of transformation to our work.

Kat sees the potential in everyday people that most cannot envision for themselves. This book will help readers uncover that physical potential and avoid the extreme, tedious—even dangerous—measures we've been programmed to believe are necessary. Anyone who takes an interest in his or her health and beauty will find powerful inspiration in the pages of the book, in addition to well-honed, practical tips that yield marked improvements in lifestyle.

“Kat James’s approach challenges several basic notions that many in my field rely on when they run out of answers. She provides a much needed wake-up call for the millions of people who could benefit from her message. In addition, I strongly recommend Kat’s teachings to therapists, doctors, fitness trainers and other nutritionists looking to increase their insights into health, beauty and wellness and to improve success with their clients. With *The Truth About Beauty*, Kat James raises the bar for other books in the field by closing the chapter on outmoded, standard diet and skin advice and opening a new way of achieving the beauty that is everyone’s birthright.”

TH: Welcome, Kat. After hearing so much about your incredible book over the past year, and reading it myself, I am really pleased to have the opportunity for you to share your thoughts with our readers.

KJ: Thank you.

TH: In commenting on the book, Suzanne Grimes, vice president and publisher of *Glamour* magazine, states, “Kat James’ approach represents not only an inspiring path for personal triumph but a paradigm shift in the pursuit of beauty whose time has come.” Please share with us your definition of beauty and how anyone can evolve their own concept to a more meaningful and self-affirming one.

KJ: Beauty is the fruit of enlightened selfcultivation, fed by self-knowledge. It’s a radiant medium through which we share ourselves with the world. Many people believe that beauty is just merely a good heart. However, self-knowledge is the catalyst for cultivating our truest, inherent beauty. Redefining beauty in our minds is not a decision but a process. Through a process of “shedding” the mind-sets, distractions and modern assaults, then replacing them with selfaffirming choices—from what goes on and in our bodies to the thoughts and cues that go into our heads—we evolve our own concept, and manifestations, of beauty. By shedding the most stubborn, self-endangering myths about achieving beauty, which I illuminate in my book, we can then begin to peel away the layers of physical self-sabotage and

uncover a much more powerful beautiful asset: vitality. Once we've recovered our senses and sensibilities and risen above the old merry-go-round of problem-causing regimens, we can then look back at it in wonder that we were caught up in something so wasteful of our lives and beauty in every sense.

TH: You state in the introduction to *The Truth About Beauty* that you were prompted to begin your journey toward transformation due to a life altering physical crisis caused by a compulsive eating disorder. When did you decide it would be important to share your experience through the book?

KJ: It was at least three years after my "shrinking phase" ended and my weight had stabilized. Professionally things had really taken off, because everyone thought I finally looked great enough to be a beauty spokesperson. I was receiving a good deal of media coverage, was being quoted in all the beauty magazines and doing makeovers on television. But I was never given the opportunity—or asked to share—the real truth about self-transformation. Truly I never set out to be an author, but at one point enough years passed, and the tools that transformed me still had not become mainstream knowledge, I couldn't go on doing what I was doing. The money was incredible and the easy spotlight was exciting, but I turned down the next beauty spokesperson contract and decided to write *The Truth About Beauty*.

The Truth About Beauty has fulfilled my need to share what happened to me (and what continues to happen to me) and to make that process of shedding accessible to everyone. I take readers through the process of shedding in my book, gradually changing our perception, our sensibilities, as it transforms us, one choice at a time. As we let go of society's imposed ideals and the physical self-sabotage, it encourages and allows our true potential to emerge. Vitality has untold plans for each of us, if we get out of its way. I would have never imagined the physical image vitality had in store for me.

TH: Once you made the commitment, you certainly did your homework. The bibliography section in your book includes over 350 references. It is obvious you felt a serious responsibility to corroborate every detail covered in the text.

KJ: I sincerely believe accepting information on blind faith has gotten us into incredible trouble, including having blind faith in the regulatory agencies and powers that set the guidelines intended to protect us. Even if it is information from my book, I recommend readers share it with their

doctor. Ultimately that interaction becomes a tool to generate enough facts to enable you to make an educated decision. A qualified health care professional needs to be your partner in understanding the problem and executing the solution for any important personal health issue.

TH: A major portion of *The Truth About Beauty* is devoted to guidelines for meeting and cultivating beauty. Can you give us an overview of the elements shared in this section?

KJ: They include *Drink Yourself Beautiful*: Virtually every beauty factor—skin, hair, bones, weight, breast health and overall vitality is affected by the beverages we drink every day. Fortunately our drink habits are incredibly easy to tweak for astounding immediate and cumulative beauty rewards.

Reclaim the Joy of Eating: Learn how to put self denial behind you and cultivate a love relationship with food that will beautify your body, awaken your senses and feed your soul.

When Food is Your Drug: This chapter illuminates the crucial chemical and nutritional factors that are too often overlooked in conventional treatment as well as the dubiously short-sighted approaches which typically take their place.

Achieve Maximum Radiance with Supplements: I consider supplements a key component in any serious beauty and body arsenal. Using supplements to change my chemical relationship with food is what truly freed me from food addiction and healed the other serious health issues and imbalances caused by over a decade of self-abuse. I also give supplements full credit for reversing my liver disorder and many other issues I would have been stuck with for the rest of my life.

Get Back Your Virgin Skin: Good skin is about wisdom, strategy and restraint. More often than not it is what you don't do that makes your skin beautiful. Reversing regimen overkill is where you start. From there you take a comprehensive inside-out approach to each problem.

Purify Your Potions and Paints: It is imperative to achieve a basic understanding of what you put on your body day in and day out. We absorb much of what we apply and some of it could be affecting your vitality and your hormonal state as well as your future. We don't need to know everything. Just the red flags.

Strategize A Whole New Skin Approach: Broadening your understanding of the possible issues that connect your lifestyle with your skin can save a lifetime of wasted energy and dollars on futile treatments.

The Bathroom-Cabinet Makeover: Planning and implementing your own bathroomcabinet makeover to maximize and expand your rewards while minimizing the risks is one of the most exciting ways to engage your self respect and self preservation instincts.

Minimize Your Beauty Wild Cards: Beauty wild cards are the factors we can't always control. Wild cards such as the growing risks of standard health care, prescription drug side effect, unresolved health and hormone issues, stress and depression can affect our looks and our lives in more ways than most of us realize.

Make Life an Authentic Beauty Ritual: Once the process of shedding is underway, we begin to rise above the merry-go-round of "virtual" beauty pursuits and we are suddenly freed up for more meaningful purposes, such as sharing our true gifts with the world and letting our beauty ripple outward through our choices and our voices.

The Living Beauty Resource Guide gives you the most evolved array of rare and one-of-a-kind products, based on my criteria of purity, potency, proof and appeal, including supplements, head-to-toe personal care products, educational organizations and support that lets you expand your own standards for the good life wherever you live.

TH: Please tell us about your upcoming Total Transformation® Cruise and your upcoming PBS special.

KJ: I've just finished taping and hosting my first public television pledge special called "The Truth About Beauty," based on the book. The show will air nationally starting this month (March) on over 150 public television stations throughout the country. It will be scheduled at different dates and times in each city, so check your local listings.

My cruise program, Total Transformation, is a dawn-to-dusk real life experiencing of my principles, from everything you put on and in your body and into your mind, to the natural, self-affirming, high-end makeovers, to the beauty elixirs and "herbal nightcaps," to the sugar-free, premium chocolate on your pillow. I call it the seven purest and most transforming days of your life. The next one sets sail on November 28, 2004. Readers can visit www.totaltransformation.com to learn more.

TH: Thank you, Kat. *The Truth About Beauty* is a landmark achievement. Your broad definition of beauty, including vitality, health, a good heart and the fruit of selfcultivation, fed by self-enlightenment, is valid to men as well as women. I would suggest it as a potential life changing gift and an excellent inclusion to any personal self help library. With your permission I would like to conclude our discussion with an excerpt from *The Truth About Beauty* regarding supplements and synthetic drugs.

KJ: Certainly, and thank you very much for your interest in my work.

“While far fewer double-blind clinical trials are conducted on natural (unpatentable) substances than on synthetic drugs, much of the evidence supporting the supplements is more conclusive than the conflicting science behind conventional controversies, such as mammograms, the role of dietary cholesterol in heart disease, low-fat diets and certain surgical procedures. If supplements such as EFAs were patentable synthetic drugs, the million-dollar commercial might go something like this: Common side effects include relief from dry skin; silkier hair; anti-inflammatory effects throughout the body; reduced joint pain; improved immunity, hormone function, moods and cholesterol levels and countless other desirables. Warning: Nature heals in ways we can only begin to predict.”

—*The Truth About Beauty* by Kat James.

Web Site: informedbeauty.com

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