

# Faith



## Life Actually By Kari Kampakis Don't discount the quiet guys

I've noticed when teenage girls discuss teenage boys, they tend to group them into three categories:

- The "He's so annoying" category (generally because they're rude or make fun of girls and think they're being funny)
- The "He's really nice" category (a handful of boys achieve this label)
- The "He's nice, but he's so quiet" category (a grouping I never thought about)

With the third category — the quiet boys — girls quickly move on to the next topic of conversation. They don't see the potential or consider the possibility that one day, those quiet boys may blossom and prove to be something special. All they know is what they see today, and based on that, a friendship or future relationship seems highly unlikely.

That is why I've started to tell girls: Don't discount the quiet boys. Don't give up on them this early. Some of the best men and dads you know were once the quiet boys in school.

Teen culture has certainly changed since my days, but some dynamics remain. Like the girls I meet through my work, I knew guys who were annoying and couldn't take the hint that girls really don't like to be teased. I knew guys who were nice and fun to be around. And I knew guys who were quiet and hard to talk to until something or someone brought them out of their shell.

Often times, that someone was a girl. A girl who recognized the diamond in the rough, gave them a chance and brought out a new side that nobody knew existed.

I once went on a date with a guy who was very quiet. It worked out because it was a double date with my best friend, and we carried the conversation all night by being silly and obnoxious.

Later, he began to date my friend — an extrovert with a big personality. They fell head over heels for each other, and the relationship transformed him. He became more outgoing and confident. He started to carry himself differently, smile more and let his personality show.

That's when girls realized what a catch he was — largely because of the way he treated my friend. He was a terrific boyfriend, and he adored her in a way that every girl hopes to be adored.

Sometimes the most obvious person to like isn't the best person to like. Particularly in the teen years — when appearances are king and everyone is drawn to the same charming and extroverted people — the best catches fly under the radar. They are often developing their potential and waiting to be noticed by someone who can look past the superficial measures that don't reflect the heart.

I recently spoke to a small group of high school girls, and when I asked what they wanted to discuss, they said boys. Two things I emphasized were:

- The importance of approaching boys as potential friends, not potential boyfriends
- The importance of choosing good guys

More important than how a guy looks or how impressive he appears is how he treats a girl, how he makes a girl feel and whether he has her back. The hallmark of any healthy relationship is helping each other grow, and when a guy is good for a girl, he'll enrich her life, bring out her best and leave her in a better place than when they first met.

For teenagers especially, it's tempting to let first impressions and perfect presentations drive relationship choices. But the truth is people can be like storefront window displays: what catches your attention externally doesn't always match what you find internally.

I believe the best people in life, guys and girls, are like the stores that pleasantly surprise you. The interior outshines the exterior. While this can certainly hold true for extroverts — or anyone with a great exterior — it is often the story of quiet types who may possess important internal qualities that aren't readily apparent. If so, it's worth keeping the door open.

Teenagers are constantly evolving, and they all have some growing up to do. As I hear the frustrated sighs of girls describing the boys they know and the slim pickings of that pool, I'll kindly remind them to give it time and keep perspective. Use their current season of life to invest in friendships, grow in faith and pursue their passions. As they become who they're meant to be, they'll attract who they're meant to attract.

Sometimes the best guys need room to grow. Sometimes they fly beneath the radar before anyone notices. With help from the right influences — like a special girl who sees that potential — they may prove to be something special, an unexpected diamond in the rough.

*Kari Kubiszyn Kampakis is a Mountain Brook mom of four girls, columnist and blogger for The Huffington Post. Her two books for teen and tween girls — "Liked: Whose Approval Are You Living For?" and "10 Ultimate Truths Girls Should Know" — are available on Amazon and everywhere books are sold. Join her Facebook community at "Kari Kampakis, Writer," visit her blog at [karikampakis.com](http://karikampakis.com) or contact her at [kari@karikampakis.com](mailto:kari@karikampakis.com).*



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