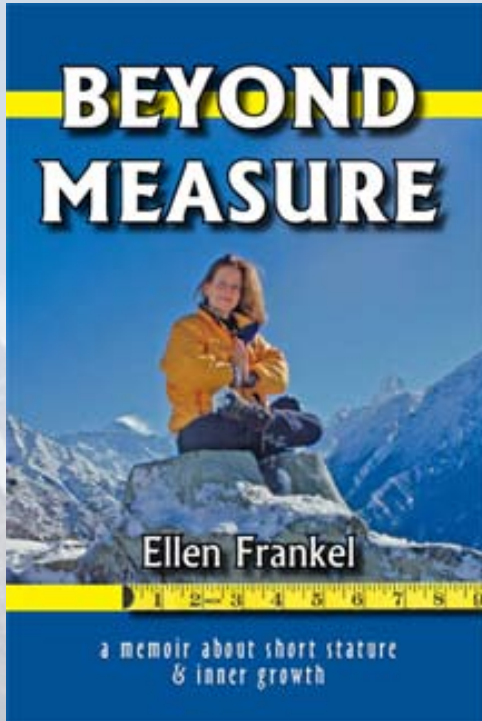


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Beyond Measure: A Memoir About Short Stature & Inner Growth
by Ellen Frankel

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A touching, tender and at times funny account of a woman's struggle for stature in a 4 foot 8½ inch tall body, *Beyond Measure* speaks to the heart of soul-breaking attempts to fit an arbitrary and elusive cultural ideal of physical perfection. Being short isn't the problem, Ellen Frankel insists. Instead, the real difficulties lie in the social bias against short people.

Ellen shares the difficulties of living short in a world in which stereotypes are based on gender and size. She moves beyond her own experience into the political realm in revealing how pharmaceutical companies—with government backing—are expanding the market for human growth hormone treatment by reclassifying healthy short children as patients in “need” of such injections in hopes of making them taller.

She shares the dilemma of being subjected to simultaneous messages that her physical body should be bigger—that is, taller, but not wider—while her expansive spiritual body should be smaller. Self-destructive behaviors emerge from too much attention on the external rather than the internal workings of the soul. Ellen flirts with eating disorders and unhealthy relationships with powerful males in an attempt to compensate for her feelings of not “measuring up.” In the process, her real self slips farther away.

The path out of her dilemma lies in the shadow of the tallest mountain on Earth. It is through a spiritual pilgrimage to Nepal that Ellen discovers her own strength and spirit, and that

We are all dwarfed by Everest and beyond measure.



“If you have ever measured your height or your weight and felt good or bad about yourself as a result, you need this book. In its pages, Ellen Frankel makes an important contribution to human liberation by telling the most fabulous story that can be told, the story of a person coming fully into her own. This book is thought-provoking, heart-rending, and a genuine solace for people of all sizes.”

Marilyn Wann
author of *FAT!SO?*

*Because You Don't Have to Apologize
for Your Size*

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AS A CHILD, I don't remember coming to the realization that I was short on my own. Rather, I recall snippets of conversations about my height mostly from adults who loved me. The words hung heavy in the air.

We called my step-grandmother by her first name, Julie. Upon her occasional visits, she would kiss the top of my head and say to my mother, “Look how short she is! Has she grown any this year?” Pinching my cheek, she'd declare, “You're a little doll!”

Already in a strained relationship, my mother appeared to take these comments as a personal assault, as if Julie had discovered another round of ammunition to fire at the daughter-in-law she held in disfavor. During those times my mother would look at me, her eyes rolling up and her face in a nasty grimace directed at Julie.

“She just wants to make us feel bad,” my mother would tell me later.

I would wonder, alone in my room, if my growing would somehow even the score, make my parents prouder in some way. I knew that I was somehow, if not “wrong,” not exactly “right,” either. Too many tape measures announcing growth (or lack thereof). Too many pats on the head that made me feel foolish.

“Why, you're so tiny!” I'd hear from salesclerks in the depart-

ment stores where we would buy my school clothes.

“Of course, the slacks will be too long on her,” the salesclerk would confide to my mother, “but you must be used to that!” To me she might ask, “How old are you?” Whatever my answer, there was invariably a daughter, niece or neighbor who was three years younger and twice my height.

Then she'd offer, “Think of all the money you'll save when you're older! You'll be able to shop in the kids' department when you're an adult!”

The prospect of ruffled Peter Pan collars and corduroy jumpers into my later years seemed awfully unappealing.

Soon the salesclerk would go off laughing on her way to help the next (taller) customer. At least, most of them were taller. I knew because if my mother saw a short girl in the store, she would have me casually walk over to where she stood and pause for a moment. Mom would do a quick assessment and report back to me on the height differential. I hated those moments, but I loved my mother.

I never really knew what to say when comments and assessments about my height were made. I simply learned to do what girls, especially short girls, were taught to do. I'd smile. I'd stay silent and smile. And shrink a little more inside.