



# Body Image

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## Body image is . . .

- How you see yourself when you look in the mirror or when you picture yourself in your mind.
- What you believe about your own appearance (including your memories, assumptions, and generalizations).
- How you feel about your body, including your height, shape, and weight.
- How you sense and control your body as you move. How you feel in your body, not just about your body.

### Negative body image is . . .

- A distorted perception of your shape--you perceive parts of your body unlike they really are.
- You are convinced that only other people are attractive and that your body size or shape is a sign of personal failure.
- You feel ashamed, self-conscious, and anxious about your body.
- You feel uncomfortable and awkward in your body.

### Positive body image is . . .

- + A clear, true perception of your shape--you see the various parts of your body as they really are.
- + You celebrate and appreciate your natural body shape and you understand that a person's physical appearance says very little about their character and value as a person.
- + You feel proud and accepting of your unique body and refuse to spend an unreasonable amount of time worrying about food, weight, and calories.
- + You feel comfortable and confident in your body.

People with negative body image have a greater likelihood of developing an eating disorder and are more likely to suffer from feelings of depression, isolation, low self-esteem, and obsessions with weight loss.

We all may have our days when we feel awkward or uncomfortable in our bodies, but the key to developing positive body image is to recognize and respect our natural shape and learn to overpower those negative thoughts and feelings with positive, affirming, and accepting ones.

***Accept yourself -- Accept your body.  
Celebrate yourself -- Celebrate your body.***

