



BODY IMAGE RESOURCES FOR TEENS

Positive body image is an inside job

Choose a love list of self-respect, self-worth and self-care



backONTRACKteens
YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE A SQUARE PEG IN A ROUND HOLE

INTRODUCTION TO BODY IMAGE

What do you see when you look in the mirror?

So many people dislike the way they look. They complain about being too fat, too thin, too tall, too short, too curvy, too pale, or too dark.

They don't like their hair, nose, eyebrows, lips, bottom, breasts, legs, feet, toes – and the list goes on. But why? Compared to who?

Even people who seemingly have everything - the ideal body, perfectly defined facial features - aren't happy if they don't feel happy inside. And that's the problem.

“

You define beauty yourself.
Society doesn't define your beauty.

Lady Gaga



WHAT IS BODY IMAGE?

Body image is how you perceive the attractiveness of your own body, translated through individual thoughts and feelings. The emotions experienced from these thoughts and feelings can be positive or negative. This internal processing often results in many people, especially teenagers, wanting to make changes or improvements to their body image.

Remember this: You are beautiful exactly as you are, and there is no need to change.



Feeling beautiful has nothing to do with what you look like.

Emma Watson

WHEN DID BODY IMAGE BECOME AN ISSUE

Imagine travelling back in time and watching a replay of the ideal human body image evolving.



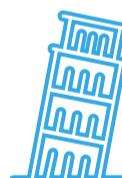
Ancient Egyptian tomb paintings portrayed slim females with slender shoulders and a long waist.



Early Chinese art illustrated petite female figures with a narrow waist and pale skin.



Yet the ancient Greeks held an opposite ideal, portraying females as fair-skinned and fuller-figured. Greek male archetypes were strong and masculine with Adonis-like chiselled bodies.



In 16th century Italy and Victorian England, it was still fashionable to be a fuller figured female, a symbol of the wealth and achievement of their male counterparts. Does this suggest that history interprets beauty in the eye of the culture rather than the beholder?



In 1820, super skinny was born with the corset! Fashion consisted of men and women being 'pulled' into shape at the waist to emphasise the hips and the bust, displaying, of course, the classic hourglass figure. The outcome? Fashion over comfort.



THE ROLE OF THE GLAMOUR GIRL AND GLOSSY MEDIA

The 'Gibson Girl', was celebrated in the United States in the late 1800s. Drawn by US artist Charles Dana Gibson, she represented the refined beauty of a calm, confident, independent woman.

Glossy magazines exploded shortly afterwards in the early 1900s. The golden age of Hollywood blossomed from the 1930s as people escaped, from the great depression and world wars, into a fantasy world of beautiful, sexy, feminine and masculine celebrities.

Pin-up girls and sex symbols with hourglass figures arrived in the 1950s. Playboy Magazine, Playboy bunnies and Barbie with her unrealistic corset-type figure soon became household names.

Nowadays, stick-thin supermodels and celebrities are everywhere, topped up with personality workouts, reckless weight-loss diets and fad foods.

Advertising campaigns appeal to insecurities by promising makeup and beauty enhancements to make us look prettier, feel better and smell better – but why? You were born unique and that's a good thing.

Who says you will be more masculine/feminine or popular if you buy that body spray, those shaving products, those face creams or that hair product?



“

How I feel about myself is more important than how I look. Feeling confident, being comfortable in your own skin - that's what really makes you beautiful

Bobbi Brown



HOW BODY IMAGE ISSUES AFFECT MENTAL HEALTH

UK [surveys suggest](#) that 52% of 11–16-year-olds worry about how they look, and 36% say they would do whatever it took to look good.

According to the Mental Health Foundation, young people inform them that body image is a 'substantial concern'.

Why not choose the natural way to look great? Dieting, cosmetic surgery and steroids are drastic measures frequently considered. These measures can be life-changing decisions in the search to look good, which give no lifetime guarantees. Natural tonics such as sleep, hydration, nutritious food and exercise are far more affordable, accessible and achievable!

Females can become obsessed with being skinny, whereas boys are frequently obsessed with being muscular. Anorexia is a common issue in girls and bigorexia (excessive exercise) in boys to gain the so-called perfect physique. Increasing protein intake, cutting out carbs, adding supplements and even steroids to minimise body fat and maximise muscle gain is gaining popularity.

But again, it's not natural. The pressure of looking a certain way causes anxiety, depression and sometimes suicidal thoughts due to low self-worth.

Studying for exams, learning new material, and choosing subjects to help identify future career prospects can cause immense tension. Presenting in front of classmates and being asked questions on the spot can also cause feelings of anxiety.

“

You have to stand up and say, There's nothing wrong with me or my shape or who I am; you're the one with the problem!

Jennifer Lopez



BODY IMAGE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

The Internet, apps and mobile devices make accessing content super easy. And it's easy to enhance appearance using filters and effects.

With a few touches, you can smooth out your skin tone, remove dark circles, make your eyes look bigger, nose smaller, lips fuller and teeth whiter! But it's not real, is it?

How often do you find yourself scrolling and stopping to compare yourself to a perfectly staged photo? Thoughts question why you don't look like that perfect vision, and your feelings take a nosedive. But who said it was perfect? This fakeness is causing a genuine and global anxiety problem.

Remember this: Comparing is despairing.



BODY IMAGE AND SELF WORTH

Feeling incredible is an inside job, not an outside fix.

Self-worth and inner confidence are how you shine. With it, you radiate positive energy and erase negative body image issues. Consider the definition of self-worth for a moment:

"Self-worth is the value you give to your life and achievements. It's self-respect, self-value. Self-worth is a feeling that you have good qualities and have achieved good things. Respect for or of a favourable opinion of one's self."

Not once does this definition mention eye or hair colour, how much you weigh or how tall you are. It mentions qualities, achievements, and the value you bring to the world.

Would you rather be with a gorgeous guy/gal with a perfect physique who is mean, self-centred and rude or with someone kind, confident and who radiates positivity? When you stop and appreciate these qualities in others, you see them in yourself too.

Acknowledging faults consumes your ability to notice the good stuff – like a vacuum. If this happens, you become disconnected and body image issues attack.

“

My weight? It is what it is. You could get hit by a bus tomorrow. It's about being content. And sometimes other priorities win.”

Melissa McCarthy

BODY IMAGE AND SELF-RESPECT

As you develop self-respect, you will naturally focus on self-care. With self-respect, you'll automatically feel good and want to take good care of yourself.

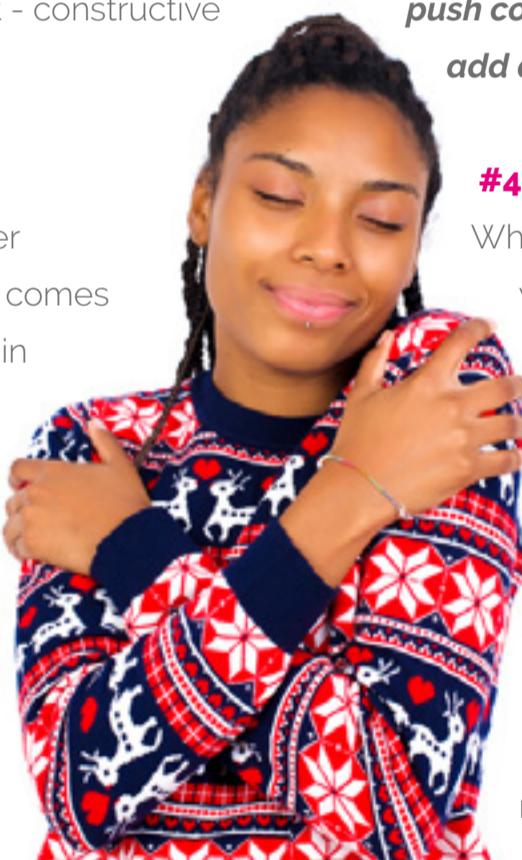
PRACTICE THESE DAILY HABITS TO BUILD SELF-RESPECT AND SELF-WORTH

#1: Stop Comparing

Pull away from social media influencers and filtered photos of so-called beautiful people. Give yourself a break and put your finger scroll to good use by finding feel-good content - constructive and positive.

try repeating this daily:

'I used to think that perfect was the only way to be and now I know that all I need is here inside of me. I appreciate and honour myself and when push comes to shove, all I ever have to do is add a little bit of love.'



#2: Stop the hating habit

Stop the biggest bully you've ever encountered - you! Self-bullying comes from the negative self-talk voice in your head. Practice quietening it today.

#4: Meaningfully look in the mirror

When you look in the mirror, gaze past your physical attributes and look deeply into yourself. Acknowledge the natural qualities and internal gifts that make you remarkable and unique.

#3: Use positive affirmations and incantations

Choose to replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations or incantations -

#5: Ooze confidence

Breathe in new confidence and accept self-validation. That's all it takes to feel more confident.

“

Respect yourself and others will respect you.

Confucius



Listen to the
[full podcast](#)



Read the
[blog](#)

HOW CHLOE SURVIVED THE DARKNESS OF THE ONLINE WORLD ATTACKING HER BODY IMAGE

Chloe's struggles began at the age of 13 when she remembers getting dragged into social media.

When she joined Tumblr (a blogging platform), she started seeing damaging content around bodies and body image.

"I think it put a seed in my mind that triggered an issue with body image. I was seeing Tumblr posts that kind of romanticised eating disorders and having issues with your body image - pictures of girls wanting to be skinny and thin and have the perfect body. I struggled a lot with self-harm around that time because I got into a cycle of self-loathing. I was fighting a battle with everybody who was trying to help me."

A turning point came when Chloe's mum sat her down and said she needed to get counselling.

"I realised how close I was to going into hospital; I was like, 'I don't want to be in hospital, I've got a life, I've got a boyfriend' and this was when I was about to take my GCSE's. I think that was like the eureka moment. I am very lucky because I think a lot of people suffer in silence."

So, what would Chloe say to young people struggling with body image based on her experiences?

"Firstly, I would say that a good relationship with the

people you are close to is probably the most valuable thing you can ever have - to be able to talk about things, be open and raw and honest with someone and say:

'Hey, I'm struggling with this' or 'I've had this thought' or 'I've been doing this'. Enjoy your life. Once you realise that life is valuable and so short, it's so important to take every moment as it comes and appreciate it.

Don't let yourself get into a place you can't return from and that is really difficult - and make sure you can talk to someone."

“

Nobody is perfect. I just don't believe in perfection. But I do believe in saying, 'This is who I am and look at me not being perfect!' I'm proud of that."

Kate Winslet

EXPERIENCE THE BENEFITS OF POSITIVE SELF-CARE

Self-love is arguably the most important place to begin when building a positive body image and to keep growing.

Below are a series of top tips that encourage you to become confident in your skin. With healthier self-respect and self-worth, you'll develop healthy self-care habits.

Step #1: Start your day with positivity

Kickstart your senses by listening to beautiful, upbeat music and showering with a juicy-smelling gel in the morning. Pamper your skin with body lotion, spray your favourite fragrance and step into vibrant clothing with a sparkling smile of confidence.

Step #2: Put on your rose-tinted glasses

Choose to wear rose-tinted glasses and consciously search for goodness around you. Seek out positives and be an optimist, always looking on the bright side. When you do this, you will create positive energy that will affect and infect the people around you.

Step #3: Reinvent yourself

Releasing old negative thoughts will force you to reinvent yourself by creating new positive thoughts.

Swap the 'got to fix it' attitude with a 'got to find it attitude' and begin a journey of discovery about the incredible you.

Step #4: Eat better, feel better

You are what you eat, and as you eat healthier, you will start to feel more energetic and become more active. Boosting your energy will release an abundance of endorphins - your body's natural feel-good chemicals. Stress and tension will fall away from you as you practice these steps, and you'll feel incredible inside. Find your unique style and feel 100 per cent comfortable in your clothes as well as your skin. Build the habit of self-respect, self-worth and self-care and you'll have your love list. It'll be an incredible inside job!

“

I can't think of any better representation of beauty than someone who is unafraid to be herself.

Emma Stone

BODY IMAGE RESOURCES FOR TEENAGERS

Use the resources below to help you learn more about positive body image and choosing a love list of self-respect, self-worth, and self-care.



GUIDED MEDITATION RECORDINGS FOR TEENS

These four guided meditations have been recorded by a professional and created especially for children, teenagers and young people. They will help you to start dealing with any negative feelings and emotions you have around body image. You will find options with and without music, so try them all and settle on the ones that work best for you.

[Breath meditation](#)

[Guided meditation to release stress and anxiety](#)

[Guided meditation for teens to escape to your safe place](#)

[Guided meditation to help you drift effortlessly off to sleep](#)



LISTEN TO OUR PRACTICAL PODCAST THE SPARK TO YOUR SUCCESS

The Spark to Your Success podcast for teenagers and the young at heart releases a new episode every week, packed full of hints, tips and easy ways to maximise your life in a positive and healthy way.

>> [Subscribe to the Spark to Your Success](#)



MORE RESOURCES FOR TEENS

Browse our online shop to explore some of the games and resources available to help you grow as a person.

Remember, everyone is unique. That's what makes you the real you.

>> [Browse the Ignition! shop online](#).



DISCOVER MORE IN THE SPARK TO YOUR SUCCESS BOOK SERIES

Feeling pressure as a teenager can be overwhelming because you encounter many obstacles for the first time. Learn powerful techniques to make you feel awesome and uncover proven ways to overcome challenges successfully. Grab opportunities when they present themselves by understanding what's going on in your head and learning how to find your fuel and your flow.

This book is for teenagers who want to enjoy life to its absolute fullest, so come on – dive in!

>>[Order your signed copy](#)



MORE MEDITATION AND MINDFULNESS RESOURCES

Check out international meditation gurus [Deepak Chokra](#), the late [Dr Wayne Dyer](#) and [Dr Joe Dispenza](#) for more advanced ways to meditate. Browse our online shop to explore some of the games and resources available to help you grow as a person.

Remember, everyone is unique. That's what makes you the real you.

>>[Browse the Ignition! shop online](#)



LEARN MORE ABOUT YOURSELF

Please do share your thoughts and ask questions within our social media community.

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

Everyone is here to help each other and build resilience together to help you become the very best version of your authentic self.



Get in touch

www.backontrackteens.com
info@backontrackteens.com