



Guide to Body Image

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This package was created by Healthy U: Peer Health & Wellness at the University of Manitoba. We are a group of trained, non-judgmental, and confidential student health and wellness leaders on campus.

We provide outreach activities, workshops, and one-on-one support for our fellow students on a variety of health and well-being topics. Feel free to drop in to chat or pick up more information packages.

If you would like to request or attend one of our workshops or events, check out our website for details.



Crash course on Body image

What is it?

Body image is your personal relationship with your body. This includes thoughts, feelings, beliefs, perceptions, and actions regarding your appearance.

Why is it important?

Many people find that dissatisfaction with their body is a starting point for poor self-esteem, social anxiety, depression, or eating disorders. Body image has a huge impact on the way you understand your value and self-worth.

Do I need to improve or enhance my body to achieve positive body image?

No! Achieving positive body image is about gaining peace and acceptance about your body, regardless of what it looks like or what it can do. Body image starts in the mind, not the mirror.



Is it your body or your Feelings?

Get to the root of the problem!

Often when we feel like we're "disgusting," "fat," or "ugly," we're actually recognizing that **something feels wrong**. But there isn't something wrong with your body, there's something wrong with how you're feeling. Take time to recognize your feelings instead of blaming them on your body. Otherwise you are betraying both your body and your feelings!

What can I do about this?

Next time you find yourself criticizing your body, ask yourself what is actually wrong. Do you need sleep? Do you need to eat? Are you sad, stressed, or lonely? **Even if you don't feel like you deserve it, take care of yourself**. Try to keep up with your meals, hygiene, rest, and socializing.

Remember how much your body does for you. Your body needs you to take care of it so you can live the way you hope to. You are not fat for being hungry, you are not lazy for being tired, and you are not selfish for doing things for yourself.



Encouraging healthier Body Image

Treat your body with respect.

Eat healthy and exercise because it makes you feel good, not as a way to control your body.

Any time you catch yourself judging your body, find something you like about yourself.

Wear clothes you feel comfortable in and that fit you now.

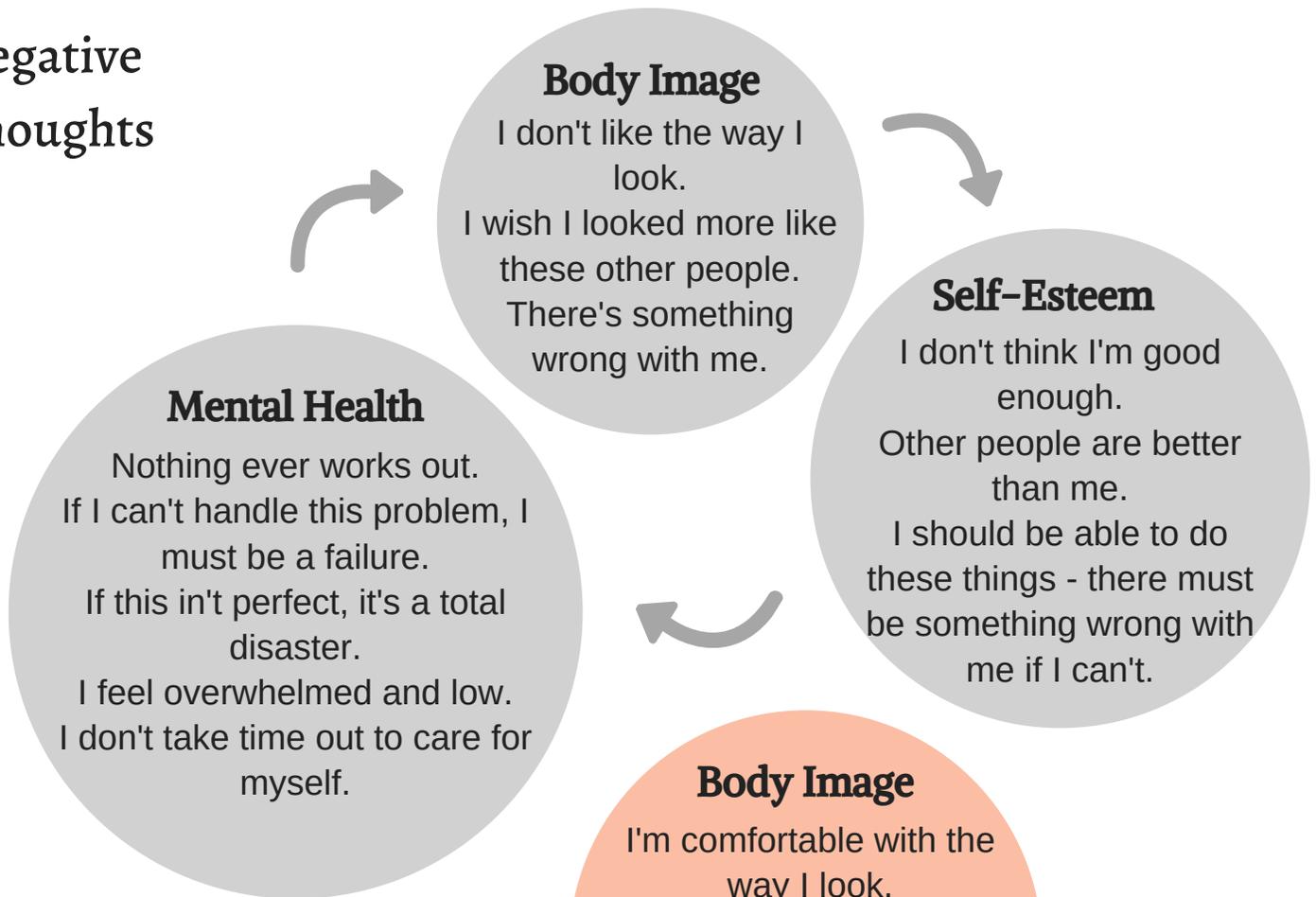
Become aware of how you talk about your body to others - are you looking for validation? Do your comments about yourself revolve around appearance?

When you have negative thoughts, think about what's going on in your life. Are you taking your stress or sadness out on yourself?



Negative vs. Positive Thoughts

Negative Thoughts



Positive Thoughts



positive things about my body

think: things my body lets me do or be

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

appreciating my body

My eyes let me see:

My ears let me hear:

My hands let me feel:

My legs let me do:

Resources for body image improvement



The Body Project

For free workshops to help participants feel better about their bodies, visit umanitoba.ca/student/health-wellness

Women's Health Clinic

Programs and workshops are open to all genders. For more information visit womenshealthclinic.org

Klinik Drop-in Counselling

Drop-in counselling is free of charge. For location and hours, call 204-784-4067 or visit klinik.mb.ca

Online

For information on body image, self-esteem, and physical activity: heretohelp.bc.ca

For information on eating disorders and disordered eating:
gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/mh/eatingdisorders.html