

Self-teach Workbook Unit 1: Body Image

TIME ASSIGNED: 1-2 Hours

Activity 1

Complete a mindfulness exercise. Please read the information below and have a go!

“The purpose of this mindfulness exercise is to provide you with a scene that completely absorbs your attention and distracts you away from your negative thoughts. As you become absorbed in the scene you will deepen your state of relaxation and will notice physical changes. For body image concerns, this technique can be used to help you think about and attend to your body in a different way. You will work towards accepting your body and yourself as a whole. This process begins by becoming mindful of your own inner experiences in the here and now.”



“Negative body image is produced and maintained in your mind. What do you notice about how you think about your body? What affect does this have on you emotionally? How do your negative self statements affect your self-esteem? This exercise will help you release those negative thoughts and begin to feel appreciative of your body and accepting of yourself.”

- (1) “Begin by finding a comfortable position either sitting or lying down in a location where you will not be interrupted. Closing your eyes, allow your attention to focus only on your body. If you begin to notice your mind wandering, bring it back to your body. Take a deep breath through your abdomen, hold it for a few seconds, and exhale slowly. Again... in...and out
- (2) As you breathe, notice your stomach rising and your lungs filling with air. As you exhale, imagine the tension in your body being released and flowing away.
- (3) Inhale...and exhale. Feel your body already relaxing. Now, as you continue breathing, tune into your body. Notice how your body feels. How does it feel where it touches your clothing? Feel the pressure of your body resting on the surface on which you are lying or sitting. Mindfully scan your body from top to bottom. Breathe in...and out.
- (4) How does it feel? What do you see? Which areas of your body stand out more or less? Now, think about your body image. What is body image to you? Take some time to consider your own thoughts and ideas about your body. What are you thinking? What do you see? Breathe in...and out As you think about your body, notice how you are feeling. Are you feeling comfortable, satisfied, dissatisfied, disgusted, frustrated? Whatever you are feeling, it’s ok, let yourself feel.
- (5) Now tune in to the part of your body you dislike most. Spend some time thinking about that area of your body. What are you thinking? Now how do you feel? How do these thoughts



make you feel? Notice how damaging these thoughts can be to your emotions. Now imagine yourself accepting your body as it is. Imagine feelings satisfied with your physical self. What might it be like to feel comfortable with your body?

- (6) You begin to see yourself as a whole, rather than a collection of parts. You appreciate your own beauty. Breathe in...and out. You appreciate all the wonderful things your body does for you. How it rejuvenates you when you need energy, how it relaxes you when you need rest. You feel ok about who you are. Now repeat after me. I accept my imperfections. They don't define me or take away from who I am as a person. I accept this body I am in. There is no need to be perfect. I am free of judgment. I will no longer say negative things to myself. I accept myself. I am ok. Breathe in...and out
- (7) You take a moment now to relax. Breathe in...and out
- (8) You notice yourself feeling more calm, more satisfied. You feel yourself beginning towards a path of self-acceptance. You know that soon you will begin to appreciate yourself. Breathe in...and and out When you are ready...slowly begin to turn your attention back to your environment. You continue to feel satisfied and relaxed. Slowly open your eyes and stretch your body, notice how rejuvenated you feel. Once you have returned to your usual level of alertness, resume your day, continuing to feel relaxed and satisfied."

Exercise above taken from... please see original source <https://www.uhcl.edu/counseling-services/resources/documents/visualization-files/txt-guided-img-body-image.pdf>

Activity 2

Improve your body image by understanding a technique called ‘fogging’. Underline any sentences that interest you.

“Fogging is a simple technique used to slow down a potentially unpleasant situation, give both parties ‘space’ and prevent the situation from escalating further. It works by offering agreement rather than disagreement to someone acting in an aggressive manner. When someone makes an aggressive comment, they are expecting an aggressive reply (this is most people’s natural response) but fogging surprises them by giving an unexpected response. It is a way of sidestepping their issue whilst retaining your viewpoint and integrity, by agreeing with some part of what they say.”

For example, if someone said to you:

You were dressed so ugly at the party yesterday.

Rather than enter conflict, you could try to fog them, by replying:

Yes, I agree my appearance was not perfect, thank you for your opinion.

- ✓ Important note = You aren’t actually agreeing with the person who has said this to you. You are simply defusing the situation. But, if someone has said this to you, reconsider whether the friendship you share with this person is healthy. Talk to a parent, guardian or teacher for further guidance and advice.

“The word “yes” takes them by surprise, slows them down, and can reduce the tension in a potentially explosive situation.”

“When you are in next in a situation that could develop into serious conflict, try this technique and see just how well it works. When done with sincerity, many times, rather than further conflict, the situation is often quickly reversed, leading to an opportunity for further, more constructive conversation.”

Think about a rude comment you heard about yourself or your peer.

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Write down a possible response based on fogging technique.

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The information above has been taken from this source - <http://www.newlineideas.com/team-fogging.html>



It can help to understand that what you are feeling is not necessarily the truth (e.g., just because I feel like everyone is staring at me doesn't make it true).

Think about these questions..

- Consider well known people like Mother Teresa or Bill Gates – would they win a beauty contest?
- Have you loved or admired people for reasons that have nothing to do with their appearance?



Activity 4

Appreciate Your Personality. Highlight your strengths!

Take a sheet of paper (A4) and write down the personal features, skills, attributes that make you an interesting, unique person. Try to think and write down as many ideas as you can. Fill a whole piece of A4 paper.

Read the list out loud and often. Add to it every time you discover something new about your strengths. Think about how many of them are related to your appearance and how many not?

Activity 5

Appearance vs Personality

You need to realise that everyone, even celebrities, have insecurities about their bodies. Ideally we need to appreciate our bodies as unique and our own to manage these insecurities.

For example, if you are insecure about your height, you will find that there are many actresses and actors who are as well. If you are insecure about your skin and how it looks, similarly there are many celebrities who share the same insecurities. Please see the following website with information about Tanzanian Male Model Miko Deo who has a rare skin condition. He has learnt to overcome insecurity and embrace his unique look. He is such an amazing role model! =><https://www.sbs.com.au/news/i-have-skin-that-makes-me-unique-says-model-with-vitiligo>

Choose a celebrity to research! Find out about them, what have they achieved and how have they contributed to society. It is more than their looks!

Celebrity :

Think about what factors had influenced their achievements? (It is more than just their looks!)

1)...

2)...

3)...

Activity 6

My Self Care Calendar

Prepare a calendar for your wellbeing! Find 5 or more days per month which you could dedicate as a self care day. Choose a self care activity for that day and write it down. You can use the template of the calendar below.

How can you nourish your body and do something nice for yourself – something that lets your body know you appreciate it (e.g., take a bubble bath, take time for a relaxation, find a peaceful place to take a rest, practice physical exercises, yoga, running, prepare healthy self-made meals, take care of your hygiene, go for a walk, prioritize sleep etc.).

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATUDAY

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