



Overcoming a Distorted Body Image

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If you look to TV, the media, or any form of advertising, chances are you're viewing unrealistic images of women. Unfortunately, some women feel that, in order to be accepted, they need to have unrealistic weight goals and a distorted body image.

There is no wonder why health issues like anorexia pop up in developed countries. We are told that thinner is better and we might be tempted to take it to the extreme. However, for the majority of women, ***drastic weight goals are unattainable and severely detrimental to our health.***

The Answer to an Unrealistic Body Image

It isn't always easy, but the answer is to ***accept ourselves for who we are.*** When we learn to love ourselves just as we are, we open up to accept love from others. In order to do this we need to change the way we think. There are certain pieces of advice we can use in order to change our previous patterns of thinking.

Here are some tips for overcoming a distorted body image:

- 1. Understanding Imperfection.** Everyone is "imperfect" in some way or another. ***If you wait until you're perfect to enjoy your life you'll never get the chance to enjoy it.***
 - The ladies from the magazines are imperfect too. Images are touched up and women are made to look thinner, without blemishes.
- 2. Don't Talk About It.** One of the important steps toward having a better body image is to talk less about the things you find imperfect.

- When you get together with your friends try not to say things like: "I wish I had better thighs" or "if only I had clear skin."
 - This piece of advice also works for your internal dialog. Whenever you catch yourself thinking negative things about yourself, stop!
- 3. Focus on the Good.** Spend less time worrying about the things you don't like, and spend more time focusing on what you *do* like about your body.
- A woman's body is an amazing thing. It can create life and nourish children. It should be loved, honored, respected, and appreciated - especially by you!
- 4. Set Attainable Goals.** Of course there are certain imperfections that you can do something about. If this is the case, it's important to ***set realistic and attainable goals.***
- If you're overweight, set a weight loss goal that's within your normal weight range. Don't overdo it!
 - If you suffer from face blemishes, try different facial soaps and use an acne prevention gel to prevent pimples.
- 5. Study the Problem.** It may help you to gain an awareness of the widespread problem of body image issues in developed countries. Read some books or do additional research online. Just having an understanding can help you change your perspective.
- 6. Know When to Get Help.** Sometimes body image issues will go above and beyond the average problem and manifest itself as a Body Dysmorphic Disorder. If you think you're imperfect at all times, and you refuse to go out in public unless you have a great deal of time to spend on your appearance, you may have a problem. It can help to speak with a counselor about your thoughts and feelings.

Believe In Yourself

Most people aren't going to be 100% happy with themselves at all times, and that's okay. After all, it's important to question yourself from time to time so you can make positive lifestyle changes.

However, you have to learn to love yourself the way you are. Getting too caught up with your body image can make you miss out on the joys in your life!