



# Week 3 Lesson 2

START NOW

Learn to make peace with your body



# Signs of a Poor Body Image

- Weight loss is one of your main goals and top priorities for most of the days of your life.
- Avoiding being in photos or videos.
- You hate the image in the mirror.
- You avoid and dislike clothes shopping.
- You postpone life experiences: “I will do that when I lose twenty pounds.”
- You have poor eating habits: you either under- or overeat or switch between the two.
- Negative self-comments.
- You compare yourself to others - Self-consciousness and shame.
- Isolation and depression.



# Tips to improve your body image

The good news is that you can improve your body image and with some work you can become confident and love yourself just as you are. While this will not be an easy task to accomplish, it is one that is well worth the effort.



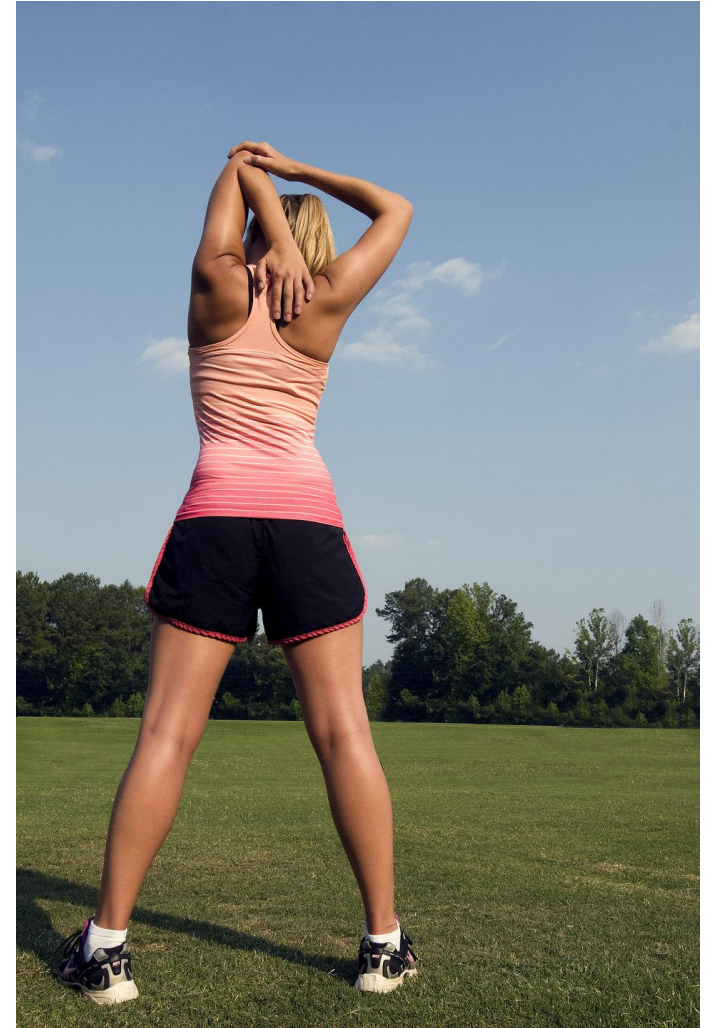
# Eat and exercise for health

Taking care of your body to promote health, not how you look, promotes a positive body image.

When you feel strong and healthy, you will also feel better about yourself.

Avoid fad diets, extreme exercise, and dangerous ways to lose weight like laxatives. These methods can harm your health instead of making you feel and look better.

Continuously going from one extreme diet or exercise routine to another focuses your energy on how you look, not on how you feel. The healthier choice is to eat and exercise to improve and maintain your health, no matter your body weight, shape, or size.



# Eat and exercise for health

As we discussed before denying yourself certain foods often increases your desire for them and can lead to binge-eating things that aren't healthy for you.

Instead, control your food choices by savoring the foods you eat.

Enjoying an occasional treat is better for your health than binge-eating after denying yourself for too long.

The cycle of diet, food denial and over-eating can damage your health and your self-esteem. Make peace with your body by appreciating all the foods that you eat.



# Eat and exercise for health

Take the dance class you've always wanted to or go for a bike ride. Put on your favorite music and dance in your living room or your kitchen. Close your eyes, lose yourself in the song, and move your body how it wants to move.

Go for a hike, try scuba-diving, salsa dancing, swimming, skating, or just simply go for a walk. Do whatever you feel like doing.

If you try new things be prepared to suck at it at the beginning. Everyone sucks at things they do the first time. Don't compare yourself to others.

Don't treat exercise as something that makes you thin because if you don't get slim you will think that exercise is pointless and you will stop doing it. Don't expect anything from it, just do it as a way of caring for your body.

Exercising may become your favorite "date with yourself". You may discover some new music or a podcast you like listening to while exercising. You will enjoy becoming stronger and having more stamina, better posture, and a calmer mind. Weight-loss should be the by-product of exercising, not the goal.



# Don't compare yourself to others

Companies spend incredible amounts of money to make you compare yourself to their version of people who look good. Stop comparing yourself to images you see in ads and to other people you meet.

There is more than one way to look and feel beautiful. Comparing yourself to other peoples' standards can lower your self-esteem and promote a negative body image.

The most physically beautiful person you see may not be kind or helpful. How a person looks doesn't determine their true beauty. Imagine a woman in your life you really love. Does she look perfect. I assume she doesn't and you still love her. Strive to be your best self, not to be a duplicate of others.



# Let go

Don't torment yourself with a closet full of clothes that don't fit or a pantry full of unused diet food.

As you age, your body changes. You don't look the same at 20 as you did at ten years old. You won't look the same at 40 as you did at 20, either. Let go of your previous body image and make peace with who you are today.

Making peace with your body is based on self-acceptance. Don't let others' opinions of how you should look cloud your view of yourself. Focus on health and happiness, not physical characteristics. Good people come in all shapes and sizes.

When you do fail at something, learn from your mistake, and let your mistake go. Use your failures as lessons, not as reasons to dislike yourself.



# Do what works for you

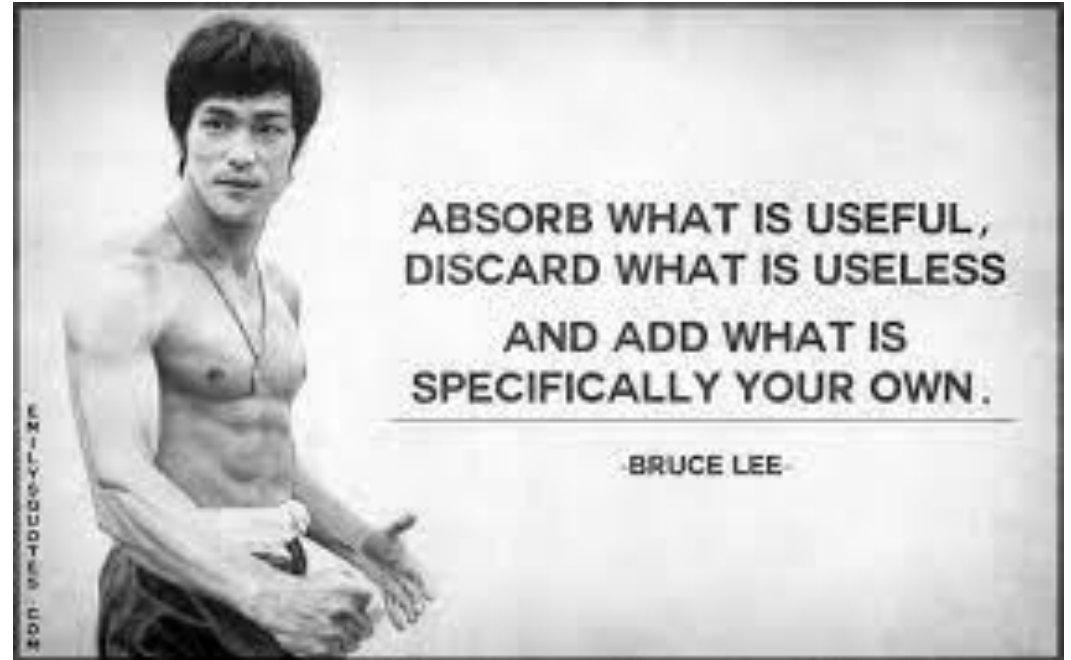
Instead of following someone else's diet and exercise plan, focus on what works for you that makes you feel healthy and happy.

You are not a better person because you eat or don't eat a particular food or because of how you look in a certain style of clothing.

Try new things, and when you find something that motivates you, do what works to keep you positive and healthy.

As Bruce Lee said:

*"Absorb what is useful, discard what is useless and add what is specifically your own."*



# Separate fact from fiction

Negative thoughts and emotions can make you believe that you have physical flaws when, in fact, you don't.

**Your thoughts and feelings are not facts, so don't judge yourself based on them.** For example, if you think that people with certain size or hair colour or whatnot have more friends, **your mind can turn your thought into a belief.**

It won't matter how friendly you are or how outgoing when you look in the mirror, you will see a person who doesn't have enough friends.

In reality, friendship isn't based on size or hair colour. To love what you see in the mirror, you need to separate your negative thoughts and emotions from who you truly are.



# Consider what is really bothering you

Being upset about something other than how you look can carry over into how you see yourself.

If your boss was mean to you, you may start to feel stupid or unable to work properly.

As your self-esteem suffers, so will your view of how you look. If you see yourself as a failure, you won't like anything about yourself.

Before you tell yourself how you look is a problem, consider what is really bothering you instead.

Sometimes we distract ourselves from the real problems in our lives that we don't want to deal with by obsessing about how we look. If this obsession fills up our head all day, we don't have to think about solutions to the real problems.



# Find positive support

Positive people tend to attract other positive people. They support each other and build each other up, not tear each other down.

To look in the mirror and like what you see, spend your time with positive people who support your mental and emotional wellbeing.

Positive support helps you separate your fictional negative thoughts from who you really are, so you see yourself as a whole person.

Join our private group or talk to me if you need positive support in your life.



# Practice gratitude

When you look at each day as an opportunity to learn, grow, and enjoy life, you become grateful for what you have and appreciate the good in your life.

Practicing gratitude teaches you to focus on the positive and improves your self-esteem by reminding you of your good qualities.

When you look in the mirror, gratitude helps you love what you see.

Each morning write down or think about at least 5 things that you are grateful for. You can have a gratitude jar too.

Be grateful for your body parts too. Even though they may not look exactly the way you would like them to look, they work hard all day to keep you alive, take you to places, do your everyday activities, have fun, make a baby, make love, learn and all the other activities you do.



# Homework

- Eat and exercise for health
- Notice when you compare yourself to others and stop doing it. Remind yourself that good people come in all shapes and sizes.
- Let go of perfectionism and accept yourself as you are now. You can still want to change but it's much more effective if you do it while you love and accept yourself instead of hating yourself into change.
- Do what works for you, don't copy other people.
- Consider what is REALLY bothering you.
- Separate fact from fiction. Is that thought REALLY true?
- If you need help to do that have some supportive people in your life who helps you separate your fictional negative thoughts from who you really are.
- Practice gratitude daily. Have a gratitude jar if you like.

