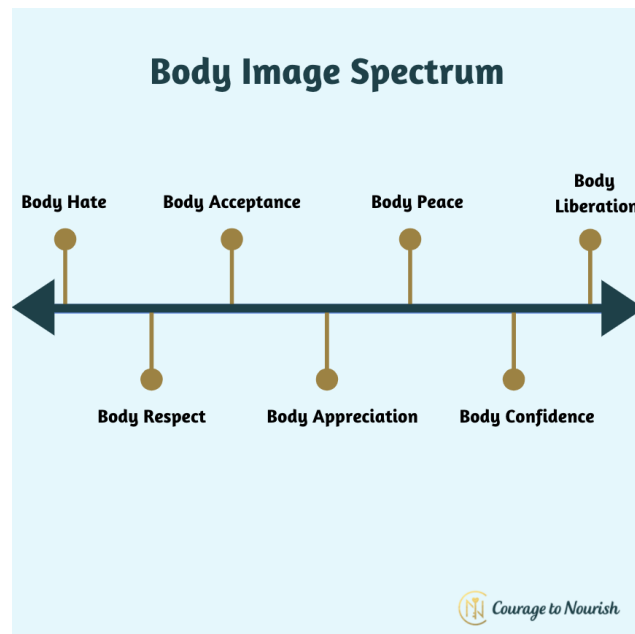


Body Image Workbook

By Alex Raymond, RD, LD, CEDRD Bobbi Boteler, RD, LD, CEDRD

Thanks for downloading our body image workbook! We hope this will help you discover a more meaningful relationship with your body. I'm sure you know, eating disorders completely disconnect us from our bodies and their signals. And, in our culture, we are taught over and over again how our bodies define our worthiness. A huge part of this body image journey is finding worthiness outside of how your body looks. This workbook is a place to start.



We created this body image spectrum to show how body image, just like food, isn't black and white. We don't either love our bodies or hate our bodies. And we can exist in multiple areas of the spectrum at anytime throughout the day. If you're struggling with your body image, it's nearly impossible to go from hating your body to loving your body. It actually takes a lot of internal work and intentional thought. The goal of this workbook is to lay some of that groundwork. First, we'll talk about some definitions. Then, we'll get into some journaling and self reflecting activities.

Body Respect: Body respect is the first step to stop hating your body. In body respect, you'll begin being kinder to your body and give it the nourishment and self care it deserves. You don't have to love your body or like how your body looks in order to respect it. How have you shown your body respect recently?

Body Acceptance: To me, body acceptance is getting to a place where you understand the attempt to change your body may result in using disordered eating or exercise behaviors. This doesn't mean you like your body, or even are accepting of how it looks, but feeling more ready to move on from wanting to change it. This is not "giving up" or "failing!" In fact, it's quite the opposite. You are beginning to see you have a life and worth outside of your body's looks.

Body Appreciation: In this stage, you begin to appreciate what your body can do for you. You begin to see your body has worth outside of what it looks like. Yes, you can appreciate the physical things your body does. For example, your heart beats and your arms hug. But, it's important to appreciate what your body does on a bigger scale. Allowing you to be present in your life and with people you love.

Body Peace: Aah body peace. Here, you may begin to feel okay with your body and even start to become at peace/okay with what it looks like. But, you know your body doesn't define your worth. You might not feel totally confident in your body, but you've accepted the fact, and are at peace with the fact, you can't change it.

Body Confidence: Many of us want to change our bodies in order to feel more confident. Well, the good news is you don't have to change how your body looks in order to become more confident in yourself. As you start to intentionally challenge negative body image thoughts, you'll begin to notice an increase in confidence. In this stage, you might notice confidence is somewhat based on how you think you look from one minute to the next, but you're slowly starting to find being social and fun isn't based on looks. You'll also find you're spending more time with people you love, spending less time thinking of your body and wearing clothes you like and feel comfortable in.

Body Liberation: Body liberation! Body liberation is finally breaking free from society's body image standards. You are fully aware that your body doesn't define your worth and you fully accept that. Sure, you may not totally love the way you look all the time, but it doesn't matter. What your body looks like won't prevent you from engaging in your life, finding love, a dream job, clothes shopping, traveling....etc. You can appreciate all the little things your body does for you. Judgments about your body or other people's body's may pop into your mind, but they are often ignored or easily reframed.



Website: couragetonourish.com

Phone: (301) 202-4532

Email: hello@couragetonourish.com

Location: College Park and Columbia, MD

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Activity #2: Body Respect

As I mentioned earlier, body respect is the first step along this body liberation journey. You don't have to love (or like) the way your body looks in order to show it respect. Let's take a dive into body respect within the context of your experience.

1. What does body respect mean to you?
2. How are you currently showing your body respect? (Example: eating regular meals, taking a rest from movement, taking medications regularly, getting adequate sleep).
3. What are other ways to show your body respect? (Even if you're not currently doing them)
4. Is there anyone in your life who is a "body image role model?" Who smashes beauty standards and eats intuitively?
5. How does your current perception of your body prevent you from or allow you to showing your body respect?



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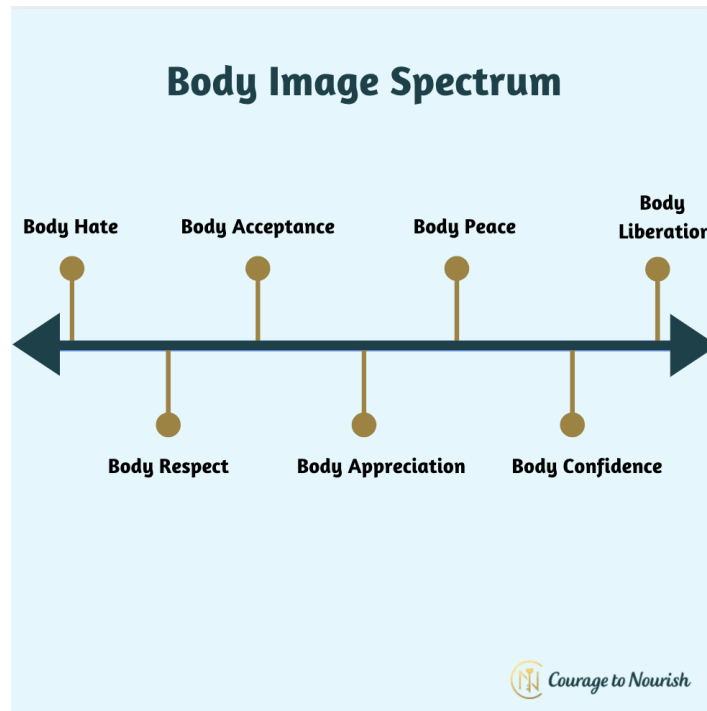
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Activity #4: The Body Image Spectrum

Let's go back to the spectrum.



Think about what it would be like for you at each point on the spectrum. What would your life look like? What would change? What would be the same?

What would need to happen for you to get to the next "phase?" What would need to happen to eventually get to body liberation? This may be tough to imagine, so it's okay if you're not sure or if it's tough to say.

Activity #5: Goal Setting

Use this page as it feels necessary. If you're not ready to "set goals" surrounding body image. That's okay. Feel free to think about it and revisit.

List 3 ways you can show your body respect. Choose one as a "goal" for this week.

List 3 ways body image gets in the way of your life. Choose one as a "goal" to jump in and do this week.

Choose a day to wear an outfit that may feel uncomfortable to you. And outfit that you wait to wear until you have a "good body image day." Perhaps this is a pair of jeans. Jot down a few thoughts on how the day went.**Please note: if the clothes are too small or too big, donate them. It's important to find clothes that fit properly so you can enjoy wearing them.

List 3 negative body image thoughts that often pop into your head. How can you reframe them?

What are you proud of? How can you practice this more regularly?



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