

Love Your Self

Body Image #2: Challenging Body Ideals



You likely have a “body ideal” – an image of how you think your body should look. Have you ever questioned where this “body ideal” came from, how striving for it affects you, and whether you want to continue to hold it for yourself?

1. How would you describe your “body ideal”? Note as many details as you can:
2. How long have you had this “body ideal,” and how has your ideal changed over time?
3. Is there a specific person who is your “body ideal model” – a friend, family member, or a celebrity?
4. How has the media influenced your “body ideal” – are there specific images from TV or magazines you like?
5. Find some images from a magazine or the internet which reflect your ideal – how do you compare?
6. Reflect about how striving for your “body ideal” has influenced you – do you ever feel “good enough”?
7. Sit in a public place and watch people go by – how do they compare to your ideal?
8. Continue watching people – and find one feature about each person which you appreciate:
9. Look in the mirror at your own image – and find one feature which you appreciate:
10. What would happen to your “body ideal” if you didn’t have anyone to compare yourself to?
11. Look in the mirror again, free of the influence of your “body ideal.” What do you see?
12. Create a new “body ideal” which represents your “True Beauty” – how would you like to describe this?
13. Design your own advertisement for “True Beauty” – what images and words would you like to use?

Pause to notice the difference between the “body ideal” held by your Eating Disorder (ED) vs. Intuitive Therapist (IT).