



Body Image Reflection Worksheet

Exploring Your Relationship With Your Body

Where did my relationship with my body go wrong?

Sometimes there is an obvious moment we can point to: a comment someone made, a difficult experience, a trauma, or a time when our body changed.

Sometimes there isn't.

Body Image distress may have developed slowly through years of messages, experiences, expectations, comparisons, and beliefs about what your body is supposed to look like.

Maybe you grew up with a lot of pressure to succeed. Maybe perfectionism has made you feel like you're never quite good enough. Maybe you learned early on that appearance affects how people are treated. Maybe social media changed the way you see yourself. Maybe someone made a comment about your body that stayed with you.

Or maybe you're not sure where it started at all.

You don't have to find one single cause in order to begin healing.

Exploring where these beliefs came from can help you understand why your body feels so difficult to live in now. Once we understand the beliefs underneath body dissatisfaction, we can begin to question them and find new ways of meeting the needs that have become attached to changing our bodies.

Body image work takes time. It is not about waking up one morning and suddenly loving your body. It is about gradually changing the way you relate to your body, your thoughts, and yourself.

Part 1: Look Deeper

Before trying to change the way you feel about your body, let's get curious about **what you believe changing your body would actually give you.**

There are no right answers here. The goal isn't to judge your thoughts, but to understand them.

1. What do I believe changing my body would give me? Maybe your answer is:

I would feel more confident.

I would feel more in control.

I would feel happier.

I would feel more accepted.

I would finally feel good enough

Choose one of your answers and get curious about it.

What would that actually look like in my life? What would I do differently? How would I feel differently? Why do I believe changing my body is connected to this feeling or experience?

Then ask yourself:

Is changing my body the only way I could experience this? What are other ways I could work toward this feeling or need?

2. Where did I learn this?

Sometimes there is a clear experience we can point to. Other times, our beliefs developed gradually through years of messages and experiences.

Consider:

- What did I hear about bodies, weight, or appearance growing up?
- How did the people around me talk about their own bodies?
- Did I receive comments or criticism about my appearance?
- Did I learn that being thinner, more attractive, or more “put together” made someone more worthy or successful?
- Did I experience bullying, comparison, or rejection?
- Have social media or cultural messages affected the way I see my body?
- Have perfectionism or high expectations made it difficult to feel “good enough” in other areas of my life?

3. What have these beliefs about my body cost me?

What have I avoided because of how I feel about my body? What have I postponed until I lose weight, change my body, or feel more confident? How has body image distress affected my relationships, social life, eating, movement, intimacy, work, travel, or ability to be present? How much time and energy do I spend thinking about, checking, comparing, or trying to change my body?

Then consider:

What would I like to have more room for if body image took up less of my mental energy?

Part 2: Building a Different Relationship

Understanding where your body image struggles came from is important. But healing also involves learning new ways to respond when difficult thoughts and feelings show up.

The goal isn't to force yourself to love your body.

It's to build a relationship with yourself that is **less controlled by appearance and more connected to the life you want to live.**

1. **Come Back to Your Values.** When body image takes up less space, what would you want more space for?

What matters most to me?

What kind of person do I want to be?

What relationships do I want to nurture?

What experiences do I want to have?

What do I want my life to be about beyond my appearance?

Choose one value that matters to you.

What is one small action I can take this week that moves me toward that value, even if I don't feel completely comfortable in my body?

2. Practice Self-Compassion

Notice how you speak to yourself when you're struggling with your body.

What do I say to myself when I don't like how I look?

Would I speak to someone I love this way?

If not:

What would I say to someone I care about who was experiencing the same thoughts?

Try offering yourself some of that same understanding.

Self-compassion doesn't mean convincing yourself that you love everything about your body.

It means recognizing that **you deserve kindness even when you're struggling.**

3. Build Awareness Around Your Thoughts

Body image thoughts can feel like facts, especially when you've been having them for a long time.

Instead of trying to get rid of the thought, practice noticing it.

When a difficult thought comes up, ask yourself:

What is the thought?

What emotion is underneath this thought?

What does this thought make me want to do?

If I didn't automatically believe this thought, what else might I notice?

You don't have to make the thought disappear. You can have the thought without automatically acting on it. The goal is to create enough space between the thought and your response to choose what comes next.

“I'm having the thought that my body isn't good enough.”

And then:

“What would I do right now if I wanted to act according to my values rather than this thought?”

You don't have to win an argument with your thoughts. You can notice them, make room for them, and still choose where you want to put your time and energy.

Remember...

There may be days when you feel comfortable in your body and days when you don't. That doesn't mean you're moving backward.

Healing isn't measured by whether you love your reflection every day.

It can look like spending less time checking or comparing. Eating without needing to “make up for” what you ate. Wearing something because you like it rather than because it hides your body. Going somewhere even when you don't feel completely confident. Being present in a photograph instead of worrying about how you look. Choosing your values over the voice telling you that you aren't good enough yet.

You don't have to change your body before you start living your life.

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