

## Ten Tips for Developing a Healthy Body Image



*Try to spend at least five minutes a day on one of these suggestions and see if you notice any improvement in how you feel about yourself and your body.*

- 1) Begin to cultivate listening to your body and its hunger and satiety cues. Eat when you are hungry. Stop when you experience an internal sensation of fullness. Do not allow externally imposed guidelines – like diets – to override your internal cues.
- 2) Regard your body as the “instrument of your life” that enables you to do many important and gratifying things. Create an inventory of all the wonderful things you can do with your body.
- 3) Create a list of people you admire who have contributed in important ways to your life, your community, or to the world at large. Remind yourself of the qualities that these people had that enabled them to make such a valuable contribution. You will most likely find that their physical appearance had very little to do with why you admired them and why they were able to be so successful.
- 4) Decide how you want to spend your energy: pursuing the “perfect” body, or enjoying nurturing relationships with your family, your spouse or partner, and your friends; pursuing your interests and hobbies; learning; exploring; and so much more.
- 5) Put signs on your mirror, in your car, or any place visible that say things like, “I’m beautiful inside and out” or “I love my body just the way it is.” Make up a quote that is personally meaningful and useful to you and affirm it to yourself when you find yourself starting to get into negative self-talk.
- 6) Count your blessings, not your blemishes.
- 7) Ask for support and encouragement from friends and family when life gets stressful instead of taking your feelings out on your body and yourself.
- 8) Find a method of exercise that you enjoy doing and do it regularly – not to lose weight or to eliminate “excess calories” – but because it makes you feel good.
- 9) Work towards self-acceptance and self-forgiveness as much as possible.
- 10) Every morning when you wake up, thank your body for resting and rejuvenating itself so you can enjoy your day. Every evening before you go to bed, thank your body for what it has helped you to do throughout the day.