

Body Confidence for Women & Tweens: “Tween2Queen” Manual



By Nicole Irlbeck

Build your Body Confidence through Movement, Connection, and Creative Expression

Tween2Queen builds positive self-esteem in tweens and their mentors by engaging leadership skills and courageous movement to help girls learn self-efficacy. It is our mission to develop strong women who love themselves wholly and who believe in their value and worth so much that they are empowered to lead others to do the same. We engage the body to build up your confidence muscle so you can crown your inner tween a queen. *(Insert a short bio of yourself and your interest in the subject matter here)*

This workshop provides tools to develop Body Confidence through interactive movement, creative play, and supportive conversation.

ALWAYS ACT
LIKE YOU ARE
WEARING AN
invisible
crown.
CHERRYBAM.COM

A crown is worn (typically by queens) as an emblem of sovereignty, royalty, and dignity.

This very moment you are a queen (or King!)

You are sovereign (having authority) **over your body**,
You are brilliant (attractive, knowledgeable, powerful)
You have dignity (innately worthy, esteemed, and able to help others feel the same)

"There is deep wisdom within our very flesh, if we can only come to our senses and feel it."

- Elizabeth A. Behnke, PhD, Coordinator and Senior Research Fellow of the Study Project in Phenomenology of the Body

"We will be in tune with our bodies only if we truly love and honor them. We can't be in good communication with the enemy."

-Harriet Lerner, PhD, clinical psychologist, author of The Dance of Anger

****Participants Take the Body Image Assessment and Collect the Tests****

- Have the participants write their score on their personal Body Image Score Sheet
- Discuss the outcomes to see if they were surprised at all with their results?

Rules of the day: Have fun. Be willing to let yourself be vulnerable by engaging in conversation and activities. Keep what is in this room confidential.

Body Image is the mental picture you have of your body, along with your feelings, thoughts and judgements about your body.

*Write down the first thing you think about when think about your body:
“My body is”...*

Why does my body matter?

It might be easy to think that because you love books, you really love food, or would rather watch a movie than be active, that you can just disassociate from your body and pretend it doesn't matter. Ultimately, you aren't you without your body!

There is no one who can attest to this more than a quadriplegic who is confined to their body whether they can use it or not. Imagine having to have someone else move your body for everything you do- bathing, turning in bed, brushing your teeth, etc. And although their body may not function, it is still theirs. Just like your body is yours. Sometimes in our culture we place such an emphasis on perfection, that we forget how blessed we are to have the simple things- we take our bodies for granted. Our health is one of the greatest gifts and most precious commodities we have.

Science shows, as do centuries of ancient healing arts, that the mind and body are deeply connected:

- * At Carnegie Mellon University, one researcher discovered that the more stress or more negative emotional state a person has, the more likely that person is to catch a cold when exposed to cold germs.
- * At Harvard, studies have shown that meditation, a simple focus on thoughts and emotions, can help lower high blood pressure, decrease levels of chronic pain and diminish nausea that accompanies chemotherapy.
- * Your gut has its own neurotransmitters (chemical messengers) that respond to and remember experiences, providing a physiological basis for intuition and gut feelings. Even the immune system acts as an extension of the mind, responding to psychological stress and influencing your mood.
- * The brain uses what is happening in your posture, breathing, and muscles to understand your emotional state and self-image. In fact, social psychologist Amy Cuddy shows how “power posing” -- standing in a posture of confidence (arms in a “V” and chin lifted or on two feet with hands on hips), even when we don't feel confident -- can affect testosterone and cortisol levels in the brain, and might even have an impact on our chances for success.

Your body matters because your body is connected to everything you do and how you appear in the world. It is the vehicle that provides us with the ability to experience life through our senses.

"I finally realized that being grateful to my body was the key to giving more love to myself."
-Oprah Winfrey

We all come in different shapes and sizes.



Just like our own fingerprint, no two bodies are exactly alike.

Our bodies are also always changing throughout our life no matter what we do to "control" them, whether it's because of puberty, pregnancy, or aging. However, our body image isn't all about what we think, we are influenced by the opinions of others too.

Write down the first thing you think about when you remember a comment someone said to you about your body (either positive or negative).

How did this make you feel?

When you dislike your body or specific parts of it, this is called having a *negative body image*. Obviously, *liking* your body correlates with a *positive body image*. Compliments are wonderful things, but just like negative comments, we can grow to depend on them too much to define how we feel about ourselves.

- 7 in 10 girls believe they are not good enough or do not measure up in some way including their looks, performance in school and relationships.
- 80% of children who are 10 years old are afraid of being fat.
- More than 90 percent of girls – 15 to 17 years – want to change at least one aspect of their physical appearance, with body weight ranking the highest.
- The top wish among all girls is for their parents to communicate better with them which includes, more frequent and more open conversations, as well as discussions about what is happening in their own lives.

Here's an amazing fact:

Speaking of unique fingerprints, did you also know that humans also have unique tongue prints? And did you know that your nose and ears continue growing throughout your entire life? What's up with that?!

Why so negative?

Studies show that *exposure to images of idealized beauty increases dissatisfaction, depression, and anger, and lowers self-esteem in both women as well as men.* When women are dissatisfied with their own bodies, pictures of ultra-thin, beautiful models in magazines and TV can reinforce those negative feelings. These media images can make them feel worse about their size, their skin color, or a any number of other physical features.

While it may be natural to notice our own flaws, having a negative body image can escalate to the point where people hate looking at their own bodies and will do anything it takes to achieve their “ideal body”. Negative body image can lead to low self-esteem, social isolation, regression in achievement, and reduced participation in physical activity.

Negative body image can create such an obsession with weight that it leads to disinterest in school or work and can snowball into a full blown eating disorder. People with negative body image are much more likely to resort to harmful activities such as drug and alcohol use, diet pills or laxative use, unsafe tattooing or piercing, or unsafe sexual activity with multiple partners. Any kind of negative obsession with how you look compared to others takes energy away from maximizing who you are!

As it turns out, others’ opinions of us matter greatly.

Our body image is influenced by:

- Comments from family, friends and others about our, their, and other people’s bodies, both positive and negative
- Ideals that we develop about physical appearance, particularly based on peer pressure and media exposure
- The frequency with which we compare ourselves to others
- Exposure to images of idealized versus normal bodies
- The experience of physical activity
- The experience of abuse, including sexual, physical, and emotional abuse
- The experience of prejudice and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, ability, sexual orientation or gender identity
- Sensory experiences, including pleasure, pain and illness



The media influence is everywhere. Just look at Barbie and GI Joe Extreme. If Barbie were life-sized, she'd be at 76% of a healthy body weight – a weight consistent with acute hospitalization. And GI Joe would have biceps almost as big as his waist - bigger than most competitive body-builders!



glamour magazine images

By the age of 21, the typical American will have watched over one million commercials. What we are not told, is that actresses and models weigh 23% less than the average woman, and that the current media ideal of thinness is achievable by less than 5% of the female population.

****Discuss the image above:**

What's wrong with the picture on the left?

Why does the picture on the right appeal to people more?

We spend an alarming amount of time worrying and striving, obsessing, and often times torturing ourselves to live up to what we *think* will calm our fears of inadequacy...all to wake up one day wondering why we are SO tired.

Whether real or perceived, the thoughts, words, and actions of others DO have an impact on us, but we have a choice about how we will let it move us. The biggest tragedy of our lives would be to let someone else dictate how we feel about ourselves when we have the power to love ourselves, and our bodies, unconditionally. We will never live up to the 'standards' that are out there for perfection in size, shape, skin tone, or weight. ***By pursuing these 'standards' we trash the precious time we have to develop our own ideals and stand up for what makes us shine.***

YOU get to decide what you will let influence how you feel about your body!

Activity #1: Name Game (5min)

This activity is meant to help participants overcome their fear of standing out, looking different or feeling judged. The idea is to break down the wall of self consciousness and let yourself just be!



- Group leader models saying a name and with a gesture they create. When gesturing, be sure to be confident in your risk taking with your body and voice. The other participants will then repeat your name and gesture with you. Have each participant do the same and end when everyone has completed their name and gesture with applause.
- The second round, everyone repeats the same process and round one, but does their best to remember the names and gestures to learn them.
- The final round, participants will all do the names and gestures together. End with big applause.
- Recommend that each person do their best to remember and approach other participants by their name. It is affirming and important to recognize others as often as possible by name.

Studies show that when we pair a strong physical action with the words we use, we can re-program our brain to create a new response to an emotional trigger. (based on Neuro Linguistic Programming)

Creating Positive Body Image and Self-Confidence:

So, how do we overcome negative body image and embrace positive body confidence?

Dr. Nor Ashikim Mokhtar- a gynecologist in Malaysia, found ***the most powerful influences on women's appreciation of their bodies is:***

- 1) *How they believe "important others" view them.* (friends, parents, coaches, etc)
- 2) *How well they focused on the inner workings of their body -- or how their bodies function and feel -- rather than how they appear to others.*
- 3) *How much they perceive that they have strong social support.* This perception empowers them to be less concerned about their physical appearance and more concerned about how their bodies function, which encourages appreciation of their own bodies and a healthful approach to eating.

During our tween years, at a time when our bodies are changing the most, we are also faced with choosing between cliques or social spheres. We are being presented for the first time with athletic pursuits, drama, or academic achievements that will form a potential stigma for how our peers relate to us.

It is in these years that a social support system (even if it is just one person) can make a world of difference for tweens. Let's not forget that our bodies change throughout life, especially as we approach menopause. Why not help each other out by lifting one another up and learning as we navigate the changes together!?! Interestingly enough, males are not exempt from life transitions either. As Testosterone decreases, men experience anxiety and depression and weight gain very similar to women.

Health is defined in many different ways and can range from being free from illness, to having soaring energy, strength, and stamina- depending on who you talk to. It is no wonder we can get confused about what we should or shouldn't do to take care of our bodies. Some are starving themselves to fit in, while others are holding back their emotions with food as a way to cope with the stress of life.

Where do you rate your health?

I'm free from illness
and that's it

I'm keeping the status quo

I am energetic and vibrant

Given the choice, most of us would agree that we would rather have vibrant energy and vitality rather than simply existence with freedom from illness.

Studies show that girls' and boys' self-esteem peaks when they are 9 years old- however both sexes have a significant drop in self esteem in adolescence, and the drop in self esteem was twice as great in females.

What can we do to influence self-esteem so that it continues to build throughout a young girls (and boys) life?



You build self-esteem and confidence in youth by:

- 1) Connecting them with strong friends and mentors with positive self-esteem and leadership skills;
- 2) Engage them in situations where she/he learns self-efficacy (the belief one can do something) which can build self-esteem

In this workshop we will focus on fun movement, inspiring creativity and bold conversation to develop a connection with mentors and leaders who are modeling healthy body image behavior, and move and create in ways that instill self-esteem.

Effects of Exercise on Body Image:

Researchers from the University of Florida studied how exercise influences body image in fit and unfit subjects. Interestingly it shows that ***doing virtually any type of exercise, on a regular basis, can help people feel better about their bodies***. What is awesome about this is that *literally any exercise can improve body image*. With such a large segment of the population dissatisfied with their bodies, it's encouraging to know that even short, frequent bouts of lower intensity exercise can improve body image.

Another study conducted in 2011 showed that ***the more you exercise, the better you feel about your body***. Researchers studied more than 1,800 adults over the age of 50 and found that increases in physical activity were associated with having a better body image. The researchers also found that longer or more frequent exercise led participants to be more satisfied about how their bodies functioned.

What types of movement or activity make you feel good about yourself and your body?

Why?

What would it take to commit to doing this activity more?

The following types of exercise may increase self-esteem and confidence more than others:

*Yoga: This introspective exercise can also be very challenging and a great workout for both stress relief, flexibility, strength, and stamina. Yoga emphasizes a balance of the body and checking in with how your body feels.

*Pilates: While improving your posture, you work on breath, lengthening, and strengthening the spine and core. It centers your energy directly to your core. A great place to feel at home!

*Kickboxing: Incredibly empowering, this total body workout is a great way to boost your energy and feel like you can kick away your negative habits!

*Martial Arts: The act of being able to defend yourself is very powerful, and your body will start to take on a function and purpose rather than an aesthetic drive.

*Strength Training: pumping iron can pump up you confidence too. It's no secret that strength training makes you stronger, is it any wonder you would feel more powerful after doing it?

**Dance*: Creative dance allows you to set your body and mind free. The unstructured nature of this type of dancing lets you explore your body and move with it.

**Swimming*: Water makes every person buoyant, so weight becomes less of an issue. Swimming can be a great alternative activity that feels great because it is non-impact. All you have to do is strut your stuff in your swim suit and jump it!

MODULE 1

Striking up your Personal Power with Kickboxing

You are uniquely YOU, and there is beauty simply in the variety we *each* bring to the world. *You have authority over your body!* Sometimes, though, there are things that make living from our hearts hard; like peer pressure to fit in. It is during these times that it is useful to have a strong sense of self to help you navigate making good and wise decisions both about how you feel about yourself and how you react to the circumstances around you.

There will be people who will put you down, or perhaps even hurt you in life...but knowing how to fight back with words (and if need be actions) is a wonderful ability to practice. Healthy relationships both with you and with others require good boundaries and a system of receiving love and giving it away.

Take 90 seconds and write down as many words as you possibly can that describe you:

Kickboxing is a tremendous way to demonstrate your personal power and to metaphorically establish good give and take of emotions and actions.

In life we are often taught to keep our opinions to ourselves, to keep the peace, or to keep silent so we don't "rock the boat". However, sometimes when we have been hurt by someone, we need to confront the issue and be able to communicate how "I am" or be able to empathetically receive how "You are" without hearing blame or criticism.

Today we are going to learn to punch and claim our power to be heard!

Activity #1: STRIKING YOUR PERSONAL POWER

- Set up as a group in a circle formation.
- Get into a staggered stance with your hands in fists.
- Make sure your thumb is wrapped down across the bottom of your curled fingers.
- Keep your wrists stiff.
- You want to start your punches from right by your face and keep your motions tight. This both protects us and puts into a ready position to defend ourselves. It gives us offense and defense all in one pose!
- Maximize power by engaging the full body by twisting your back foot and hips in to the punch. With a right power punch you'll pivot your right foot up to the ball of your foot as you extend the punch outwards and twist your hips as well, this allows you to generate energy through your entire torso and use that towards the power of your punch.
- As you punch, let out a yell or grunt or screech to actively release your power.
- Once you have practiced this 4-5 times on each side go back to the list of words above and pick the one that sticks out to you the most and say that word (or a short version of it) with each punch. Simple words like “pow”, “Yes”, “Awesome”, “Smokin” are good words if you can't come up with some for yourself.
- Consider adding a partner that you can deliver a punch to and say the word aloud to them as you punch his/her opposite hand. Be sure to avoid hitting anything but the opposite persons hand!
- At the end of this exercise take a moment and have the participants write their name and power word(s) on a camouflage bandana with silver or black sharpie pen to memorialize their experience with expressing their unique power and character with bold action!



Even though it is great to tap into our unique character and power, when faced with peer pressure or are trying to just fit in, it can become tempting to blend into the background, and fade in with the crowd...sort of like putting on camouflage. Unfortunately, this does nothing to help us express our needs or desires, and in the end hurts the collective whole when we hide our best selves.

When we close our eyes, there is a world that is completely US. However, in our internal world, it can be hard to stand up against our own self-criticism. It is in these times we need help to see our way through the mystery, self-sabotage, or pain around us.

ACTIVITY #2: AMAZING LOVE



- Pair up in partners (ideally mentee with mentor or mother with daughter)
- Have one partner put his/her bandana on over his/her eyes.
- The non-blindfolded partner will then spin the blindfolded partner for 6-8 turns.
- Once the spinning partner stops, the “seeing” partner will verbally try to get the “blind” partner to move in the right direction toward a specific target.
- Once finished switch roles.

It is in being bold enough to stand up for what we believe in that shows our inner strength most.

If you struggle to feel like you can express yourself or your needs to others, especially in situations where we have been hurt by our peers, we can also use a process called “Non-Violent Communication” to express ourselves more clearly to others:

- 1) What I observe that is or is not aligned with my well-being: “When I (see, hear)...”
- 2) How I feel (use emotion or sensation- not a thought) in relation to observation: “I feel...”
- 3) What I need or value that will support my feelings: “...because I need/value...”
- 4) The concrete actions I would like taken: “Would you be willing to...”

****Have participants practice this while standing in their “Power Pose” using one role playing scenario from below or one that you create for them****

Role Play #1: You saw your friend talking to someone and it looked like they were talking about you.

Role Play #2: You found out your friends all got together to hang out and you weren’t invited.

Role Play #3: You heard your mom/daughter telling someone about something that you thought was a confidential discussion you shared.

Allow a few minutes for open dialogue about how it felt.



DISCUSSION TOPICS:

- Describe the last time you stayed silent instead of communicating your feelings:
- What ways can we use the above example of coming out from “behind the camouflage” and speaking our truth with power *and* empathy?
- How do you think your life would change if you lived out the words written on your bandana?
- Who are the top 2 people you can turn to to get support when you need a body image boost?

MODULE 2

Expressing Your Body Brilliance with Dance

Have you ever witnessed a child dancing? It is incredible how little shame or modesty most kids have when they dance. They just move. No one teaches them how to dance, they just start shaking or twisting or jumping to the beat of their own drum.

Dancing is like letting joy explode out of your body. There is no better way to get your body feeling good than to let yourself dance.

Show video of Jessica’s Daily Affirmation (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qR3rK0kZFkg>)

We get so serious about what we wear, how we look, and what others think of us that we forget to enjoy the body we have! A big part of knowing who you are is being able to let loose, celebrate you, and forget about everyone else. Dancing is a way to enjoy not only shakin’ your stuff, but smiling, laughing and enjoying the fellowship of our friends as well.

We females LOVE to communicate...and **body language** is a powerful way to let others in on our hearts as well.

In a recent TED talk, Sir Ken Robinson spoke about the death of creativity in our schools. He said that creativity is dying because we are so afraid as a society of making a mistake or failing. The problem with this is that **“If you’re not prepared to be wrong, you’ll never come up with anything original.”**



Just because you may move differently or look different from your peers, does not mean that you are void of beauty or magnificent potential.

You don't have to feel beautiful or confident to be it. "FAKE IT UNTIL YOU BECOME IT". Simply doing the act of smiling or sitting in a power pose for two minutes, has been proven to increase Testosterone (the power hormone) and decrease cortisol (the stress hormone). This can actually influence how we think and feel about ourselves!

Activity #1:

The Body Brilliance Chant & Dance

Now we are going to teach you the "body brilliance chant and dance". The chant is to the tune "twinkle, twinkle little star" but more military, Gangsta style.

*"Body, Body your so bright
You fill me with a loving light*

*I'm smart, I'm bold, I'm full of might
That's why I'm dancing with delight"*

Oh yea, Oh yea, Oh yea"

There is no right way to dance. That's what is so amazing about the movement. There may be styles and specific steps that you *could* learn, but when you dance for fun, it is simply about letting go and being free to move however your spirit moves you. Too often we put ourselves in a box and try to define ourselves with narrow terms, ideals, or be who we think other people want us to be. Our health care system has additionally put narrow parameters on what is defined as a "healthy weight".

In 1998 the National Institute of Health changed its definition of how they categorize "overweight" vs. "obese" when evaluating a person's body mass index. Literally overnight, the average American woman who is 5ft 4in tall weighing 155 pounds went from being "normal" in weight to "overweight". With the stroke of a pen, 25 million Americans who weren't overweight before, were now facing the fact that they are. Their body didn't even change- only the label did. You've probably noticed this when trying on clothes. One store has a size that fits you at a 12, and the next store is a size 10- and still fits. You can't define yourself by a number or a pant size. Especially when it often times lies!!



There is no one right way to look and there is no one right size or shape or weight that is perfect. One of the ways we label ourselves is by stepping on a scale. Rather than letting yourself be defined by a number, what if your scale could talk to you? What if instead of using the scale to keep ourselves in check or punish ourselves into a diet or extreme exercise program we let the scale be our friend?

Take 15s per person and silently write down the words that come to mind that describe them on separate name tags.

Give each person their name tag to remind them of what their scale should say! Not because of what others think, but because of what we show the world beyond a number.

DISCUSSION:

- Were you surprised by the words others used to describe you?
- What are some ways that practicing dancing might help you to focus on your beauty rather than what you perceive as your “flaws”?

MODULE 3:

Deepening your Dignity with Yoga

Dignity is your innate right to be valued and to receive ethical treatment. It is also the quality or state of being worthy, honored, or esteemed. We demonstrate *dignity* when we are centered in our sense of worth, esteem, and our value. As our sense of dignity increases, so does our ability to be “bountiful” (liberal in bestowing our gifts) in life. When we are able to bestow our unique gifts to others, we can in turn help them feel worthy, honored, and esteemed too!

Centering our minds and bodies and focusing on our inner voice is a wonderful way to ground us in the truth about our beauty. Women and girls tend to mix life all together, and we have a hard time separating what we really think and believe from what we were maybe told or heard.

Also, since we tend to be very nurturing and caring people, we often put ourselves last.

We are our own worst critics. In order to live a life that reflects our unique beauty, we have to focus on what we know or want that beauty to be. (Not some ad or magazine image, or what we think the boys will like, or even what may be the popular trend at school)



A big part of having self-esteem is to nurture your inner self so that the negative external images or parameters no longer have to define your sense of feeling healthy and beautiful. When we stop comparing ourselves to others and start deepening our appreciation for our own personally best body, we center our focus and can therefore go out and spread our joy and love to others.

Yoga has a rich history in connecting the body & mind.

The classical techniques of Yoga date back more than 5,000 years. In ancient times, the desire for greater personal freedom, health and long life, and heightened self-understanding gave birth to this system of physical and mental exercise which has since spread throughout the world.

Yoga means “*to join or yoke together,*” and it brings the body and mind together into one harmonious experience.

The whole system of Yoga is built on three main structures: exercise, breathing, and meditation. The exercises of Yoga are designed to put pressure on the glandular systems of the body (which improves your hormones!), thereby increasing its efficiency and total health.



A note on hormones:

During puberty, a tween/teens body will grow faster than any other time in their life, except for when they were an infant. This happens due to a large surge in our sex hormones. These hormones will cause mood swings, physical changes, and much more.

Later in life, as we hit menopause or “manopause” our hormones steadily decline, leaving us with low energy, interrupted sleep, and mood swings.

The body is looked upon as the primary instrument that enables us to work and evolve in the world, and so a yoga student treats it with great care and respect.

Breathing techniques are based on the concept that breath is the source of life in the body. It's not enough to just go through the motions, we must connect the motions with breath and intention to get the full benefit of yoga and meditation.

These two systems of exercise and breathing then prepare the body and mind for meditation, and the student finds an easy approach to a quiet mind that allows silence and healing from everyday stress. Regular daily practice of all three parts of this structure of Yoga produce a clear, bright mind and a strong, capable body.

Yoga is a typically a deeply personal experience, and one in which the person engaging in it will connect with their inner gratitude and peace- this is especially important for when we need to have greater peace and gratitude within ourselves. The best part is that you can have this deeply personal experience while engaging in a room full of others who are doing the same thing.

Activity #1: Sun Salutation Song

Have all participants spread out so they have plenty of room to move. Let everyone know that you will demonstrate and they can follow along by repeating what you say back to you. For a recording of this song see <http://www.firefliesyoga.com/> or you can simply say the words and have participants read along with you with the words printed on a large easel/erase board/chalk board/etc.

Stretch up high (point to the sun)

Hang down low (tickle your toes)

Feet jump out (just like a frog)

Belly on the ground (just like a snake)

Look at the sun

Now Downward Dog

And Breathe, (and breathe, and breathe)

Feet jump up (just like a frog)

Hang down low (tickle your toes)

Stretch up high (point to the sun)

Mountain Pose (look what you've done)

Sun salutation dance for the sun, I can do it, you can do it, we can do a sun salutation!

Activity #2:

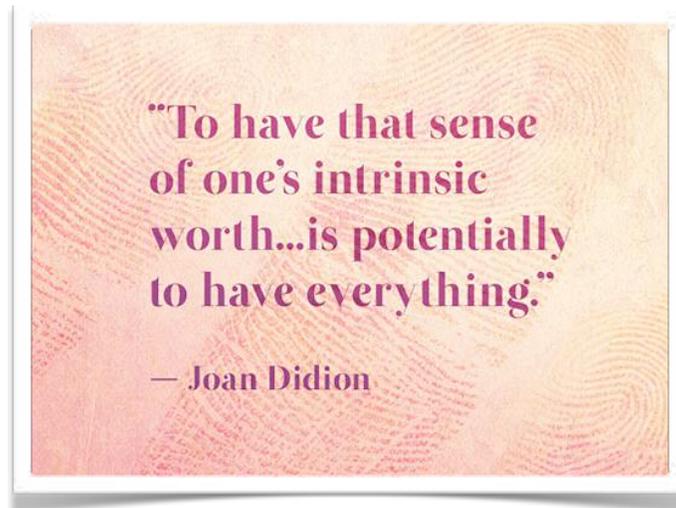
Silent meditation

- Sit with your legs crossed, back up tall, chest lifted, and hands resting palm up on your knees.
- Take three breaths in through the nose and out through the mouth trying to breathe the air deep into your belly and then all the way out.
- With each breath relax your shoulders down to your toes and let go of any expectations.
- As you start to relax, ask your body to tell you the most beautiful thing about your mom or daughter. It could be physical or something else entirely.
- After 3-5 minutes of silence, let your mind take a picture of the words or images that came to you for your mother/friend/daughter.
- As you open your eyes, take a moment to write out what came to you and if you would like, share it with your mom/daughter- or keep it for your journal.
- If time, add fingerprints to the message as a reminder there is no one else like you!

Discussion:

- How could yoga or meditation help you focus on your inner strength and voice of positive beauty?
- How is does your mom/mentor influence how you feel about your body?
- Discuss with your mom/mentor ways that you can help each other to take what you have learned from the class and help to bring out her inner diva.

Share your “BFO” “Blinding Flash of the Obvious”...what you learned today that you didn’t know before that changed the way you think.



Wrap Up:

****Read aloud all together the 25 positive affirmations for a better body image****

25 Positive Affirmations for a Better Body Image

1. My body is a gift. My body is an instrument, not an ornament.
2. The number on the scale does not determine my self-worth.
3. Likewise, the size of my jeans does not dictate my happiness.
4. I can have a good day even when I'm not comfortable in my body.
5. I'm thankful to my legs & heart for carrying me to the places I want to go
6. I'm thankful to my body for allowing me to serve others.
7. I can be a good example to others about how to love my body.
8. Beauty is a state of mind, not a state of the body.
9. Great people come in all shapes and sizes.
10. I am special beyond skin deep.
11. No one is perfect. Every body is different, unique, and special.
12. If you had 24 hours to live, would you spend that time making your body thinner, bustier, or less wrinkly? NO!
13. The images in the media aren't real.
14. There are 3 billion women who don't look like supermodels, and only 8 who do.
15. I don't need to compare to others in order to feel good about myself.
16. My body needs carbohydrates, fats, and proteins to function properly. So I'll give my body what it needs while honoring my hunger and fullness.
17. I trust my body to use food the way it will work best. Even if that means I need fat on my thighs.
18. I can enjoy delicious food without taking it out on my body.
19. My "flaws" add character.
20. If someone doesn't like me because of my appearance, I don't want to be their friend anyway!
21. Poise and confidence go further than just a pretty face, big breasts, or a skinny waist!
22. I will accept my genetics. Thanks Mom and Dad!
23. I have more important things to do than fight with my body.
24. Smiling makes anyone more attractive.
25. Accepting my body is always in fashion.

Summary of Key Points for Cultivating Body Confidence:

- ★ You matter. You and your body are connected, so your body matters. Respect it with exercise, good nutrition, sleep, and positive thoughts.
- ★ What other people think and say matters, but it doesn't ultimately define you. Develop your own ideals and stand up for what makes you shine.
- ★ Latch on to a positive mentor. If you can't find one, seek out a friend's mom or volunteer for a girls group like Girls, Inc.
- ★ Let go of trying to live up to the media standard of what is pretty/normal. It's all airbrushed anyway!
- ★ Take small steps to do something that challenges you.
- ★ Move. Choose an activity that makes you feel good and that you will do consistently. Your body will engage to give you positive energy!
- ★ When you are feeling down, do an "air punch" while saying the positive thing about yourself that you cultivated in the personal power exercise.
- ★ If you feel like you just can't take in the positive messages about your body's beauty, then fake it till you make it. Just keep acting like you believe, and one day you will.
- ★ Throw out the scale and dance instead
- ★ At the end of the day, consider doing a few yoga poses and then sit for 3-5 minutes and thank your body for all it does for you!

Tools to Promote Healthy Body Image in Children:

- ★ Compliment your children often on their strengths, accomplishments and efforts, instead of focusing on weight, size, or appearance.
- ★ Avoid commenting on your own weight concerns. Try not to use words like “fat”, “ugly”, or “disgusting” to describe yourself or others.
- ★ Initiate family activities that involve getting outside the house and being active.
- ★ Be a role model so your children can see that size or appearance don't limit your own activities.
- ★ Encourage your daughter to play sports and provide her with the proper equipment to do so. Show up at her games and express pride in her participation, whether or not she is a skilled athlete or otherwise.
- ★ Recognize that weight gain, like the development of breasts and hips, is a normal part of puberty and adolescence. Help your daughter to accept these changes.
- ★ Provide your children with age appropriate information about puberty, menstruation, and sexual health.
- ★ Teach your children about diversity. Let them know that people come in a variety of heights, weights, sizes, skin colors, physical abilities and that those differences are what make them unique. Show respect for the work and accomplishments of women despite their size or other physical characteristics.
- ★ Listen to your daughter if she is experiencing teasing or bullying based on her gender, size, physical abilities or skin color. Try to give her tools for dealing with the situation or contact a local program that deals with bullying.
- ★ Make time to talk to your daughter about what is going on in her life. Try to create a home environment where she will feel safe to talk to you about any concerns she has about her body.

Resources:

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Brumberg, J.J. (1997). *The body project: An intimate history of American girls*. New York: Random House.

Campos , P. (2004). *The diet myth: Why America's obsession with weight is hazardous to your health*. New York: Penguin.

Cash, T. (1997). *The body image workbook: An 8-step program for learning to like your looks*. Oakland: New Harbinger Publications.

<http://www.americanyogaassociation.org/general.html>

http://brown.edu/Student_Services/Health_Services/Health_Education/nutrition_&_eating_concerns/body_image.php

Casey L. Augustus-Horvath, Tracy L. Tylka. **The acceptance model of intuitive eating: A comparison of women in emerging adulthood, early adulthood, and middle adulthood.** *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 2011; 58 (1): 110 DOI: [10.1037/a0022129](https://doi.org/10.1037/a0022129)

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McGraw, Carol, "Media, hormones, peer pressure do a number on girls' confidence", *The News-Sentinel*, Mon, Jul. 31, 2006

University of Florida (2009, October 9). Exercise Improves Body Image For Fit And Unfit Alike. *ScienceDaily*.

Lina Ricciardelli, Marita P. McCabe, Sophie Banfield. **Body image and body change methods in adolescent boys: Role of parents, friends and the media.** *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*, 2000, Volume 49, Issue 3, pages 189-197

Girls Leadership Institute: Girl Meet's World Curriculum

List of things to teach this class:

Sticky Name Tags

Camo bandanas

Silver/Black Sharpie pens

Stationary, something stiff to write on, and working pens

Poster board or dry erase board for participants to read the Body Brilliance Chant

Optional: Sun salutation song and stereo with speakers; Internet access with video link to YouTube; Finger Paint