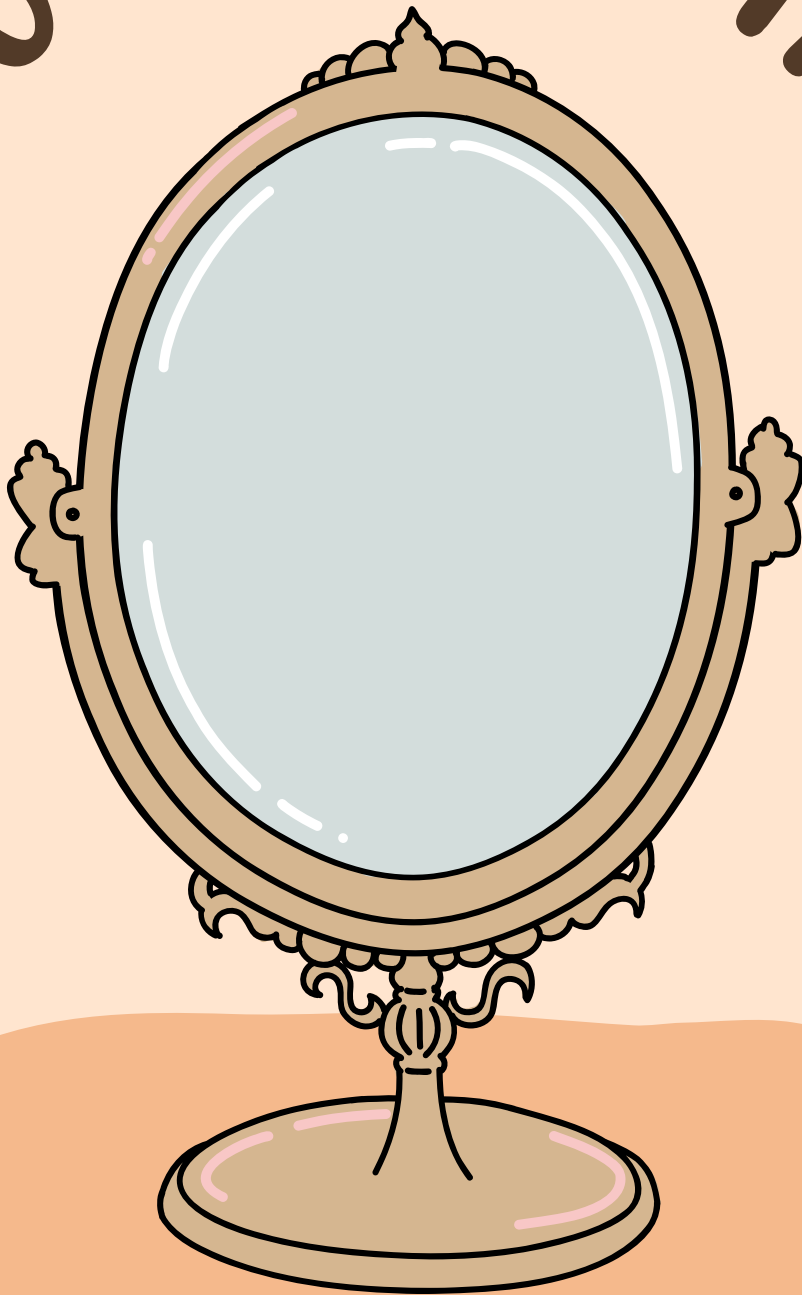


# I LOVE WHO I SEE IN THE MIRROR



# BODY IMAGE

## (NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE BODY IMAGE)

The next time you walk past a mirror, take a second to stop and look at yourself – whatever version you see in the reflection is **your body image**.

These thoughts and feelings can either be positive or negative.

These negative views can have an impact on both your physical and mental health.

Body image isn't always dependent on your weight; it can also be an issue you perceive with some other body part.

Body image concerns and challenges are not limited to age groups nor any specific gender.



## BODY IMAGE HAS FOUR PARTS:

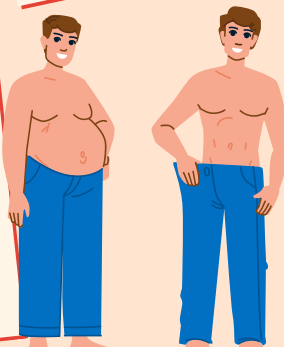


**Seeing yourself (perceptual):**  
Sometimes what you see isn't what others see. Like, you might think you're fat when you're not.

**Feeling about yourself (affective)**  
You might feel confident about some parts of your body while experiencing negative emotions like shame or anger, creating a complex relationship with your body.



**Thinking about yourself (cognitive):**  
This is about how you think about your body.  
Eg: You might think you'd be more popular if you were thinner or it would be so much better if you lost some weight.



**Doing things because of how you see yourself (behavioral):**  
If you're not happy with your body, you might start behaving in a certain way. For eg: you might exercise more or go on a diet.

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# BODY IMAGE THROUGHOUT THE LIFESPAN

Body image evolves with age, presenting challenges at each stage of life for individuals. Body image is influenced by biological, psychological, and social factors throughout life.

**In older adulthood (45 onwards),** changes like menopause, muscle loss, weight fluctuations, and aging can lead to negative body image perceptions.

**In adulthood (20-45),** body image changes can occur due to aging, lifestyle, societal expectations, and pregnancy.

**During adolescence (10-19),** teens grapple with body changes because of puberty, social pressures, and the influence of media on their self-perception.

**In childhood (0-9),** seeds can be sown for a negative body image. Stemming from comparisons with peers, within the family, "light-hearted" comments passed by the family members, and experiences of teasing or bullying.



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# BODY SHAMING CYCLE AND HOW OTHERS AND YOURSELF CAN SHAME THE BODY

## Accepting and following beauty standards

People absorb society's beauty standards from media, ads, and culture, comparing themselves to traits like thinness or muscularity.

## Self-Comparison

Comparing our real selves to these unrealistic standards of how a person should be.

## Harmful Actions

To meet these expectations, people may crash diet, over exercise, or undergo cosmetic procedures, harming their physical and mental health and continuing a cycle of dissatisfaction and self-harm.

## Cycle starts again

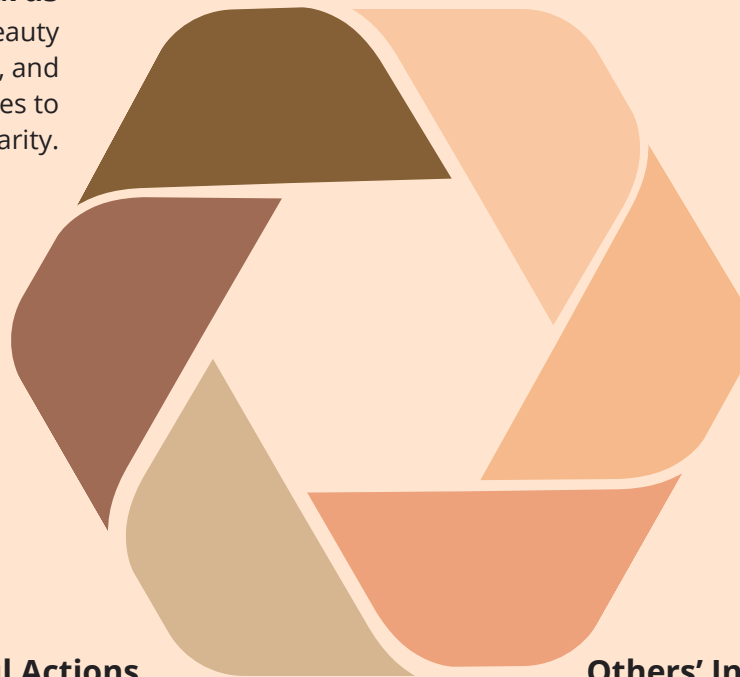
People who internalize body shaming ideas might unknowingly pass on these insecurities to others, continuing the cycle and making body shaming seem normal in society.

## Self-esteem Impact

Continuous exposure to body shaming hurts body image and self-esteem. It can lead to eating disorders, anxiety, or depression due to internalizing these negative messages.

## Others' Influence

Friends, family, peers, or strangers reinforce beauty ideals through body shaming comments, making feelings of inadequacy stronger.



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# SELF-ASSESSMENT SHEET FOR IDENTIFYING MY BODY IMAGE

SELF ASSESMENT QUESTIONNAIRE	YES/NO
Do I overly worry about others' opinions of my looks?	
Do I dwell more on what I dislike about my appearance than what I appreciate?	
Do I tie my self-worth closely to my appearance?	
Do I avoid certain situations due to feeling self-conscious about how I look?	
Do I invest significant resources into altering my appearance or pursuing perfection?	
Does my mood hinge on how satisfied I am with my appearance on a given day?	
Do I frequently compare my looks to others or check my reflection?	
Do I seek validation from others regarding my appearance or downplay compliments I receive?	
Do I believe my appearance has shaped much of my life or that I can shape my future by enhancing it?	
Do my feelings about my appearance hinder self-acceptance or enjoyment of life?	



## SCORING CARD

- For every "Yes" answer, **score 1 point.**
- For every "No" answer, **subtract 1 point** from your total score.
- Calculate your final score at the end

## SCORING ANALYSES

### **Scores between 0-3**

A healthier view of your body image

### **Scores between 4-6**

At risk for developing a negative body image

### **Scored between 7-10**

Might have a negative perception of self

*This tool provides body image insights, not mental health diagnosis. Self-diagnosis can be inaccurate and harmful. Seek qualified mental health professionals for assessment and support tailored to your needs.*

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Body dysmorphic disorder involves obsessing over minor appearance flaws, leading to anxiety, embarrassment, and avoidance of social interactions. Symptoms include excessive focus on appearance, repetitive behaviors like mirror-checking, and distress impacting daily life.

# BODY DYSMORPHIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCE

Social media, movies, ads, and TV all emphasize perfect looks, which can affect how we see ourselves. It's important to remember that not everything online is real. It's hard to tell if someone's edited their photo when you only see them online, and seeing these perfect images can make you feel like you should look like that too. While social media doesn't cause body dysmorphia, it can make it worse. It's important to remember that what you see online isn't always real.

**Everyone is unique, with their own set of flaws!**



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# HOW TO RESPOND TO BODY SHAMING COMMENTS

Responding to body shaming with confidence and assertiveness can help disarm the situation and assert your boundaries. Here are some potential replies:

**"I PREFER NOT TO DISCUSS MY  
BODY. LET'S TALK ABOUT  
SOMETHING ELSE."  
-SETTING BOUNDARIES**

**"WOW, THANKS FOR YOUR INPUT. BUT  
I'M PRETTY SURE MY BODY DIDN'T  
ASK FOR A CRITIQUE TODAY."  
-HUMOR**

**"INTERESTING PERSPECTIVE. SO,  
DID YOU CATCH THAT NEW MOVIE?"  
-REDIRECTING**

**"LET'S FOCUS ON SOMETHING MORE  
MEANINGFUL THAN MY  
APPEARANCE, SHALL WE?"  
-DEFLECTION**

**SOMETIMES, NOT DIGNIFYING THE  
COMMENT WITH A RESPONSE IS THE  
BEST COURSE OF ACTION,  
ESPECIALLY IF IT'S CLEAR THE  
PERSON IS SEEKING A REACTION.  
-IGNORING**

**"I'M COMFORTABLE WITH MY BODY,  
AND I DON'T APPRECIATE  
COMMENTS LIKE THAT."  
-ASSERTIVE STATEMENT**



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# HOW TO MOVE TOWARDS A HEALTHIER BODY IMAGE



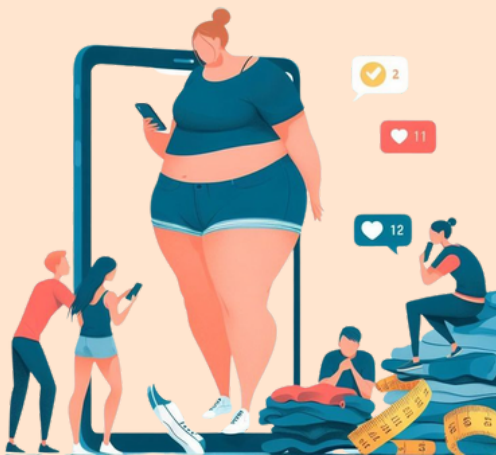
Don't bully yourself by criticizing yourself



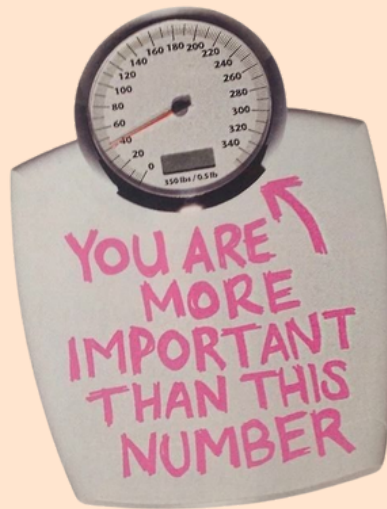
Seek Help From a Professional if a Negative Body Image Is Interfering With Your Life



Appreciate your body for what it has done for you and can do



Avoid comparisons



Challenge your belief about media portrayal of body image



Engage in activities that allow you to express yourself creatively, such as art, writing, or dancing. Embrace your uniqueness and individuality.

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**Physical characteristics I'd like to accept more:**  
I'd like to

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I'd like to

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I'd like to

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**Situations I'd like to feel more comfortable with:**  
I'd like to

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I'd like to

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I'd like to

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**Beliefs and behaviors about my appearance and self-worth I'd like to change:**  
I'd like to

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I'd like to

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I'd like to

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# HELP SHEET FOR BETTER BODY IMAGE

**Ways that I cope with my body image difficulties that I'd like to change:**  
I'd like to

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I'd like to

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I'd like to

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**The ways I would like to cope with my body image difficulties:**  
I'd like to

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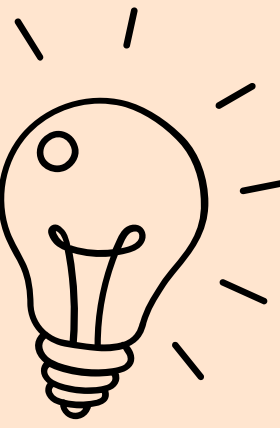
I'd like to

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I'd like to

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# CO-WORKS AN INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY



A FEW POEMS ON BODY IMAGE AND FOR SELF. FEEL FREE TO WRITE AND EXPRESS YOUR THOUGHTS THROUGH POEMS OR DOODLE EXPRESSIONS ON BODY IMAGE AND SELF. PLEASE NOTE THIS IS A FREE OPEN JAM BOARD FOR EVERYONE SO PLEASE BE MINDFUL OF YOUR THOUGHTS AND EXPRESSIONS.

**HAVE FUN!**

## SCAN TO EXPRESS



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# BODY IMAGE AND ITS IMPACT ON MENTAL HEALTH

We often see a parent/teacher/relative/neighbour call children names like "Golu, motu, kaala, kaandi" or pass comments like:

Khaate pite ghar ka

Wow! This dress makes you look slim

Naak hai ke capsicum

You are looking better ever since you lost weight.

Similar is the narrative in media, sadly in children's songs too. Remember "ek mota haathi jhoom ke chala"?

People use this narrative loosely and that's how it is normalised. However, commenting this way is never okay. Over time, such repeated comments can create hate for their body/body part, develop a negative body image, and damage their self-esteem and mental well-being.

What can we as parents, teachers, society do?

- Little children build relationship with their bodies from the information that is fed to them by their parents, teachers and relatives. Positive/negative body image thus has its root in childhood. Just like children are fed with nutritious foods, it's also important to watch for the thoughts/words they are fed with – appreciate their qualities instead of commenting on physical features.
- Be cognizant of your own behaviors. Are you excessively checking yourself in the mirror, applying make-up to hide the flaws, overconscious about what you wear? Children observe; role model unconditional acceptance to teach children to accept themselves.
- Break the chain! When we hear someone calling names, assertively but respectfully in front of the child, ask them not to without bothering how they will feel. Seeing this, the child will be assured that you are there for them, they are more than their physical features.
- Help children develop self-compassion, self-love. Teach them assertiveness, resilience and confidence strong enough to guard themselves against those derogatory comments.
- Help them build their "safe space" when they experience stress. This space could be a go-to person with whom they can share their feelings and thoughts, an action of self-care.

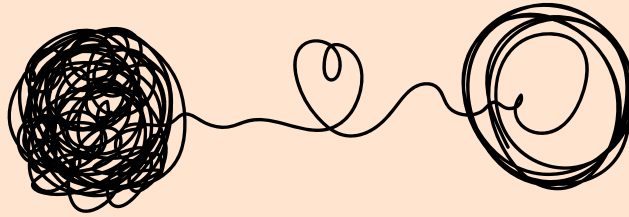
Let us prioritise mental and physical health over physical appearance; focus on people's inner qualities and strengths rather than the outer body.

KHYATI SAMPAT  
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT  
COLLEGE OF HOME SCIENCE NIRMALA NIKETAN



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# Help is a call away



## **PROJECT MUMBAI IS HERE FOR YOU!**

If you or any adolescent you know is experiencing any mental or emotional distress, kindly call on Project Mumbai toll-free mental health helpline number:

### **SAMVAAD** **A Helpline for Adolescents** **1800-102-4040**

*This helpline is active from 8 am to 8 pm, seven days a week and is handled by counsellors with varied expertise.*

In case of any mental health related concerns, please feel free to reach us on [mentalhealth@projectmumbai.org](mailto:mentalhealth@projectmumbai.org)

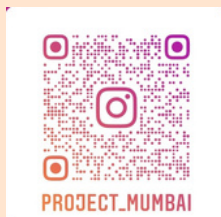
- **ICALL HELPLINE (GENERAL COUNSELLING)- 02225521111 (MON-SAT, 8AM-10 PM)**
- **HUMSAFAR TRUST (LGBTQIA+)- 0226673800 (MON-FRI, 10 AM-8PM)**
- **ARPAN (CSA)- +91-9819086444 (MON-FRI, 9AM-6PM)**
- **AASRA (SUICIDE PREVENTION)- +91-9820466726 (7 DAYS A WEEK, 24 HOURS)**

Do you want to contribute to making Mumbai the Kindness capital?

Reach out to us on [info@projectmumbai.org](mailto:info@projectmumbai.org)

or

Visit us at [www.projectmumbai.org](http://www.projectmumbai.org)



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