

## Day 19: Body Love

Your body is a sacred vehicle. Let's start out by talking about some of the things your body does for you. First, it operates automatically without you telling it what to do. It breathes, your body digests food, it knows where nutrients need to go and then eliminates the rest of it, it circulates blood which delivers oxygen to your cells and organs, and it can reproduce other human beings. Every part of your body has a function and it is completely mind blowing if you really stop to think about all your body does for you. It's actually quite miraculous, don't you think?

My story coming into self-love has a lot to do with what my body looked like. I had a mother who projected all of her weight issues onto me and so this is an issue that I've had pretty much all of my life. And because I have a twin sister who looks exactly like me and her body is smaller, this too, kept me stuck always in comparison which caused me to have a particularly challenging relationship with my body. We all have a story around our body and how much we love it or hate it, or somewhere in between.

As I'm sure you understand by now, with every issue we have it all stems from a belief we have of listening to what someone told us or something we saw that now has become our belief.

If you have an issue with the way your body looks or even the way functions for you, I want you to start to contemplate what changing your relationship with your body means, and what that would look like.

I want you to ask yourself, "Why do I want my body to look different or be different than it is?"

It could be that you feel you may want to feel accepted by others, and you believe looking a certain way will allow you to fit in more and will make you feel more loved. It could be you want it to function better than it is. When you start to accept what is and let go of expectation, your body heals. If you are comparing yourself or listening to what society says your body should be like, then you are sending negative messages to your body.

It doesn't matter what weight you are, what shape, what size, if there's anything you don't like about your body and you don't fully accept it as is you will never feel good enough which it what causes suffering.

Beautiful isn't a size, it isn't a shape and it certainly isn't what your physical appearance looks like. Your value isn't determined by how your body looks. You are valuable because of who you are. We all come in all different shapes and sizes and when we can own and take care of what we've got, we can accept what we've been given. Thank your body for how amazing it is and how much it does for you, not what it doesn't do for you or what is missing or what you think should be better about it.

You have to change the narrative in your head. Here's the way confidence works. You show up feeling good about yourself and other people will like you because you like yourself. And here's the other thing, when you show up and do the work to love your body exactly as it is, you start to attract people in your life, that will tell you the same thing. I've experienced this myself. I certainly don't have a perfect body but because I have accepted it and given it love, I've attracted partners who have reflected that back to me.

Here's a great example and how it really works. We're going to talk about Jennifer Lopez, the actor, singer, and dancer, for a minute. I saw her many years ago on the Oprah show talking about her butt. It was fascinating to me. This is what she said about it. "I'm Latin and Latin people have big butts. It's just a part of who I am. I guess people are talking about it because that's not the norm, but I'm ok with it." She decided, this is important, she decided that she was going to accept and love her body exactly the way it was. That is true empowerment. Because she accepted it and loved it and didn't care what others thought of her, there is now a trend toward people getting butt implants.

It just goes to show you that when you empower yourself, fully accept yourself and don't care what others think, more than likely, people will accept you as you are. It isn't about being perfect, it's only about loving who you are and what you look like, every part and every piece. You get to decide that you are going to

love your body just because it's a part of you and you are worthy of love and acceptance just because you exist, not because of what your body looks like.

This is the only body you have and it's going on this journey with you. The more you love it, the more it becomes the perfect size for you and functions fully for you. And if you don't feel good about it, is it because you are comparing yourself or listening to societal standards? When you compare yourself you are keeping yourself stuck and feeling not good enough.

Ways to start to love your body more:

The first thing I want you to do is throw away your scale. Really. Getting on a scale everyday to judge yourself isn't helpful and will only keep you stuck and feeling bad about yourself. This is not a good way to love your body. I haven't had a scale in over 20 years and I'm much more at peace because of it.

Start listening to your body. Is there a body part that is in pain? This is your body speaking to you and trying to give you a message.

Start redefining your relationship with your body, look at all it does for you to function for you everyday and feel gratitude for that.

Do some sort of movement for your body, whether that is stretching, walking, running, biking, some sort of meditative movement, dancing, whatever feels good to you, but it's important to get up and move. Not for the sake of being thinner but for the sake of being healthy.

Start changing the conversation you have with your body. Always find something positive to say to it, even the parts that are the hardest to love. Those parts deserve more love and affection.

Wear comfy clothes, things that make you confident and good about yourself. And by the way, if you have a closet full of clothes that you hope to fit into again, ONE DAY, please remove them from your closet. This will only keep you stuck reminding yourself everyday that you aren't where you want to be which will only keep you feeling not good enough.

Start taking selfies of yourself. Yes, that's what I said. I had a coach once tell me to do this and I thought to myself, there's no way I'm taking pictures of myself, that sounds very narcissistic. But it's a great exercise, especially if it feels uncomfortable for you. You get to see yourself, you get to really see yourself and look for the good things about yourself. This is an image of who you are and it certainly isn't all of who you are, but it's an opportunity to accept fully the image yourself. At first it will be easy to pick yourself apart but the more you do it, and the more you focus on the good things, the more momentum you will put into motion around centering your thoughts on only focusing on the good.

Love yourself through this process. Remember it's a choice. You get to decide that you like what you look like and who you are is beautiful because it's you. Because who cares what other people think. If you care too much about what other people think you are giving your power away. Are you willing to give your power away?

What I can tell you is when I healed the relationship I had with my body, when I started to say nicer things to my body, to really take care of it, and when I stopped caring what others thought and just decided to love my body the way it was, that's when I became more confident and felt comfortable with who I was.

Learning to love your body doesn't happen overnight. It's a process and a practice. The more you practice, the better you get. Be easy on yourself, this takes time and commitment and talking yourself into better feeling thoughts about how worthy you are. Be aware that what you are saying to your body, what you are feeding your body and what you are thinking and feeling about your body all affects your health. Honor and respect your body. Take a moment to appreciate it daily. Decide to only say nice things from this point forward. Spend time during the day to thank your body for all it's letting you get done today. Treat your body as you would your dearest friend. It will be with you for the rest of your life.