

Body Image Workshop

“Look in the mirror and say, ‘Dangggggg I’ll take two...’”



person in his family to go to college and earned a Bachelor's of Science in Speech Communication, a Masters of Arts in Special Education, and a Graduate Diploma in Leadership Development.



Growing up performing in the theater, led Adam to act in a play off Broadway. He quickly he realized that he no longer desired being a character on stage, but rather longed to be himself which has translated into motivational speaking.

Adam speaks to teens and adults across the country regarding Healthy Communication, Bullying, and Body Image. He has spoken at assemblies, conferences, and camps where his story of hope and appreciation for one's self continues to transform those he talks to. With Adam's

humor and theatrical style audiences are entertained as well as moved by his heart touching stories of life and how we can begin to see ourselves in a healthy and exciting light. Adam's work as an educator and speaker at one of the top rated Eating Disorder clinics has enabled him to cut to the core of issues that hold us back in life.

Introduction

BODY IMAGE, that phrase really has a ton of meaning behind it. It's something that people for decades have been trying to figure out. We went from the conservative stay at home be seen and not heard female of the 1950's to the all body acceptance movement of the late 60's. We now are moving into the media driven phase which has caused body dysmorphic disorder during the 2000's. If we continue on our current momentum we will either cycle back to the way it was in the 50's or we will continue down the path of struggling with our body image. This is hardest on women and includes suicide, abuse, BDD, eating disorders, etc. We have to make some changes in our individual lives if we are to see a change in our communities.

Our minds traditionally go to the negative whenever we think about ourselves. We can wire or re-wire our brains; chances are you have heard me give a talk. In that talk I probably discussed how powerful our brains are. Whenever we think about ourselves we make a groove in our brain. The more we think that thought the deeper our groove gets. Eventually our grooves get so deep that we can't think any way other than where our grooves are. Sadly our minds continually go to the negative over the positive. When we look in the mirror we could see someone who is gorgeous and beautiful, but instead we choose to believe and see the negative.

This is why the most important thing we can do is to start to change those negative grooves to positive ones. It takes practice and hard work, changing our grooves is not meant to be easy. Most of us have spent years developing our negative grooves so to think that we can

change them overnight is not realistic. We want to take on the “mountains” in our lives...we want to love everything about ourselves right now. However, we must first learn to take on the “mole hill” of our lives, build up those small victories so that we can take on the “mountain” after a while. That’s why I love the movie “What about Bob?” because he took on life the way we should as well, through baby steps. So instead of trying to love ourselves fully by tomorrow maybe we should start to pick a body part that we can focus on and start to love instead of hate. Or we can focus on our heart and soul instead of focusing so much on our outer shells. These are small steps that are more achievable and can lead us to a healthier way to take on more and more of our own body image issues. So let’s take those BABY STEPS together...

Questions to ask yourself

Work through the following questions and answer honestly. You will only be cheating yourself.

1. What sorts of things do you hear in your head when you look in the mirror?
2. When someone gives you a compliment, what’s the first thing to come to mind?
3. If you were to make a list of your attributes that you like and don’t like, what list would be longer?

4. How do you want to look at yourself? Describe in detail.

5. What changes are you willing to make in order to be healthy?

How we got here

“In the first movie, when it was obviously being talked about, like, ‘It’s The Hunger Games; you have to lose ten pounds.’ I said ‘We have control over this role model. Why would we make her something unobtainable and thin?’ This is a person that young girls will be looking up to, so why not make her strong? Why not make her beautiful and healthy and fit? I was very adamant about that, because I think that our industry doesn’t take enough responsibility for what it does to our society. I remember what it felt like to be 14 years old, looking at a Victoria’s Secret model and thinking. I’ll never look like that I don’t want to make someone feel like that.” -Jennifer Lawrence

The first time we see the phrase “Body Image” even being used in science is in 1935 so the concept that we know today about how we view our bodies and in what ways that itself impacts us is still fairly new. This could be the case for a variety of reasons...mainly in history people ate what was available and really only in the last 100 years has the average person been able to have such a variety of choice of food that at least in the modern world we can actually conscientiously choose whether to eat foods that make us a variety of body shapes.

In the 1960’s a young woman who had been a model began working in advertising. Jean Kilbourne. Who then started collecting ads out of magazines that she thought were interesting. At one point she decided she had had enough and started teaching and lecturing on the impact of advertisements in our society and lives. In 1979 she filmed a lecture which quickly launched her into becoming the expert and has been speaking about body image ever since. Check out her Killing Us Softly videos if you want more information.

In our culture today we are faced with even more impacts of this sort. Not only do we have advertisements which portray an unhealthy and sometimes unattainable body image standard, but we also have social media which only amplifies the real issue. Instant gratification and fear of missing out have become the norm for us, but it doesn't come without its consequences. Comparing our own bodies to those around us causes discontent. OBSESSION breeds DISCONTENT!!

What do we do now

For a few years I used something with my students that I called the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy Worksheet. It's where you write the Negative statement that you often tell yourselves and afterwards you write a new Positive statement. This time for this exercise I want you to do the same but make it about those things you struggle with regarding your body.

Negative Thought: _____

New Positive Replacement: _____

Negative Thought: _____

New Positive Replacement: _____

Negative Thought: _____

New Positive Replacement: _____

Negative Thought: _____

New Positive Replacement: _____

Resources

Whether inspirational or informational these are great:

Books:

The Body Image Workbook by Thomas Cash

An Eight Step Program for Learning to Like Your Looks. (There is also a TEEN edition)

The Body Book by Cameron Diaz

The Law of Hunger, the Science of Strength, and Other Ways to Love Your Amazing Body.

Beautiful You by Rosie Molinary

A Daily Guide to Radical Self-Acceptance

Videos:

Rick Guidotti: http://www.ted.com/talks/rick_guidotti_from_stigma_to_supermodel

Jean Kilbourne: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uy8yLaoWybk> (Parts are raw and should be screened first)

That's What She Said by Soul Pancake- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0Lz6tYh4esY>
(Groups of women discussing Beauty and Body Image)

Why Thinking You're Ugly is Bad for you by Meaghan Ramsey-
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXIIAS-rI4E> (Careful has some one or two offensive words shown)

Artistic Exercise

Try This:

This can be a group project or you can work on it on your own. Get as many magazines or newspaper advertisements as you can. Now gather around and look through each one cutting out and pasting to a poster board anything that you see, that represents beauty to you. Whatever you want beauty to be or look like that's what you should be putting on this board. I want this board to be a positive image of beauty and I want you to hang it up somewhere so that you see it all the time. So add quotes or pictures or anything that reminds you of real true authentic beauty! Happy Cutting and Pasting!!

“There is nothing more rare, nor more beautiful, than a woman being unapologetically herself; comfortable in her perfect imperfection. To me, that is the true essence of beauty.”

— Steve Maraboli

“Beauty shouldn't be about changing yourself to achieve an ideal or be more socially acceptable. Real beauty, the interesting, truly pleasing kind, is about honoring the beauty within you and without you. It's about knowing that someone else's definition of pretty has no hold over you.”

— Golda Poretsky

“When our emotional health is in a bad state, so is our level of self-esteem. We have to slow down and deal with what is troubling us, so that we can enjoy the simple joy of being happy and at peace with ourselves.”

— Jess C. Scott

Helpful Ideas

I am going to give you a list of certain assumptions and how they impact you...Discuss them or answer them on your own. Use them as a daily reminder of what is ultimately important.

When I assume that “physically attractive people have it all,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that “my worth as a person depends on how I look,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that “I should always do whatever I can to look my best,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that “the first thing that people will notice about me is what’s wrong with my appearance,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that, “if people knew how I really look, they would probably like me less,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that “by managing my physical appearance, I can control my social and emotional life,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that “my appearance is responsible for much of what has happened to me in my life,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that “if I could look as I wish, my life would be much happier,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that “my culture’s messages make it impossible for me to be satisfied with my appearance,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

When I assume that “the only way I could ever accept my looks would be to change my looks,”

Then I am focusing on:

And I think:

And I feel:

My new inner voice argues with this assumption by knowing the truth that:

These scenarios are great to go over every month or two. So, keep writing and keeping notes whenever you go through each question and statement. You will be able to see the progress and how you have grown throughout the years.

Notes

I want more

I hope that you have enjoyed working through this book...I know the word enjoyed is an interesting word choice since we are talking about how we struggle with our body image. But hopefully you were able to see the places and areas you need to work on to build a healthier self image.

If you enjoyed this workshop and you are asking yourself,

“How can I get more?”

I have two answers for you:

1. Have you checked out Adam’s workshop on “The Epidemic of Mean Girls?”
2. Have you brought Adam out to speak to your school, camp or group?

Both of these are great ways to get more information and help from Adam and True Measure Solutions.

There will be more workshops and workbooks added to this collection, so keep coming back to www.adamleebrooks.com to make sure that you stay current on what’s out there.

Any questions or concerns please contact us also at www.adamleebrooks.com

Conclusion

If you used this program chances are you or someone you love is struggling with the way they view their body. The first thing I want anyone to know who is going through that feeling is that they are NOT ALONE!!! No matter what you aren't happy with in regards to yourself there are plenty of those of us who are experiencing the same feelings. We have gotten to these feelings together and we will break them down and begin the process of our self acceptance together. I am not there yet...I am like you, in the process of getting there. I may always struggle with my body but I promise you this, each day, each month and each year it gets easier. It gets easier to look in the mirror and smile. It gets easier to catch a glimpse of myself in a store window and wink at it. It gets easier to try on clothes at the mall. Ok so that last one has taken me longer than the rest! Ha Ha.

So, let's take those first few steps together. Today literally I sat in my office for 20 minutes and just started making statements that I want to remember the rest of the day. I made statements of self acceptance and inspiration. Yes, at first it did feel weird, but if I can't tell myself I love me than I should probably rethink telling others that. If you are still making excuses about why this stuff is good, but just not for you, or that you don't really hate all of your body so that means you are doing better than others....Let me assure you, I AM TALKING TO YOU!! We shouldn't wait until we don't like anything about ourselves before we begin the process to healing. The TIME IS NOW!!

For too long we have been looking in the mirror and judging ourselves. For too long we have been critical when it came to parts of our body. We have stared into our own eyes with contempt and began picking ourselves apart. We have to begin to look with grace and care. We have to begin to see things that others don't see, things we love and are excited about. We have to get to the point where we look in the mirror and yell out loud "DANGGGGGGGG, I'LL TAKE TWO..."

I'll see you on that journey friend....