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Ten Ways to Improve Your Body Image

1. ***Become a good consumer.*** Question societal messages that suggest you are not okay just as you are. Remember there are reasons that marketers and sellers of products want you to dislike your appearance.
2. ***Be more compassionate with yourself and others.*** Become more aware of the negative thoughts you have about your body and replace them with the things you like about your body and your personality. Notice when you are being judgmental of others and remind yourself to be compassionate instead.
3. ***Redefine your idea of beauty.*** Notice the beauty in everyday things including your interactions with others and your interactions with nature. Expand your notion of beauty to things beyond your appearance. Take note of the beauty around you and share it with others.
4. ***View your negative thoughts as thoughts and not truths.*** Just because you think it doesn't make it true. You can learn to just observe your negative thoughts and then let them go. They control you only when you let them.
5. ***Have realistic expectations of yourself and others.*** Let go of any perfectionistic tendencies that lead to negative body thoughts. Your body is not meant to be perfect, and trying to achieve perfection results in unrealistic goals and feeling as if you are failing.
6. ***Use daily affirmations as a reminder of who you want to be vs. how you want to look.*** Use post its, phone alarms, computer reminders etc., to help you remember what truly matters to you. For example: "I treat myself with love and kindness and know that I am worthy of love." Or: "Today I notice the beauty in myself and others and in the nature all around me."
7. ***Become aware of events that trigger negative thoughts and feelings.*** Understanding the relationship of environmental triggers to negative body talk allows you to make changes or plan to do something differently when you will be in a triggering situation or environment.
8. ***Be aware of especially high risk environments and plan accordingly.*** When you know you will be in an environment that will trigger negative thoughts and feelings take time to plan how you will do good self-care. What can you do to take care of yourself in this situation? Should you limit the amount of time you will spend there? Should you have a food plan ready in advance?
9. ***Get in touch with your body in a positive way.*** Increasing activities that provide opportunities to feel good about yourself and your body might include yoga, Pilates, dancing, stretching, meditation etc. Try focusing on how your body feels in the moment when you are doing these activities.
10. ***Remind yourself of the things your body allows you to do.*** Remember, your body houses your soul and your spirit and allows you to be you. Become one with your body in spirit.