

# Love Your Body Week: Do you love what you see in the mirror? *Traci B. Hawkins, MA LLP*



*Love Your Body Week*; a project from the NOW foundation, runs the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of October, but any day of the year is the right day for women to embrace their natural figures. Love Your Body Day is a national day of action to speak out against disrespectful, negative, and harmful advertisements, raise awareness of health issues, and to celebrate the beauty and diversity of all our bodies.

Hollywood and the fashion, cosmetics, and diet industries work hard to make all of us believe that our bodies are unacceptable and need constant improvement. Television bombards us with makeover and plastic surgery shows cementing the message that our natural, God given bodies are unacceptable. Print and television ads reduce us to body parts—lips, legs, breasts, abs—airbrushed and retouched to impossible standards. TV shows tell women and teenage girls that cosmetic surgery is good for their self-esteem. Is it any wonder that the number one wish of girls age 11-17 is to be thinner or that 80% of U.S. women are dissatisfied with their appearance? Women and girls spend billions of dollars every year on cosmetics, fashion magazines and diet aids. These industries can't use negative images to sell their products without our assistance. ***Together, we can fight back.***

## Nine Ways to Love Your Body

**Indulge on your own terms.** Whether it's fresh veggies from the Farmer's Market or a pint of Häagen Dazs Vanilla Fudge ice cream, loving your body is also about loving your taste buds every once in a while.

**Stretch your mind and body.** Yoga—gentle yoga that encompasses relaxation and a healthy lifestyle, as well as meditative yoga—can bring one to the consciousness of their unique inner being. Yoga can rejuvenate the mind and body and teach us how to care for ourselves.

**Read.** It can be a source of entertainment, a way to catch up on current events or an educational tool. Several books have been published on loving your body—get some new ideas!

**Throw a private party.** Take a day for yourself and yourself only. Turn off your cell and log out of your instant messenger. Just spend the day looking in the mirror and exploring your body. Once the celebration is over you'll realize that you learn something new everyday.

**Laugh out Loud.** This isn't just an Internet acronym spelled out. It's an action that will do your body some good. Don't be afraid to show the world your smile. It's contagious.

**Have safe sex.** Loving our bodies is about keeping them healthy and free from diseases. And besides, there's nothing like getting a two for one on Love Your Body Day.

**Spend time with your family.** Whether it's a pet or partner, your spouse or a sibling, quality time is a must-have in nurturing relationships which in turn nurture and love your body.

**Listen to positive music.** Developing a theme song can do wonders for your body esteem and your overall outlook.

**Develop a creative outlet.** Everyone needs a medium to express daily stress and frustrations constructively. Maybe you're a photographer, writer, poet or all three. Maybe you can knit, make shapes out of clay or finger paint. Loving your body is also about loving your mind.

***Together we can fight back! Girls, boys, women and men need a definition of beauty that focuses on who they are and what they do, not on how they look.  
Love Your Body week is in October, but remember,  
every day should be Love Your Body Day.***

**Traci Breniser Hawkins, MA LLP**  
Clear Reflections Psychotherapy, PLLC

517. 414. 0065

Email: [TraciHawkins@TraciHawkins.com](mailto:TraciHawkins@TraciHawkins.com)