



Body Image, Self-esteem and Weight

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Americans today are being mentally whipsawed about their weight, with often terrible consequences for properly positive body image, appropriate self-esteem and successful weight loss / maintenance programs.

On the one hand, the landscape of what Americans are eating -- whether at home or in restaurants -- has skewed radically in the direction of processed packaged foods high in sugar, salt and fat, making simple control of caloric intake difficult for many.

On the other hand, while the actual problem of obesity in the United States has skyrocketed in recent years, the presentation of ever thinner and more sculpted "role models" in advertising and other media has made more and more Americans feel ever further from their weight loss / maintenance goals.

Americas' relentless insistence that only slender bodies are beautiful makes appropriate self-esteem very difficult for many. Studies have shown that the majority of Americans are not happy with their appearance. We are a nation obsessed with how we look, and increasingly we don't like what we see. Whether the result of a scientific body fat assessment, the number we see on a home bathroom scale, or a reflection in a store front window, the internal judgment of failure is always lurking.

Unfortunately, issues of negative body image and self-worth are often self-fulfilling. How we see ourselves -- as it relates to interactions with others -- is really how we project others are seeing us.

When we feel that we are "fat" we often tend to withdraw...and not infrequently eat unhealthy "comfort" foods.



How can you tell if you have an issue with body image or diet goals?

Consider these three questions

Do you compare yourself to super models?

Using as yardsticks of beauty individuals that have body and facial types that represent just a tiny fraction of 1% of any population.

Are you unable to experience satisfaction in weight loss or maintenance goals that you have achieved?

The all-or-nothing view of diet that is unable to recognize and have a positive experience of incremental progress.

Do you believe that losing weight will fix all the problems in your life?

The idea that when some specific weight loss goal is achieved -- magically -- relationship or professional problems will vanish.

As NLP Life Coaches concerned with weight loss and maintenance, we are acutely aware of the way self-esteem, diet and nutrition are intertwined -- and we teach clients useful tools for untying the knot.

Changing yourself begins with changing your mind, and NLP bases all of its weight loss / maintenance and nutritional programs on a solid foundation of transformative mental processes and exercises that bolster self-esteem.

Self-esteem is uniquely human, and is one of the most powerful building blocks of how we experience the world, especially with regard to how we interact with others.



NLP understands that -- whatever your actual weight -- a negative, usually distorted, view of what's in the mirror is not helpful. NLP Life Coaches understand that our first job is to help clients feel greater self-esteem by helping them stop punishing themselves for perceived failures in diet or weight loss programs, or for failing to live up to unrealistic media images.

Once body image and self-esteem beliefs have been addressed, NLP Life Coaching enables clients to move beyond diets and dieting, and establish new healthier patterns of eating based upon sound nutrition and healthful foods.

Weight loss and maintenance support provided by NLP coaching is not diet-specific. While we have beliefs about specific diets and foods -- and will share them in future articles -- we know from long experience that many types of diets can work.

We're here to help.

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