Body Image & You

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We hope you leave here with a better understanding of...

What is “body image”
What influences your body image
Who benefits from you having negative body image
What you can do to improve your body image

If you feel like you need urgent support during this seminar, please call Counseling Services at (805)756-2511
"Overheard at Cal Poly"

Consider how often you think about your body or overhear other people talking about bodies, either their own or someone else’s. You might say or hear things like:

“I really need to go work out later after eating SLODOC0 this morning.”

“I could never work out at the Rec Center, I’m not skinny or fit enough.”

“I could never wear a cop top; I don’t have the abs for that.”

“They/he/she shouldn’t be wearing that with that body type.”

“Oh my gosh you look so good; you’ve lost so much weight! I’m so jealous.”

“Your hair is perfect; I can never get mine to do that.”
What is “body image”?

“The subjective picture or mental image of one's own body.”

(Oxford Dictionary)

Messages received from:

family, friends, the medical community, the media
The (social) media of it all

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<th>The average American spends <strong>11 hours a day</strong> using media</th>
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<td><strong>95%</strong> Of girls say they see an onslaught of negative beauty critiques on social media</td>
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<td><strong>69%</strong> Of elementary school girls who read magazines say that the pictures influence their concept of the ideal body shape</td>
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<td><strong>47%</strong> Say the pictures make them want to lose weight</td>
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Who benefits?

Who profits from us not liking our body and our appearance?

Who makes money from us trying to change how we look?
What does this do?

- **Mental Health Impacts:**
  - Negative self-esteem
  - Negative body image
  - Low self-worth
  - Disordered eating/Eating disorders
  - Depression
  - Anxiety
  - Substance misuse/abuse
What can you do about it?

Self-Compassion  Mindfulness  Language
Self-Compassion

1. Self-kindness: That we be gentle and understanding with ourselves rather than harshly critical or judgmental.

2. Recognition of our common humanity, feeling connected with others in the experience of life rather than feeling isolated and alienated by our suffering.

3. Mindfulness: That we hold our experience in balance awareness, rather than ignoring our pain or exaggerating it.
Using Compassionate Imagery

Reading from "Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself" by Dr. Kristin Neff (adapted from Paul Gilbert, "The Compassionate Mind")

If you notice yourself feeling uncomfortable, feel free to turn down volume and not participate.
Words Matter

Neutral language

- Body neutrality
- Body acceptance
- Embodiment
Intuitive self care

- Intuitive Eating
- Intuitive Movement or Exercise
- Intuitive Rest
- Intuitive Media Consumption
Expand Your Definition of Beauty/Attractiveness

• What makes you unique?

• What aspects of your beauty did you inherit from ancestors?

• What do you enjoy doing in your daily life that your body allows you to do?
Next Steps

Check in with yourself
Observe non-judgmentally
Assess for signs you need more help
Ask for support----->

Counseling Services

- Brief phone screen (805) 756-2511
- Nourish workshop (3 sessions)
- Be Body Positive group (8 sessions)
- Eating Disorder Support Group (ongoing)

https://chw.calpoly.edu/counseling
Sources:

National Eating Disorders Association: https://www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/statistics-research-eating-disorders

Dr. Kristin Neff: https://self-compassion.org/
Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself by Kristin Neff, Ph.D.

The Body Positive: https://thebodypositive.org/