Foundations of Well-Being

Quizzes: What’s Your Personal Body Image?

How do you feel about your body? Are you basically content with it? Or are you embarrassed about it or critical of it? Have you been preoccupied with your weight, shape, complexion, hair, or other aspects of your appearance?

You can explore this by reflecting on and answering the questions below.

For each question, try to find a response in one of these five categories:

1 - strongly disagree     |     2 - disagree     |     3 - neither agree nor disagree     |     4 - agree     |     5 - strongly agree

A person’s responses to questions like these are often more complex and nuanced than a single number can indicate. But for scoring purposes, for each question please choose the number above that is most accurate (or least inaccurate!).

QUESTIONS

_____ I feel grateful for how my body has helped me do things over the years.

_____ I basically like my body.

_____ I feel very tuned into my body, rather than numb to it.

_____ I accept my body as it is.

_____ I am aware of my standards – my "shoulds" – for how I look, and aware of how these standards have been shaped by my upbringing, by larger forces such as the media, and by the messages I’ve received about what a man or a woman should look like (if gender-related distinctions are relevant to you).

_____ I spend little or no time wondering what others think about how I look.

_____ I might wish some things were different about my body, but I am just not critical of my body, or critical of myself related to my body.

_____ If I am in a situation with people who are truly better-looking than I am, I still feel perfectly comfortable and not inadequate.

_____ I have a strong sense of the aliveness, juiciness, and passion in my body.

_____ I don’t feel at all inhibited in my self-expression by how I look.

SCORING

Your responses to particular questions can be taken at face value, in their own right, as opportunities for seeing useful things about yourself, for investigating further – perhaps talking about them with others – and for identifying inner resources that would be good to develop further in yourself.

Additionally, it can be helpful to get an overall sense of where you stand. Add up your responses to each question to get your total score. See where your score fits in just below; please hold these descriptions lightly, but in a general sense it could well be true that:

40 - 50     You are very comfortable with your body as it is. You don’t feel betrayed by it or embarrassed about it. You are tuned into it, not disconnected or numb to it. You are aware of and enjoy the vitality, juiciness, and passion in your body. It feels like your body is your friend, not an adversary or something to be controlled or punished.

21 - 39     You probably don’t hate your body, but it seems like there is still a significant amount of self-consciousness, preoccupation, comparison, or self-criticism related to it. Perhaps there have been times in your life when you felt real bad about your body. Perhaps you have struggled with your weight, or been afraid of losing your hair, or wished your skin color were lighter or darker. You might feel constrained by the “right” ways to look or act as a man or a woman.

10 - 20     You do not have a friendly relationship with your body. Consider whether you are avoiding certain situations or opportunities because you feel bad about how you look. You could be angry with your body or yourself, or have strong feelings of embarrassment, self-criticism, or even self-loathing related to it. If these negative beliefs and feelings about your body make you depressed or ashamed, or lead you to treat your body in punishing ways (e.g., cutting, purging), please talk with a licensed mental health professional about this.

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