BODY CONFIDENCE (for Life!) GUIDE



Are you ready to start feel amazing and appreciate your body **RIGHT NOW?**

Not tomorrow. Not next week. But right at this very moment?

You might think you have to wait "until" before you can feel truly confident. That can mean waiting until you:

- *Finally reach a certain weight*
- *Fit into your "goal" jeans*
- *Get your hair/nails done*
- *Finish up your latest fitness plan*

Body confidence (also called body positivity) means shedding the weight of all those external pressures to achieve a certain "look" or the ideal body.

It means appreciating and loving yourself for being uniquely **YOU**, as you are right now in this moment!

In this ebook we're going to go over actionable steps you can take **TODAY**, to start feeling more confident about yourself almost immediately!

We hope you'll take this empowering journey with us.

Remember – you're perfectly "you" ... just the way you are!





What is BODY CONFIDENCE?

Body confidence is accepting – and celebrating! – your own body as it is at this very moment. And it's also celebrating the same thing in others.

No body shaming. No pressure to fit into a cookie-cutter image.

It starts at a very young age, and it just goes on from there, following people into adulthood … just look at these statistics:

42%
of girls in grades 1-3 want to lose weight

45%
of boys and girls in grades 3-6 want to be thinner

51%
of 9 and 10 year old girls say they feel better about themselves when they are dieting

81%
of 10 year olds are afraid of being fat

89%
of girls have dieted by age 17

(Source: https://thebodyimagecenter.com/education-awareness/eating-disorder-statistics/)



For Men

- Nearly 28% of male college students who participated in a study about body image were at risk of developing an eating disorder.
- 45% of men are dissatisfied with the shape of their bodies.
- In France, more than 85% of young men who were surveyed said they weren't satisfied with their muscularity.
- In Australia, 15% of men reported their self-worth was tied into their appearance.

(Sources: https://breakbingeeating.com/body-image-statistics/ https://breakingmuscle.com/fitness/the-modern-male-and-body-image-its-okay-to-talk-about-it)

For Women

- In the US, a study found that 50% of women were dissatisfied with their bodies.
- Almost a 1/4 of the women reported frequently weighing or comparing their bodies to others.
- A study of 1,000 women aged 30 to 74 in Switzerland found that even though 73% of the women surveyed were at a normal weight, more than 70% of them wanted to be thinner. This was true for women of all ages.
- Almost a quarter of women in Australia reported their feelings of self-worth were linked to their appearance.

(Source: https://breakbingeeating.com/body-image-statistics/)



Can you imagine the amount of negative energy and unnecessary stress we would get rid of if we didn't live with these concerns?

The sad truth is that most of us go through periods in our lives when we don't feel positive about the shape of our bodies.

This applies to both men and women!

Feeling negative about your body can happen at any point in your life, but there are a few times you're more likely to fall victim:

- *After a pregnancy*
- *When you're transitioning into a new phase of life (promotions, marriage, breakup, moving to a new city)*
- *If you're coming back from illness or injury*

And it comes in almost every form.

For women, it can mean you might feel like you're not thin enough (or you're too thin), your butt is too small (or too big), your arms are not toned (or too toned), or it could even be that your hair is too curly – or too straight (or there might not be enough of it!).

For men, it can be tied into the size of their muscles, the state of their abs, their height, skin, or hair loss.

The lists are almost endless.

We're fed a constant diet of Photoshopped images of the ever-changing "ideal" body as defined by Hollywood, mainstream and social media. The ironic thing is, even the people pictured in those "ideal" photos don't look that way in everyday life!

Plus, we can also feel pressure from society to look a certain way. Sometimes this pressure even comes from our families and friends.

But ...

What if, for right now, you did something **completely RADICAL** and appreciated your body for its amazing, one-of-a-kind uniqueness? For all the incredible things it can do?

We're going to explore 5 steps to *Body Confidence (For Life!)* in this ebook.

LET'S GET STARTED!



Step 1

WATCH YOUR WORDS

This step is first on the list because it can take some retraining – both in how you talk to yourself and also with others.

Take some time over the next few days to **really listen** to the words you use when you talk to – or about – yourself!

Is your inner voice encouraging or critical? Does it notice all of the good things and things you love about yourself? Or are you focused on the negative and things you don't like?

*One of the most important things you can do is learn to **shut down your inner critic** and **redirect it to notice your POSITIVE traits**.*

At first, this can feel a little uncomfortable (and maybe even a little fake).

Do it anyway.





For example:

> *"Ugh I hate how I look in these jeans and I feel gross.*
> *They are so tight on me and my thighs and butt look so big."*

can become

> *"I may not be where I want to be, but I'm making strides every day! I love my body, truly appreciate it, and am very grateful to have one!"*

Over time this gets easier as you reframe how you see yourself and your body.

Just as important: don't criticise yourself in front of others.

This can open the door for others to think it's OK to be critical of you, too – and also critical of themselves and other people.

Keep it positive!

ACTION ITEM: Grab a pen and paper, and write TWO lists.

List 1

This one is designed to help you appreciate that you are not your body – but that you are an amazing person who happens to live in a body!

Write down 10 things that you ARE – for example a great friend, a loving mom or dad, an athlete, a brilliant Words with Friends player, a go-getter, etc.

List 2

Now list 10 things you LOVE about yourself! What traits / talents / characteristics do you have that you admire and appreciate?

Write down 10 of your favorite things about yourself ... for example: do you make everyone around you feel special? Do you love your hair or your smile ... or both, etc.

Read your lists out loud right now. Do you feel any different after reading it? I know I do! Keep these lists nearby and refer to them EVERY DAY this week.

EXTRA CREDIT: Make new lists every week to keep building that healthy confidence!





Step 2

CURATE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

You might not realise it when it's happening, but your social media feed(s) can play a bigger role than you think in your confidence, self-esteem, and mood.

Studies have shown that the quality of your online interactions have a profound impact on your mood – as well as feelings of worthlessness!

Seeing a constant barrage of posts and images that make you feel like you don't measure up ... and it can leave a mark on your self-confidence and mental health.

People who have negative interactions online are ***significantly*** more likely to have symptoms of depression.

People who use more social media platforms have a
300% higher risk of anxiety and depression
than people who use fewer of them.

Researchers blame cyberbullying and seeing a distorted view of other people's lives – along with a sense of wasted time after spending hours scrolling social media.

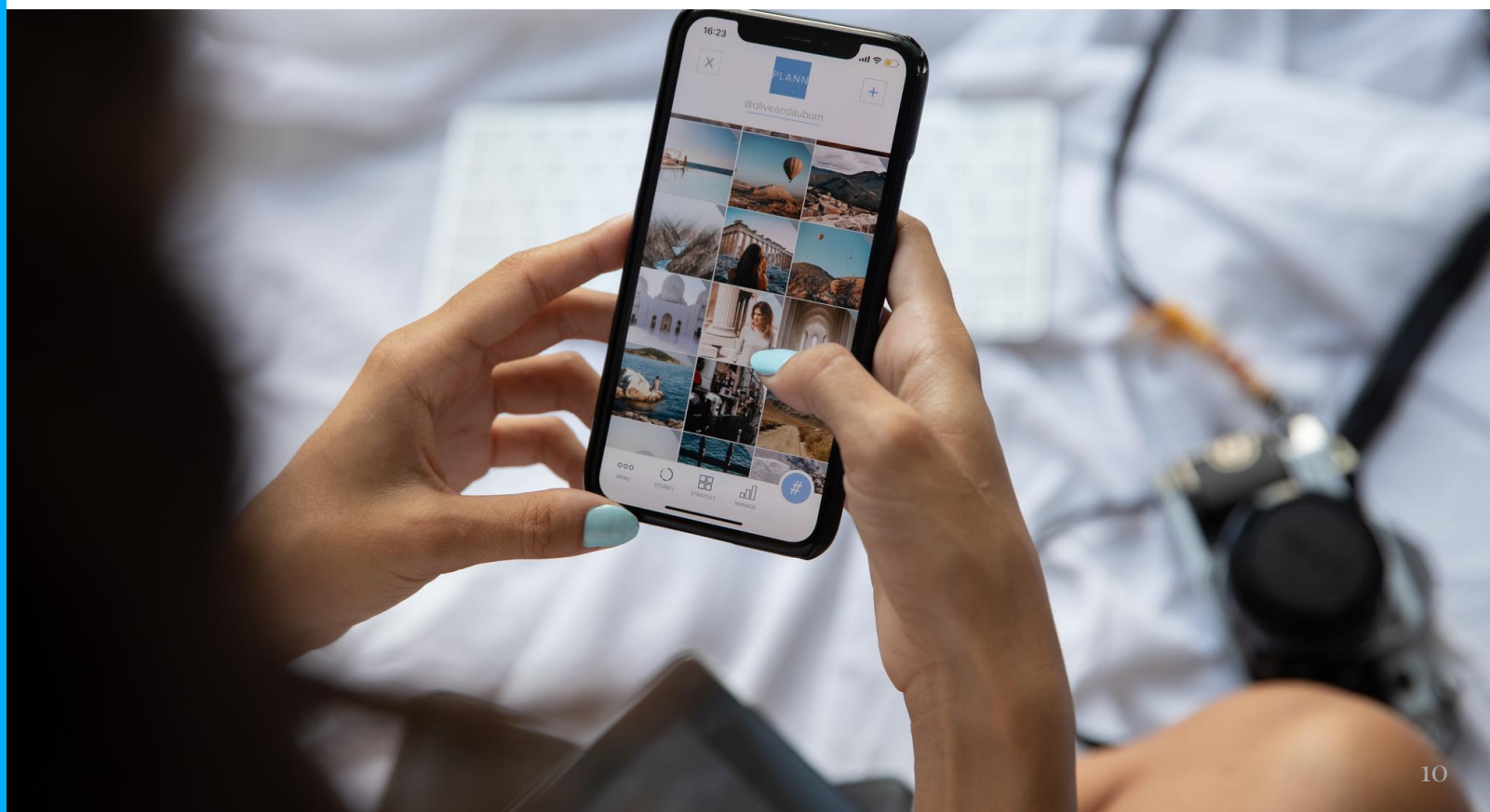
For more info, check out **this TED Talk** about the impact of social media and body confidence and how it impacts your health, achievement, and performance.

***Remember**: social media is simply a tool to help keep us connected. It should ADD VALUE to your life and not detract from it!*

ACTION ITEM: Go into your phone's screen time settings and set a daily time limit for your social media apps to avoid spending too much time scrolling.

Then, when you're using social media, if you notice that certain people or "influencers" push your buttons and make you feel "less than" – unfollow them asap!

Replace them with people who inspire you and leave you feeling positive.



Step 3

FOCUS ON WHAT YOUR BODY **CAN** DO



Have you heard the incredible story of former U.S. Marine Sgt. Kirstie Ennis?

She was a 21-year-old medic when the helicopter she was in went down in Afghanistan, leaving her gravely injured. After 40 surgeries, she ended up with her leg amputated above her knee.

Through it all, she never stopped focusing on what her body was capable of doing.

Between surgeries, she completed a 1,000-mile "Walking for the Wounded" nonprofit walk across England, Wales and Scotland.

And since her recovery, she has competed as a Paralympic snowboarder and is working on completing the "Seven Summits" – climbing the highest peak on every continent.

But that's not all. She has started several businesses, was a stuntwoman in the movie "Patriot's Day," has completed three Master's degrees, and is working on a doctorate … on top of being a motivational speaker.

Source: https://kirstieennisfoundation.com/about-kirstie/

When it comes to health and fitness, our culture is consumed with weight and appearance.

The problem with that is ***when you focus on external validation – things outside yourself – it strips you of your power****.*

You end up relying on the scale, the mirror, and other people to tell you how you feel about yourself.

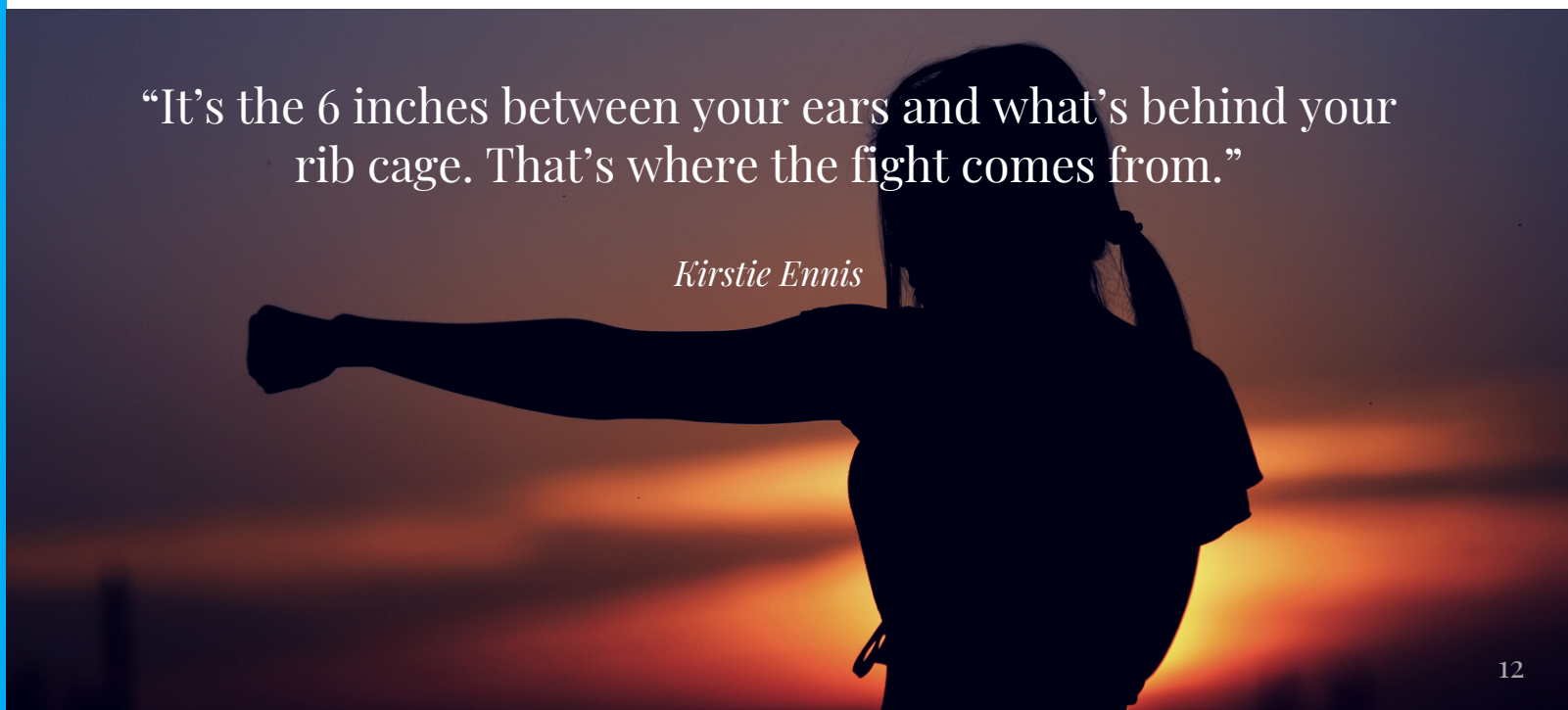
What if instead, you took pride in all of the amazing things your body CAN do – and loved it for all of its strength, power, and resilience?

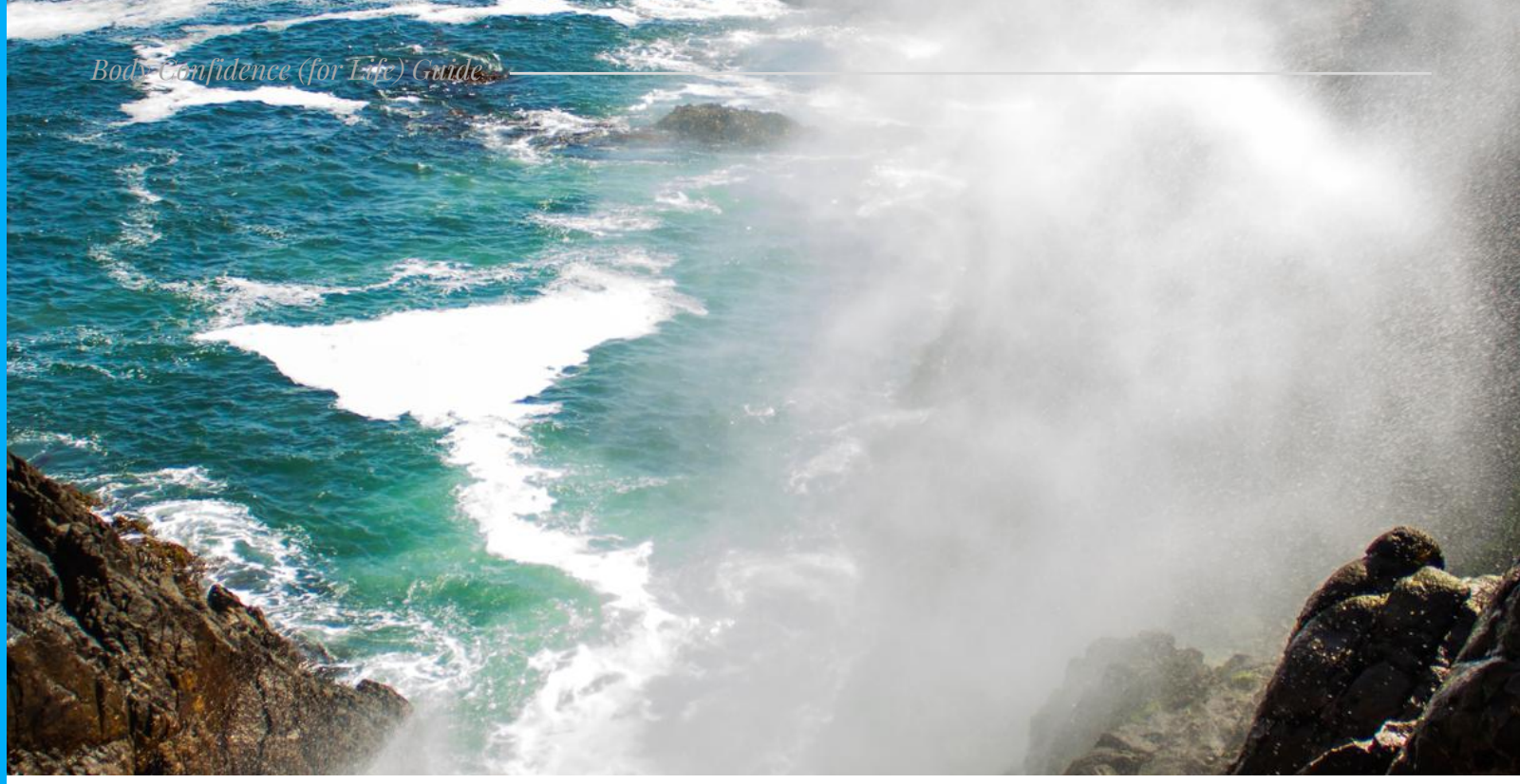
This is a radical shift in thinking – but incredibly empowering.

ACTION ITEM: Think of 5 ways your body supports you every day (this can include breathing, moving, etc.).

THEN … come up with 5 different ways you can help love and support your body, as it works hard and goes through the actions it takes to support YOU!

IDEAS: Getting enough sleep, taking a few extra minutes to stretch every day, meditating, reading books that inspire you, etc.





Step 4

SET HEALTHY GOALS

Do your health and fitness goals feel more like a punishment or something you "need to get through," instead of an empowering activity that you look forward to?

If you do, then it's time to create better goals that ADD value and energy to your life!

That's what music mogul DJ Khaled did back in 2018, when he vowed to start taking better care of his body – not necessarily to lose weight but to get healthy.

"I have to love myself to take care of the people that I love," he said on Instagram. "It's not a priority, it's the ONLY priority."

Instead of focusing on weight loss, he took steps that would help improve his overall wellness.

That meant changing up his diet to include healthier choices, and he also began exercising. It wasn't long until he was down to his goal weight of 250 pounds (113 kg) ... with newfound energy to keep going!

DJ Khaled is always about radiating positivity, and that was no exception during the pandemic.

In the lead-up to the global health crisis, he said he had been slacking on his workouts. But while he was in isolation at home with his family, he took advantage of the time to ramp them back up because of the mental boost they gave him!

Big Takeaway: It's all about setting goals that add value to your life.

For example, when it comes to workouts, what if instead of trying to fit into a certain size jeans, you went after a fun or performance-based goal, like training for a 5K, hitting a squat PR, or joining a softball league?

And if weight loss is a goal, you can approach it from a positive, healthy perspective and focus on how you FEEL (energised, athletic, strong, vibrant) vs. how you look!

This could include:

- *Eating foods that help your body feel GREAT after you eat them.*
- *Working out in ways that help your body feel strong and empowered instead of drained and depleted.*
- *Taking the steps YOU need (you already know what they are!) so your body feels relaxed and restored!*

ACTION ITEM: Rethink your goals! Take a few minutes to brainstorm 2-3 new healthy, confidence-boosting goals that get you fired up!



Step 5

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH POSITIVE PEOPLE

Have you ever heard the saying that you are the sum of the 5 people you spend the most time with?

Researchers actually believe it's even more than five that have an influence over your life – your confidence, aspirations, and more.

Take some time to think about the people you spend the most time with, at home, work, online, or socially.

Are they supportive? Do they help you feel better about yourself, and vice versa?

Or are you trapped in a negative loop where you always find yourself feeling drained or defensive around them?

Or just as bad … do you feel like you have to say negative things about yourself simply because they are always saying negative things about themselves?

Sometimes just having an awareness of how you feel after spending time with certain people can help protect you from negativity. It might even take a conversation to turn things around!

ACTION ITEM: Do an audit of the 10-15 people you spend the most time with (in-person or online).

How do you feel when you're interacting with them? Do you feel confident, inspired, positive, and supported? Or do you feel defensive, lacking, or feeling worse about yourself?

Then … seek out a few positive role models who inspire you!

These can be people who have accomplished something in areas that interest you – and embody the values, beliefs, and habits that you admire.

Basically, these should be people who help you appreciate your unique qualities, and who inspire you to live a larger, fuller life!

This exercise sounds simple, but I guarantee you …

If you actually PUT THIS INTO PRACTICE, your life will change.

*In fact, this is one of the biggest determining factors of living a successful life. The people who you surround yourself with are **EVERYTHING**. Choose wisely.*

Confidence IS AN INSIDE JOB

Feeling confident isn't something that will happen overnight. In fact, it can be a lifelong learning process.

It's a DECISION you make.

When you feel confident, you feel empowered to step outside your comfort zone … which can lead to a more full and meaningful life filled with possibilities.

This allows you to express and become the best and truest version of YOU. One that is authentic, genuine, and unapologetic.

The world needs YOU. The REAL you. The CONFIDENT you.

Here's a link to a fun and inspiring **TED Talk** by a former pro wrestler talking about being confident – even while wearing a Speedo in the ring!

Going through these 5 steps – and trusting your intuition – will help give you a head start on feeling *Body Confident for Life*!



BODY CONFIDENCE (for Life!)

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