

WHAT DOES YOUR INNER CRITIC SAY TO YOUR MIRROR IMAGE?

or

WHAT DOES YOUR INNER CRITIC SAY TO YOUR NAKED MIRROR IMAGE?

or

WHAT DOES YOUR INNER CRITIC SEE IN YOUR MIRROR?

or

WHAT DOES YOUR INNER CRITIC SAY TO A NAKED YOU?

or

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by Jan Cole, M.Ed.

Hey, hey, Fat Albert, ho, there, Skinny Minny. Hi, Big Nose! Were you ever called names that reflected your physical appearance that probably hurt? Our physical appearance (P.A.) can shape our lives negatively as well as positively in more ways than we think. Our relationship to our appearance, how we think, feel and act towards our looks forms an essential aspect of our personality and our body image. Our P.A. is the most readily available information about us, conveying gender, race, approximate age, economic status, sometimes occupation. By the time we've reached adulthood we have pretty well adjusted aspects of our life around our height, weight, facial features, specific body parts--ears, eyes, buttocks, hair, etc. (or life has adjusted around us). We've formed habits and patterns in our social, emotional, work, recreation... lives that accommodate them. It's unlikely a short person will become a star basketball player competing against Magic Johnson or Dikembe Mutombo on the Nugget's basketball team, an overweight person the centerfold for *Playboy*, someone with short stubby fingers a classical guitarist.

Dissatisfaction with our appearance can produce emotional distress, sometimes locked-in at the unconscious level, causing us to feel socially anxious much of the time or in certain situations, to feel discomfort, shame, self-conscious, shy, unhappy, depressed, secretive. Feelings of inadequacy can effect

intimate relationships emotionally, sexually and/or create performance anxiety. It can erode self-esteem in men as well as women. A body dysmorphic disorder creates such obsessive concern about P.A. that the person avoids social situations at all costs or endures painful self-consciousness, sometimes paranoia. Body image is the driving force behind various eating disorders, anorexia, bulimia and compulsive overeating so prevalent in our appearance conscious culture.

Research by Dr. Mark Snyder, University of Minnesota conducted experiments with men and women confirming self-fulfilling prophecies of how our looks can affect how we are treated, which in turn, can influence how we act. Other surveys indicate that the vast majority of people are dissatisfied with at least one aspect of their appearance. What matters most, according to several other studies, is how much parents and friends emphasized your appearance as a child. Chubby awkward kids are likely to grow up with poor body images, as are pretty girls whose sense of self-worth is strongly connected to their appearance. "Whenever body shape is given undue importance, positively or negatively, it becomes a focus for future problems," writes Laura Fraser in "Learning to Love the Mirror."

Even some of the most beautiful people in the world suffer from a poor body/self image.

One of the world's top make-up artists for 20 years, Alberto Fava, has watched models cringe in the mirror over their appearance. In response to their inner critic wrestlings, he developed a series of workshops, Self Image Expose, to help women identify their inner critic, tap their creativity, expand their self perceptions and transform the critic into a source of power and inner strength.

Suzy Prudden, author of *Meta Fitness, Your Thoughts Taking Shape*, believes your body is a physical manifestation of how you feel about yourself. "By healing your relationship with yourself, you will heal your body and you will heal your life." While working on your body/self relationship, you will develop new relationships with success, money and people. Part of changing your body image involves identifying your mind chatter about it. Awareness is the first step to change.

One way to get in touch with your own body/self image is to draw a picture of yourself, emphasizing what you dislike the most. Then examine whether you can change it or need to accept what you cannot change. Another way is to stand in front of a mirror, preferably naked to slowly scan your body one part at a time carefully noting your reaction, your self-talk. Is it positive or negative? Like or dislike? Note your resistance to parts you don't want to like or love? According to Louise Hay releasing the resistance and loving the parts will in a short time give you a healthier body and self-image with age lines disappearing, weight normalizing, posture straightening.

The following are a few ideas you can use to help your body image:

1. EXERCISE can improve the way you feel about your body.
2. ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE parts of your body that you do like.
3. LEARN TO FEEL ATTRACTIVE; choose flattering clothing, enhancing colors, hairstyles, jewelry.
4. PAMPER YOURSELF with massages, scented baths, silks, etc.

5. VISUALIZE stripping away negative labels you or others have given you (Baby Whale, Big Nose, Skinny Minn....)
6. CREATE POSITIVE AFFIRMATIONS meaningful to you and spend 5-10 minutes daily looking in a mirror while saying them.
7. Choose the least threatening parts to work with first -- little finger, wrist, toe -- looking directly at them when you repeat the affirmation. In a few days or even weeks move to other parts that hold more emotions working on one or two at a time.

In Love Your Looks: How to Stop Criticizing and Start Appreciating Your Appearance,Carolynn Hillman suggests writing to your body parts, your fat, your "unacceptables" and carry on a dialogue with them writing without analyzing. Just write!

Most of the material written to help people with body image problems expect their processes to take several months or more to accomplish desired results plus continual monitoring to keep and/or gain more results. I believe improvement can happen much faster and integrate at a deeper level with MUSCLE TESTING and the following REPATTERNING process integrating both the right and left brain hemispheres to be in agreement, getting you "out of your own way" so to speak, stopping the sabotage of the particular issue.

An important question to ask before you start any balancing or repatterning work is:

HOW AND WHEN WILL I (YOU) KNOW
"IT'S" DIFFERENT IF I REPATTERN
THIS ISSUE?

Procedure:

1. Test for strong right and left PMC muscles.
2. Complete the bio-computer tune-up (correct for switching) in any way that works for you. I use the following:
 - a. Five fingers pointed in at the navel. Test.
 - b. If the muscles check strong, proceed to step c.

If either or both of the muscle checks weak, hunt for circuitry shut-off points.

1. K-27's (Kidney meridian)
 2. Below the lip (Central meridian)
 3. Top of the lip (Governing meridian)
- c. Make corrections by massaging appropriate meridian end points while touching the navel.
- d. Test for water shortage by gently tugging on the hair while testing. If weak, drink water.
- e. Retest any "shut off's" to make sure the tests are now strong.
3. Make your positive declaration statement as if true in present time.
- Example: I, (all your names), love & accept my body the way it is.
4. After making the statement, test the right arm for left brain access and the left arm, right brain access for a weak response. If both remain strong, the statement may not be an issue, the body may not be ready at this time or the bio-computer may have jammed. If one or both of the PMC's are weak stroke ONCE upward on the midline of the forehead for data input.
5. CORRECTION:
- a. Ask "What will clear this issue?" (this statement to make it true) or use any other similar question.
 - b. Muscle check for each of the following BRAIN FILES. Stroke TWICE on the midline of the forehead for each STRONG response.

SPIRITUAL
SELF-CONCEPT
EMOTIONAL
PHYSICAL/STRUCTURAL
CHEMICAL
SEXUAL
WITHHOLDING
GROUNDING
PRIOR DECISIONS
FEARS
MOTIVATION
INTUITION
WISDOM
HEALING

6. Repeat the statement and muscle test to see that both arms are strong. It is now integrated and congruency should begin it's work within you.

This is a short form version of the repatterning technique; a longer more in depth form is given in my book *Repattern Your Sabotaging Ways*. If you wish to gather more data you feel is pertinent to the issue, test for this information BEFORE step 5, i.e. who, what, when, where, age recess, emotion-on-line, etc. Remember to stroke ONCE upward on the midline of the forehead for data input. One repatterning about the issue may not be enough any more than taking only one vitamin for your cold is. Consider other related aspects or use the MORE MODE to repattern other statements. This short form process, once you learn it, takes about 3-5 minutes to complete.

The following statement, I believe, is CORE for EVERYONE to repattern:

I, _____, trust, like, love, accept, respect and honor myself, have a positive self-image and high self-esteem.

AND/OR

I, _____, value who I am, care for myself, treat myself with kindness, consideration, accept and appreciate the good in myself and am and feel worthy deserving of life's best.

Others I would consider repatterning might be more specifically directed. Even though you may not like certain aspects of your body image and would prefer parts to be different acceptance is crucial to your self-esteem and self-appreciation.

I, (say all your names), accept my nose the way it is.

I, _____, accept my buttocks the way it is.

I, _____, accept my abdomen the way it is.

I, _____, accept my chest the way it is.

I, _____, accept my height for what it is.

I, _____, accept my ears the way they are.

Any part of your anatomy can be repatterned for acceptance: feet, arms, legs, hands, facial

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shape, skin, muscle tone, shape, physical strength, coordination. Acceptance does not mean you have to like or love. It simply means ACCEPTING WHAT IS. You can still repattern to like and love parts of you or change some of them, i.e. lose weight, have a nose job, love the parts you can't change, etc. Louise Hay says, "Little babies love every inch of their bodies. They have no guilt, no shame, and no comparison. You were like that, and then somewhere along the line you listened to others who told you that you were 'not good enough.' You began to criticize your body thinking perhaps that's where your flaws were."

Consider repatterning any negative thoughts and feelings you want to eliminate about your P.A., any physical ideals you want to emphasize less, and any fitness/health oriented behaviors you wish to change with this simple process.

Take this quick BODY AREA SATISFACTION TEST from *What Do You See When You Look in the Mirror?* How satisfied are you with each area of your body?

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| 1 = very dissatisfied |
| 2 = mostly dissatisfied |
| 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied |
| 4 = mostly satisfied |
| 5 = very satisfied |

- ___ 1. Face (facial features, complexion)
- ___ 2. Hair (color, thickness, texture)
- ___ 3. Lower torso (buttocks, hips, thighs, legs)
- ___ 4. Mid torso (waist, stomach)

- ___ 5. Upper torso (chest or breast, shoulders, arms)
- ___ 6. Muscle tone
- ___ 7. Weight
- ___ 8. Height
- ___ 9. Any other area/aspect you dislike: _____
- ___ 10. Any other area/aspect you dislike: _____

There are other wonderful charts and self-discovery tests in this book that I know would be helpful to you.

References:

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