The Body Project
Facilitator Manual

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Note: This script was designed for implementation those with body image concerns. Please do not implement with peer leaders unless they have received the training.

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OVERVIEW

EVIDENCE BASE

This manual outlines a dissonance-based body acceptance intervention, referred to as the *Body Project,* that has been developed and evaluated at Stanford University, the University of Texas at Austin, and Oregon Research Institute. The *Body Project* is the outgrowth of a 25-year program of research on the risk factors for eating disorders by research teams around the world. This intervention has been delivered to over 6 million young women globally.

The intervention consists of verbal, written, and behavioural tasks in which participants voluntarily critique the appearance ideals promoted for females during four weekly sessions. These activities have been shown to result in decreased pursuit of the "appearance ideal" and consequent reductions in body dissatisfaction, negative mood, dieting, and eating disorder symptoms, as well as decreased risk for future eating disorders and improved psychosocial functioning when delivered by research clinicians (Stice, Marti, Spoor, Presnell, & Shaw, 2008; Stice, Mazotti, Weibel, & Agras, 2000; Stice, Shaw, Burton, & Wade, 2006), clinicians who work in high schools and colleges (Stice, Butryn, Rohde, Shaw, & Marti, 2013; Stice, Rohde, Gau, & Shaw, 2009; Stice, Rohde, Shaw & Gau, 2011), and peer educators (Stice, Rohde, Durant, Shaw, & Wade, 2013; Stice, Rohde, Shaw, & Gau, 2017; Stice, Rohde, Shaw, & Gau, 2020) .

The Body Project produced a 60% reduction in future onset of eating disorders over 3-year follow-up when implemented by a research clinician and a peer educator compared to assessment-only control participants (Stice et al., 2008). More recently, the Body Project produced a 58% reduction in future onset of eating disorders over 4-year follow-up when implemented by peer educators versus clinicians (Stice et al., 2020). Most critically, the Body Project produced a 77% reduction in future onset of eating disorders over 2-year follow-up when implemented by peer educators compared to a placebo control condition (Ghaderi et al., 2020) which was upheld in the 2023 review by Schwartz and colleagues.

The latter results suggest that for every 100 young women who complete this program, there should be 11 fewer young girls who develop eating disorders over the subsequent 2-year period. This intervention also produces superior effects than seven alternative interventions. Numerous independent laboratories have replicated the positive effects for The *Body Project* (e.g., Becker, Smith, & Ciao, 2006; Green, Scott, Diyankova, Gasser, & Pederson, 2005; Halliwell & Diedrichs, 2014; Mitchell, Mazzeo, Rausch, & Cooke, 2007).

Consistent with the intervention theory, reductions in appearance-ideal internalisation mediate the *Body Project* effects on change in eating disorder symptoms (Seidel et al., 2009; Stice et al., 2007) and participants assigned to high- versus low-dissonance versions of this program showed greater eating disorder symptom reduction (Green et al., 2005; McMillan et al., 2011). The *Body Project* also produced larger symptom reductions for youth with initially elevated thin-ideal internalisation, consistent with the theory that they experience more dissonance (Stice et al., 2008) and eliminated the negative effect of exposure to thin models on body dissatisfaction in young girls (Halliwell & Diedrichs, 2014). Participant who completed the *Body*

Project showed a reduction in brain reward region response to thin models compared to controls (Stice, Yokum, & Waters, 2014), indicating that this body acceptance class reduces neural response to stimuli thought to play a key role in promoting body image and eating disturbances.

No other body acceptance class/eating disorder prevention program has been found to significantly reduce future eating disorder onset, outperformed alternative credible interventions, produce effects that persist through 4-year follow-up, or produced effects that have been replicated by independent research teams.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

According to Festinger (1957), cognitive dissonance occurs when there is a discrepancy between one's beliefs and one's actions. This inconsistency creates psychological discomfort, which then motivates the individual to reduce the cognitive discord by changing their beliefs. In this intervention, adolescent girls and young women who subscribe to the appearance ideal are subtly encouraged to critique the ideal through a series of verbal, written, and behavioural exercises. These activities are theorised to produce cognitive dissonance, which reduces the extent to which they subscribe to the appearance ideal, which in turn is thought to result in improvements in body dissatisfaction, negative affect, and eating disorder symptoms. Thus, the overarching goal of this intervention is to have the participants speak, write, or act in a way that is contrary to the appearance ideal.

It is **vital for the participants to generate the costs** of the appearance ideal, rather than the group leaders, because the latter would not produce cognitive dissonance. In addition, participants should never focus on any benefits of the appearance ideal, because this will only undermine the effects of the intervention. The present manual is for a second generation high-dissonance version of this intervention, in which we have incorporated a number of components that should maximise the dissonance that putatively accounts for intervention effects. This high-dissonance version of this intervention draws from procedures used in the Green and associates' trial (2005).

It is important that group leaders do not embellish this intervention (e.g., discuss a past history of an eating disorder) because this may undermine the effects of the intervention that have been observed in past trials. However, if leaders have ideas about ways to potentially improve the intervention, please contact us at thebodyproject@glos.ac.uk as we welcome this type of input and share this with other researchers in the field including Professor Stice and his team.

STRUCTURE OF THE INTERVENTION

Groups are led by a team of two peer leaders; this is to ensure safeguarding procedures are in place should a participant need to leave the room for any reason. Experience suggests that the optimal group size is approximately 6 participants, as this ensures that all group members will be able to participate verbally. The group meets for four consecutive weeks in 1-hour sessions.

Following on from feedback from some schools we have worked with, there is an adaptation for a 6 x 50-minute session version which allows a better fit for the school schedule in some cases. If this adaptation is of interest to you, please contact us at thebodyproject@glos.ac.uk.

PEER LEADER TRAINING

For optimal delivery of this intervention, we strongly recommend that group leaders carefully read this manual and practice each activity (i.e., role play) before leading a group. Experience indicates that participants quickly lose interest if the group leaders are not familiar with the activities and the flow of the sessions.

GENDER INCLUSIVITY

Gender dysphoria and body dissatisfaction are closely linked to one another, especially with disordered eating for gender affirming purposes. Thus, in a concerted effort to make the *Body Project* more inclusive, this curriculum seeks to be as gender neutral as possible, regardless of identified gender or sex. Facilitators are expected to utilise inclusive and gender-neutral language when moderating group discussions and presenting activities. It is good practice for facilitators to specify their pronouns (e.g. my name is Jane Doe and my pronouns are she/they) to signal that it is an inclusive space. (https://www.glsen.org/activity/pronouns-guide-glsen).

COMMON CHALLENGES

'HOMEWORK'

Homework assignments can pose difficulties, especially those that seem "school-like." Participants' adherence to between-session assignments depend on whether leaders emphasise the importance of completing these exercises and how well leaders track the assignments in subsequent session. Contacting participants via email or phone a day before the scheduled session can help prompt participants to complete their assignments and bring them to their next session. Peer leaders should email the home exercises to group participants wherever possible. Work undertaken by Professor Stice has previously asked that leaders collect completed home exercises (to optimise accountability that contributes to dissonance induction) however we appreciate that there may be data protection concerns over this within the UK and so we ask participants whether they are willing to do this.

To reduce the connection to 'school homework', these tasks are positioned as 'Bridging Exercises' as they form the content of subsequent sessions and discussions and 'bridge' between the sessions.

This adaptation now includes alternative options for the bridging exercises of letter writing which some students may find challenging academically and which have been recommended by EDAC (Eating Disorders and Autism Collaboration) to assist those who are neurodivergent, leaders should encourage students to explore which options they feel will help them to complete the bridging exercises most effectively as they also form an essential part of the cognitive dissonance required for the intervention to be most effective.

INVESTMENT IN THE APPEARANCE IDEAL

Participants are often extremely invested in the appearance ideal and may have difficulty letting go of this pursuit. **However, it is important not to allow *participants* to argue for the ideal, as this will only solidify their position further. Always keep in mind that the primary goal of the intervention is to get the *participants* to criticise and challenge the appearance ideal**. Group leaders should try to get other group members to speak out against the appearance ideal or pose counter arguments to pro-ideal statements voiced by participants. Experience indicates that the program does not work if ***participants*** do not critique the appearance ideal. It may be helpful for facilitators to say that they are simply trying to follow the script when they ask participants to discuss the costs rather than the benefits of pursuing the appearance ideal. Leaders can simply ask a reluctant participant to just give the activities their best shot, telling them that they are free to revert back to their old opinions after the group is over. It is also crucial for group leaders to keep self-disclosure to a minimum to make sure that participants can maximise the time spent critiquing the appearance ideal.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE APPEARANCE IDEAL AND THE HEALTHY IDEAL

It is useful to make a distinction between the thin/appearance ideal and the healthy ideal. The thin/appearance ideal is about appearing ultra-slender and following the latest trends. People often engage in very unhealthy behaviours to attain this slenderness, including laxative abuse, and go to extreme ends, such as cosmetic surgery, to attain this ultra-slender look. In contrast, the healthy ideal is about striving for a healthy body, which is typically nowhere near as slender as the thin ideal, because it is healthy to have muscles and body fat. Further, individuals pursuing the healthy ideal do not engage in unhealthy weight control behaviours, such as fasting, excessive exercise and laxative abuse. Likewise, there are costs associated with non-slender appearance ideals of having 'plump lips, no wrinkles' such as Botox, cosmetic surgery and fillers etc. all of which can be challenged as part of the 'healthy ideal'.

PARTICIPANT ENGAGEMENT IN SESSIONS

It is also important to engage all participants during the group sessions. Although it is crucial to follow the manual closely, participants often get bored if group leaders just read directly from the script. Thus, we recommend becoming familiar with the main points so that you can minimise the extent to which you read from the script.

Maintaining eye contact with participants during the entire session and using first names helps encourage discussion as well. Although eye contact can be tricky via video conferencing because of the different location of the camera versus the screen, looking at the individuals on the screen as much as possible will convey interest and attention. It should go without saying, but please do not multitask and check email while leading a virtual group. Be sure to draw participants into the discussions, paying special attention to those who are less talkative or reluctant to speak up. We also recommend that you consider safeguarding of participants if you choose to run your groups virtually, for example, consider if their home environment is

supportive if they need to talk to someone after attending and how you would ensure that they receive support if needed.

If one or two participants tend to dominate the discussion, call on other participants to share their opinions. We recommend going one by one so that *each* group member participates in each main activity (change the order so the same person does not always have to go first). Try to use humour, when possible, be relaxed, smile and laugh when appropriate, and listen carefully to what participants are saying. When a participant shares personal information or discusses difficulties they have with body image, make empathetic statements ("Wow, it sounds like you're really struggling with this", "That must have been hurtful when your father made that comment to you about your weight").

STICKING TO TIMING

It is also important to manage the time carefully during the sessions. In order for participants to get maximum benefit from the intervention, you should cover *each activity* and allot the recommended time to each activity. Spending too much time processing activities that occur early in the session will result in insufficient time for the activities that occur later in the session and can result in a rushed feeling. It is sometimes necessary to tactfully interrupt particularly talkative individuals so that the group leader can move the group onto the next exercise in the manual. If you find that you are consistently running out of time before completing all the activities in the session, consider using the 6 sessions 50-minute version of the *Body Project,* which provides a little more time for activities and which may fit with a school term-schedule more effectively.

MANUAL GUIDELINES AND FACILITATOR SUPPORT

The curriculum contained in this manual has been demonstrated in dozens of randomised trials to be an effective prevention program for individuals at risk for eating disorders. Adherence to the manual protocol and attendance of all sessions is critical for obtaining positive outcome results.

The manual describes each of the 4 intervention sessions. For each session, information is provided on (a) materials used for the session, (b) a listing of topic areas to be covered, (c) main procedural elements for group leaders to follow, and (d) assigned bridging exercises for the participants to complete between sessions.

For each session, it is good practice to familiarise yourself with the layout:

Each section for each session has a header that **shows the time** you have to cover the content for that session.

Throughout the manual all handouts are distinguished by **<u>underlined bold print</u>**.

Verbal instructions that group leaders should say, or paraphrase, to participants are presented in blue bold italics.

- ❖ Instructions to group leaders are presented in regular typeface with this bullet point, these points also give prompts as to the content you would benefit from drawing out from the participants.

We also recommend that you familiarise yourself with the Facilitator Fact Sheet as this can provide useful prompts for sessions.

<u>SUPPORT FOR YOU</u>

We'd like to remind you that following your training, you can reach out to the Body Project Gloucestershire team by mailing thebodyproject@glos.ac.uk if you have any questions or if you need support or supervision.

You will also be invited to join our community of facilitators for ongoing support and collaboration, and to be updated with latest materials, adaptations and research.

FACILITATOR FACT SHEET

FASHION MAGAZINES

(According to *former fashion magazine editor*; International Conference on Eating Disorders)

- **Function of a fashion magazine:** To convince people that something is wrong with them (e.g., hair, body, sex life, etc.) so that they can sell their product (i.e., the content of the magazine) to fix it. The more anxious they make you, the more likely you will buy the magazine and the larger their readership, which increases advertising sales.
- How they convince you something is wrong
    - **Lead articles:** Pulitzer Prize winning article on eating disorders or cancer is not going to win the author a big bonus. However, writing an article which produces the following title will: "You never knew what your bum looked like from the rear! Strategies for a better behind" will give rise to concerns and make the reader engage.
    - **Idealised images:** Digital enhancement of body shape and form, use of AI, use of make-up, clothes pinning etc.
- At this editor's magazine, many of the key staff had eating disorders due to a culture of disordered eating and weight/shape attitudes.
    - They couldn't bring food onto the floor, because it was too upsetting for some staff
    - One woman brought scales to work and moved the scales around the bathroom floor until she got an acceptable weight.
- A study in 1995 found that after just three minutes spent looking at models in a fashion magazine, 70% of women reported feeling depressed, guilty, and ashamed of their bodies (Stice & Shaw, 1995).

SOCIAL MEDIA

- Social media use has been linked to poor body image and disordered eating (de Valle BPsychHons & Wade, 2022, Som et al., 2025)
- Randomised experiments with youths and young adults demonstrate that randomisation to social media use decreased body satisfaction and increased social comparison, especially when pictures were present (Engeln et al., 2020)
- On social media, photo-editing behaviour is actually related to lower self-perceived attractiveness, and estimates of individuals who edit their photos before posting on social media range from 30-90% (and about 12% of photos posted under #nofilter did in fact have a filter; Ozimek et al., 2023)
- In one study, the percentage of girls (13-14 years old) with a social media account that reported severe changes to their eating routines was 51.7% (socialmediavictims.org)
- Social medial influencers including Cardi B, Jordi Sparks and Adrienne Bailon promoted products for a detox tea company 'Teami' which was ordered to pay $15.2m in damages after false claims of weight loss, fighting cancer and clearing clogged arteries, none of which were true.

- A 2019 Mental Health Foundation survey found that **40% of UK teenagers** said images on social media had caused them to worry about their body image.
- A major review published in March 2023 by researchers at University College London (UCL) in *PLOS Global Public Health* synthesised findings from 50 studies in 17 countries, providing a recent and highly relevant UK perspective.
    - **Plausible Risk Factor:** The study concluded that social media usage is a "plausible risk factor for the development of eating disorders".
    - **Mechanisms of Harm:** The core drivers identified are social comparison, the internalisation of "thin/fit ideals," and self-objectification.
    - **Content Type Matters:** The type of content consumed, rather than just the time spent online, is a primary factor. Exposure to weight loss content was associated with higher fears about appearance and more frequent binge eating. Content tagged with #thinspiration and #fitspiration was consistently linked to increased drive for thinness and bulimia symptoms.
    - **High UK Prevalence:** The report noted that 91% of UK adolescents use social media, with over 50% checking their accounts at least once per hour, leading to pervasive exposure to these ideals.
    - **Government Acknowledgment:** In response to this and other evidence, a UK Parliament report in February 2023 noted the "growing problem" of body dissatisfaction and its health consequences, calling for more action from the government and social media companies to regulate harmful content.
- Other very recent studies (2024 and 2025) continue to confirm these findings, highlighting that photo-editing tools, the use of filters, and specific content types (e.g., #WhatIEatInADay videos on TikTok) contribute to a persistent and significant public health issue regarding body image and disordered eating behaviours in the UK.

ADVERTISING STRATEGIES

PHYSICAL TACTICS

- Bras are stuffed with pads to fill out the front of a dress that is too loose.
- Padded underwear is also used to fill out the back of a dress.
- Duct-tape is often used to tape breasts together to create cleavage.
- Corsets are used to squeeze the flesh of models into a dress sample size that is too small.
- Excess flesh is duct-taped in the back for a front angle photograph depicting a taut, streamlined, wrinkle-free body. Models can be taped from the front for a rear or side angle photograph showing tight, firm hips, bottoms, legs, and arms.
- Heavy clamps are used to cinch clothing in and weigh it down to create an illusion of the perfect fit.

COMPUTER TACTICS

- Once a photo shoot is complete, images are altered even further through a process called re-imaging. By scanning the photograph into a computer, the image can be altered in thousands of ways. Almost every magazine uses computer re-imaging.
- Complexions are cleaned up, eye lines are softened, chins, thighs and stomachs are trimmed, and neck lines are removed.
- Some pictures of models in magazines are not real. The pictures are computer-modified compilations of different body parts.
- 20/20 aired a story of a photo shoot of supermodel Cindy Crawford. How much time was spent digitally editing and airbrushing her face and body? 2 hours.

MODELS

- The average UK woman is 5'4" tall and weighs 72 Kg (11 stone/ 159lbs). The average UK model is 5'11" tall and weighs 50-60Kg (7-8 stone/ 110-132lb)
- The average UK woman wears a size 12 to 16, the average UK model wears a size 6-8.
- Twenty years ago, models weighed 8 percent less than the average woman. Today they weigh 23 percent less and many fall into an anorexic weight range.
    - 44.7% of the models report a BMI of between 18.5 and 17.0,
    - 21.2% reported it as under 17.0, that is, severely underweight.
- Kate Moss is 5'7" and weighs 95 pounds. That is 30% below ideal body weight. Supermodels Niki Taylor and Elle Macpherson also meet the Body Mass Index criteria for anorexia.
- Many of the models shown on television, advertisements, and in other forms of popular media are approximately 20% below ideal body weight, thus meeting the diagnostic criteria for anorexia nervosa (Dittmar & Howard, 2004).
- A 2017 study found that the majority of runway models meet the body mass index criteria for anorexia, and 62% reported being asked to lose weight by their agencies.
- Only 5% of women have the body type (tall, genetically thin, broad-shouldered, narrow-hipped, long-legged and usually small-breasted) seen in almost all advertising. (When the models have large breasts, they've almost always had breast implants.)

THE HEALTH DIET AND BEAUTY INDUSTRY

- The Health Food Production industry in the UK was estimated to be worth £1.9 billion in 2025, a figure that includes meal replacements and weight-control foods.
- The broader Weight Management market in the UK was valued at approximately £2.6 billion in 2022 and is projected to reach over £3.7 billion by 2030, with diet being the largest segment.
- The overall Health and Wellness industry in the UK was worth more than £20 billion by 2020.
- In 2024, UK households spent a total of £32.4 billion on personal care products and services combined. Specifically, £10.1 billion was spent on professional beauty and personal care services like salons, spas, and clinics.

- Aesthetics Industry: The non-invasive aesthetics industry (e.g., Botox, fillers) has a market value of around £3.2 billion in the UK, with 7.7 million people having had a treatment in 2023.
- Weight Loss Medications: Spending on private weight loss medications is growing significantly, reaching £784 million by the end of Q1 2025, with an estimated 1.5 million people in the UK using such drugs.
- Health and Fitness Market: The broader health and fitness market (including gym memberships) had revenue of £5.7 billion in 2024.
- Commercial Diet Programmes**:** Men represent just 11% to 18% of participants in major commercial services like Weight Watchers and Slimming World.
- UK National Health Service (NHS) Referrals: One study found that men make up only one in twenty (5%) of the 1.3 million people attending weight management programmes in the UK.
- Research Trials: A systematic review of weight loss intervention trials found that men comprised, on average, only 27% of the total participants.
- Women who diet gain back 80-95% of weight lost within three years and those with a history of chronic yo-yo dieting can decrease their overall lifespan of up to 20%!
- The USA National Weight Loss Registry, which tracks those that have achieved significant, long-term weight loss and is run by the Universities of Pittsburgh and Colorado, has documented that not one person has been successful by eliminating or severely restricting one of the macronutrients (protein, carbohydrate and fat).
- As of 2024, the global anti-ageing products market was valued at approximately $52bn (£40bn) and is expected to reach $80bn (£63bn) by 2023.

THE IMPACT OF TV

- In 1995, before television was first introduced to Fiji, there were no cases of eating disorders. Sixty-five adolescent schoolgirls were followed over 3 years -
    - After the introduction of British and American television, **12.7%** of the girls had developed high eating disorder symptoms after 1 month, and **29.2%** after 3 years.
    - Self-induced vomiting as weight control went from **0% in 1995** to **11.3% by 1998**.
- As far back as 1996 study found that the amount of time an adolescent watches soaps, movies and music videos is associated with their degree of body dissatisfaction and desire to be thin (Tiggemann & Pickering, 1996).
- Often, body doubles are used in films, TV commercials and advertising. Famously, a body double was used for Julia Roberts in the film 'Pretty Woman'
- 'The Love Island Effect' - Body pressure from watching Love Island at the midpoint of the series predicted heightened engagement in weight loss and muscle gain strategies, and increased desire for cosmetic surgery, at the end of the series. Furthermore, heightened desire for cosmetic surgery predicted increased body pressure from watching Love Island. Results suggest that prolonged exposure to the idealised bodies on Love Island indicate maladaptive cognitive and behavioural implications for young people (Noon et al., 2025)

CELEBRITY WORKOUTS

- Hilary Swank for *Million Dollar Baby*: trained for four to five hours a day, six days a week, for 90 days before filming began. This included 2.5 hours of boxing and nearly two hours of weightlifting daily. To gain muscle, she had to consume a massive amount of protein, aiming for 210 grams a day. This required her to eat every hour and a half and included drinking 10 raw egg whites daily. She even set a midnight alarm to wake up and drink a protein shake to keep her metabolism working. Swank managed to gain 19 pounds of pure muscle
- Jake Gyllenhall (Road House) typical training day included multiple sessions, which sometimes incorporated 1,000 sit-ups, an 8-mile run, hours of boxing and sparring, core workouts, and weightlifting. The actor trained six days a week for months, consuming around 4,000 calories per day of clean foods like eggs, chicken, fish, vegetables, and complex carbohydrates. He reportedly cut out sugar, alcohol, and even simple things like chips for the duration of the filming to achieve a shredded physique of around 5% body fat.
- Model and influencer Lori Harvey combines a restrictive calorie intake of no more than 1200 calories a day with multiple daily workouts leading to reports of nutrition deficiency and physical exhaustion

SHOP MANNEQUINS

- If shop mannequins were real women, they would be too thin to menstruate and bear children (**Could Mannequins Menstruate?** (British Medical Journal; Rintala, Mustajoki, 1992)
    - Store mannequins do not have enough body fat to menstruate. The researchers visited clothes stores and based on measurements of their mannequins calculated the percentage body fat that a woman the shape of a mannequin would carry. In direct contradiction to the slim, healthy and fertile physique that mannequins seek to portray and inflict on women, the finding of the study was that, overwhelmingly, if shop mannequins were people, they would be infertile.
- **Represent Severely Underweight Women:** A 2017 study from the University of Liverpool found that *every single female mannequin* surveyed in UK high street stores had a body size that corresponded to that of an underweight human woman. The average size was consistent with a **"very underweight"** person.
- **2017 Major UK Study:** A significant 2017 study published in the *Journal of Eating Disorders* systematically assessed mannequins in UK high-street stores. The researchers found that **100% of the female mannequins were representative of an underweight human woman** and would be considered "medically unhealthy".
- **Vast Discrepancy with Average Size:** Standard female mannequins typically have a waist measurement of around 24 to 25.5 inches. In contrast, the average UK woman has a waist size of approximately 35 inches
- **Protruding Ribs and Concave Stomachs:** In the past, retailers like La Perla and Primark have faced criticism for using mannequins that were so thin their ribs or sternums were prominently showing, which are physical signs of starvation and malnutrition.

- Women naturally carry fat on their hips and thighs - it is vital for fertility, prevention of osteoporosis, healthy skin, eyes, hair and teeth.
- Clothing on mannequins is pinned, so clothes would never look the same on a real person unless it was pinned exactly perfect.

SESSION 1

Materials:

Flip chart (or whiteboard) and markers
Nametags
Packets for each participant containing home exercises for all sessions

Topic Areas:

1) Introduction & Icebreaker (5')
2) Voluntary Commitment & Overview (5')
3) Group Agreement (5')
4) Definition and Origin of the Appearance (20')
5) Costs Associated with the Appearance (15')
6) Bridging Exercises (5')
7) Wrap-up (5')

Session Overview: The focus of Session 1 is to provide an overview and introduce participants to the rules and expectations of the group. The session is largely interactive with discussions of the definition and origins of the appearance ideal, and costs associated with pursuing the appearance ideal. The importance of attendance and completing the bridging exercises is emphasised.

1) INTRODUCTION AND ICEBREAKER (5 MINS)

Welcome participants as they arrive. Distribute packets (instruct participants to bring them to each group) and nametags and ask participants to only write their first name. Group leaders should model this by only using their first name on their name tag. Make conversation with participants as you wait for the group to begin (e.g., "What year are you?" "What are you studying?" "Do you live on campus?").

The facilitators begin by introducing themselves to the group, Introductions should include pronouns, where you work and what you do.

Thanks for signing up to take part in The Body Project. Over the next four sessions, we're going to help you develop greater body acceptance and improved well-being. The Body Project is the best-in-class programme for improving body image, reducing unhealthy weight control behaviours and eating problems. That's why I will be referring to my notes through the sessions. What we do here is based on science and I want to make sure we cover everything we know to be helpful.

Research shows that when women and girls talk about the 'beauty ideal' shown in the mass media, and how to challenge pressures to be thin, it makes them feel better about their bodies.

Okay, let's warm up our topic using an icebreaker! It's called 'My Biggest Body Image Pet Peeve'. Tell us your name, something interesting about you and what your biggest pet peeve is what's the one thing about beauty or fashion that really irritates you? It can be social media, the fashion industry or anything else that comes to mind when you think of what influences how you feel about your appearance.

I will start then we will go round the room.

Group leaders should spend a few moments with each participant to elicit specific information and show interest (e.g. I can totally identify with jeans being difficult to shop for.)

2) VOLUNTARY COMMITMENT AND OVERVIEW (5 MINS)

Soliciting voluntary commitment to participating in the group

People get the most out of these groups if they attend all four sessions, and if they speak up and tell us what they think because everyone has something interesting to share. It's also important to do the bridging exercises between the sessions as this gives us more to talk about the following week.

It is important that you know that taking part is voluntary. Is each of you willing to volunteer and actively participate in the group? Let's go round the group.

- ❖ Go around the room and have **each participant say** they are willing to actively participate.

OVERVIEW

- ***During the four sessions we will:***
- ***Define the appearance ideal and explore where it came from***
- ***Discuss the costs of pursuing this ideal***
- ***Explore ways to resist the pressures to look perfect***
- ***Learn more ways to talk more positively about our bodies***

Attendance

It is important that everyone comes to all four sessions. If you need to miss one, please let us know and we will try to schedule a catch-up session with you before the next regular session, so you are up to date with everyone else.

Group leaders should **call or e-mail participants** the day before each session to remind them of the session and to bring any assignments they should have completed. If a participant must miss a session for any reason, please schedule a brief (15 minute) individual make-up session to discuss key points from the session and get the participant "caught up" before the next session. Ask them to complete the home exercises before the next session too.

3) GROUP AGREEMENT (5 MINS)

Before we start, let's come up with a group agreement for our sessions together. What can we all do to create a safe space for us to take part in the sessions?

Work with your group to come up with an agreement for your sessions.

- It may be helpful to write this list up on your flipchart or whiteboard to keep for future sessions.

- Topics to consider may include:
  - Confidentiality – this is a safe space
  - Encourage active participation – be curious
  - Listening to others – no judgements
  - Being punctual
  - Being honest and curious
  - Active listening
  - Where to go for further support – consider local safeguarding processes.

4) DEFINITION AND ORIGIN OF THE APPEARANCE IDEAL (20 MINS)

<u>Defining the appearance ideal</u>

Now we are going to define the appearance-ideal for women, this will help us understand exactly what we are discussing. Tell me what you think when I say 'The Perfect Woman' – what does she look like? Let's create our perfect woman list on the board.

- **Scribe writes "<u>Perfect Woman</u>" at the top of the board.**

- Have participants "shout out" aspects of the "perfect woman." Encourage participants to locate images of the appearance ideal on their phones if group members have a

difficult time generating facets of the appearance ideal. You may also ask who they follow on social media and what they look like.

- Write **all** features to the list on the whiteboard. **It can be useful to group the suggestions together to help draw out the contradictions that come up**.

Examples may be thin and attractive, have a perfect body, toned, large-chested, tall, look like a supermodel. Ask participants to be more specific for example 'what is the perfect body, how tall is tall, what does a super model look like'. You can ask if everyone thinks the examples given are the same for them. Elicit as much detail as possible highlighting incompatible features such as ultra-thin and large breasts, tall but with big feet. Focus the discussion on the thin part of the thin ideal, though it is fine to note other aspects, such as clear complexion, white teeth, etc.

So, the perfect woman is….

- Read back the list on the board playfully highlighting the incompatible features.

We call this 'look' 'the appearance ideal' – as this is part of the bridging exercise for this week, feel free to take a picture on your phone or make some notes in your workbook if that will help.

- **Cross out phrase "Perfect Woman" and write "Appearance-Ideal" on the board.**

Before we talk more about the appearance ideal, it's important to remember that the appearance ideal is NOT the same as the healthy ideal.

With the appearance ideal, people can go to extreme measures to look like the ideal which can mean unhealthy weight control behaviours such as extreme dieting, laxative use, restricting food groups and excessive exercise. The goal of the appearance ideal is to achieve a look that isn't realistic or healthy.

With the healthy ideal, we need to think about our unique bodies and what we need to be healthy, and this is different for everyone. Being healthy includes not just physical health but also mental health, happiness, our overall quality of life and being able to have fun and balance in our lives. A healthy body has muscles and fat, and a healthy ideal includes feeling good about how our body works and feels.

- You may wish to pause here for questions, often the appearance ideal can be confused with the healthy ideal.

So, let's think – has this 'appearance ideal' always been the ideal for beauty standards? In other words, can you think of a time when a different body type was seen as 'ideal'?

No, differs with differing times

- Solicit examples of different beauty standards over time – prompt with things they may have seen in history lessons, what was it like for their parents or grandparents. Examples can include:
  - **Ancient Times:** Curvaceous figures in early art signified fertility and prosperity, while ancient Greece idealised muscular, lean male physiques.
  - **Victorian Era (1830s-1900s):** Pale skin (signifying wealth/no manual labour) and corseted, full-figured, hourglass silhouettes were prized.
  - **1920s (Flapper Era):** A stark shift to a boyish, slender, flat-chested look, ditching corsets for a more androgynous, active style.
  - **1940s-1950s (Pin-Up Era):** Full busts, tiny waists, and softer, voluptuous "sweater girl" figures (Marilyn Monroe) became the ideal.
  - **1960s (Twiggy Era):** A radical return to extreme thinness, long limbs, and a youthful, almost childlike look (Twiggy).
  - **1980s:** Power dressing brought broad shoulders (shoulder pads), but the focus remained on a slender frame, with emerging muscle definition.
  - **1990s (Heroin Chic):** The extreme thin ideal intensified, featuring waif-like models like Kate Moss.
  - **2000s-2010s:** The rise of the "curvy" ideal (Kim Kardashian) emphasised shapely bottoms, contrasting with the previous thin standard, alongside an "athletic" look.
  - **2010s-2020s:** A push for inclusivity, authenticity, and body positivity, embracing diverse body types, ethnicities, and styles, challenging past unrealistic norms, partly thanks to social media.
  - **Today:** An increase in 'thinspiration' and 'skinnytok'

Is this ideal the same for all ethnic groups and cultures?

- Give participants a chance to discuss differences of the appearance ideal (physical characteristics, including the appearance ideal) for various ethnic groups and cultures.
- Consider different skin tones
- Consider different genetics – for example in Africa there are many different ideals, in South Asia, a 'tummy pouch' and hips are appealing and desirable.
- Summarise discussion to acknowledge that, just as the ideal has not been consistent over time, it also varies across ethnic and cultural groups.

How about other groups that may have different appearance ideals such as non-binary gender people?

- Allow participants to discuss how the appearance ideal might affect everyone differently depending on their experiences with these identities.
- Examples may include those who do not want 'curves' and strive for an androgenous look.
- Be mindful that you may have participants who identify as non-binary and that this is a very nuanced area.

Where do these ideals come from?

- Elicit examples – gender stereotypes, social media influencers, celebrity culture, advertising, films, cultural traditions, beauty, fashion and diet industries, family and friends. Can change with exposure to travelling and seeing different standards.

Who or what promotes and encourages these standards?

- Elicit examples – social media, celebrity culture, advertising, friends and family, diet and weight loss industry.

How does social media promote this ideal?

- Elicit examples - Increases direct social comparisons focused on appearance, contributes to body dissatisfaction and may promote unhealthy weight control behaviours. 'Compare and Despair'.
- Pushes subscriptions to 'fix things' – the algorithm pulls you in.

How do body appearance-ideal messages from the media impact the way you feel about your body? Let's go round the group on this one.

- Go around the group and encourage everyone to share one feeling they have experienced.
- Elicit examples - Feeling inadequate because they do not look like a model, dislike of their own bodies, negative mood, low self-esteem.

How much editing or airbrushing do they do in magazines and other media like social media?

- Discuss with the group the various ways fashion and celebrity photos can be altered (e.g., eyes can be made wider, necks can be made longer, waists can be narrowed, and thighs can be made slimmer).
- Also explain that sometimes photos are retouched to make very thin models who also look unwell (e.g., lank hair, dull eyes and skin, jutting bones) look healthier. This creates a misleading impression of health for some very thin models who are not healthy.

Let's talk more about that. How does it make you feel to know that even influencers and celebrities are edited and filtered and in other words, are not beautiful enough?

- Elicit examples – angry, sad, frustrated, manipulated, generates mistrust

What do our cultures tell us will happen if we are able to look like the appearance ideal?

- We will be accepted, loved, happy, successful, wealthy.
- Differentiate the appearance ideal from the healthy ideal if they say you are healthier if you conform to the appearance ideal.

Will reaching these standards really make these things happen? Another way to think about this is to ask – do celebrities who often come closest to the appearance ideal, have perfect lives?

- No, they will likely have little impact. Even those who most closely match these ideals have relationship problems, low body confidence, feel lonely and may struggle with even addictions. They also often change their own appearance to follow the latest ideal.

- Please do not describe (or allow participants to discuss) the benefits of thinness in general or give the impression that the appearance ideal is close to the healthy ideal (i.e., it is possible to be well within the healthy weight range but not meet the cultural standards for the ultra-perfect ideal). Use the worksheet tips provided if participants make pro-thin ideal statements (e.g., "You *are* more loved if you meet the thin ideal" or "Thin people make higher salaries than fatter people").

5) COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PURSUING THE APPEARANCE IDEAL (15 MINS)

We've discussed the appearance ideal and where it comes from, now let's think about the costs involved with this ideal.

What are the costs of trying to look like the appearance ideal? Let's think about it personally and for society as a whole. We'll go round the group for this one.

- **Write up the heading 'costs' on the white board with two sub-headings of 'personal' and 'society'**

- Encourage all of the participants to think about the costs. There may be connections between the two which you can highlight.
- As needed to prompt discussion, ask questions such as "Have you seen friends experience negative consequences of strict dieting?" or "Are there ways in which strict dieting can

have a negative impact? on [friendships, schoolwork, physical health, mental health, self-esteem, family relationships, etc.]?

- Personal examples:
  - Physical Health – physically exhausting, can hurt themselves, health problems from unhealthy weight management techniques (diet and exercise)
  - Mental health – low self-worth and mentally exhausting, anxiety and depression
  - Personal relationships – time not spent with friends and loved ones
  - Academic and work life
  - Quality of life (time and money)
- Society examples:
  - Gender inequality – 'pretty privilege'
  - Culture of discontent and unhappiness
  - Burden on healthcare services – increasing health care costs
  - Shortage of nurses and surgeons as they leave to work in the cosmetic industry
  - Skills shortage (just be an influencer)
  - Environmental costs (fast fashion, child labour, overseas shipping, quick fashion going to landfill)

As part of this week's bridging exercise is to think about these costs, feel free to take a photo on your phone or make notes in your workbook to remind you.

So, let's have a think, what are the negative effects of comparing yourself to others especially on social media?

- Elicit examples - Checking social media can make me feel insecure and increase body image concerns. Can worsen my mood.

Who benefits from the appearance ideal? In other words, who makes money from it?

- Diet industry; fitness business; mass media; fashion industry.

Are you one of the people who benefit from the appearance ideal? In other words, are you getting rich from the appearance ideal?

- Are you the founder of a diet program, a health club, gym, a media executive, a supermodel? NO!!

Given what we've discussed so far, does it make sense to try to chase the appearance ideal?

- No! Make sure that each participant makes a public statement against the appearance ideal at this stage (and anywhere else possible).

6) BRIDGING EXERCISES (5 MINS)

<u>Group participants are reminded of the home-based assignment for next session</u>:

Now that we have begun discussing the costs of the appearance ideal, would you be willing to write (or type) a letter to a girl who is struggling with her body image about the costs associated with trying to look like the appearance ideal? Think of as many costs as you can and feel free to work with others to come up with ideas.

Instead of writing a letter, you may want to make a reel or story on social media, or a short video that you can share with us, or you can also do it as a voice note if that helps. Another option could be to use artwork to do this, and we can talk about it next week.

Please bring this with you to the next session.

Secondly, we'd like you to stand in front of a mirror and write down 15 positive things about you. This includes physical, emotional, intellectual, and social qualities. So, for example, you may like the shape of your arms, the strength of your legs, your long dark hair, the sound of your laugh, you're good at one of the lessons you enjoy most, the fact that you're in a sports team, that you are a good friend… if you find this difficult, think what your best friend would say are the best things about you.

- Give examples from your experience with the mirror exercise when you went through the Body Project as a participant. Preferably include physical features that are sensitive for some women (e.g., hips, thighs, butt, breasts).

Please make sure that you include at least some physical features on your list. It may be difficult at first and may seem silly, but we really want you to do this because it is important to recognise all the different positives about yourself. Past students have said this exercise was very helpful and empowering!

Please bring this with you next week.

So, before we leave, can someone tell me what the bridging exercises are for this week in their own words?

- Write letter to younger girl about costs of pursing the appearance ideal and do the mirror exercise.

- Remind participants of the alternatives of creating a social media post, video or voice note.

Experience shows that people get the most out of this programme when they do the exercises the best they can, remember, this isn't homework and we aren't going to grade you on it, we are just interested in what you think!

- Get some form of public commitment from each participant.

We want these exercises to be fun as well as thought-provoking, so please feel free to talk about them with others in the group between sessions.

7) WRAP-UP (5 MINS)

We like to end sessions by giving everyone a chance to say one last thing. Can you tell me something that 'worked for you' or 'hit home' in this session or something you just liked?

- Have each participant share one thing they liked the most.

Past participants have found it helpful to keep in touch with each other to continue these discussions outside of the group. If you are interested in this, we encourage you to exchange contact information or connect over social media.

Thanks all for today, thank you for coming. We look forward to seeing you next week!

SESSION 2

Materials: Nametags
Extra home exercise packets

Topic Areas:

1. Reinforcing Voluntary Commitment (3')
2. Letter to Adolescent Girl Exercise Debriefing (20')
3. Mirror Exercise Debriefing (12')
4. Group Activity - Discouraging the Pursuit of Appearance ideal (15')
5. Bridging Exercises (5')
6. Wrap-up (5')

Session Overview: The focus of Session 2 is to review the materials discussed in the previous session and discuss reactions to the two bridging exercises. Additionally, this session involves role-plays to elicit verbal statements against the thin ideal.

1) REINFORCING VOLUNTARY COMMITTMENT (3 MINS)

Thanks for coming to Session 2. Is each of you willing to participate verbally in today's session?

- Go around the room and get a verbal affirmation that they are willing to actively participate.

2) LETTER DEBRIEFING (20 MINS)

Last week we asked if you would be willing to write a letter to a younger girl about the costs of trying to look like the appearance ideal.

We are now going to go around the group so that each of us can share our work. Who would like to start?

- Have each participant read their letter or the alternative way they completed exercise one from last time. After each participant finishes, respond by thanking them and/or making a positive comment about their work.

Everyone clearly spent a lot of time on this and did a great job.

3) MIRROR EXERCISE DEBRIEFING (12 MINS)

The other exercise we asked you to do was to look in a mirror and list some of your positive qualities.

How did you feel when you did this exercise?

- Elicit some responses – difficult, embarrassing, weird, hard to think of things…feeling arrogant

Why do so many of us find it difficult to compliment ourselves?

- Elicit discussion – try to pull out that there are feelings of being arrogant – these lead into the next question.

How can we teach young girls that there is a difference between confidence and arrogance, and that being confident is good?

- Participants may not be able to answer this as they may not know the difference, if there is need to, you can ask them what they think it is:

What do you think the difference is between being confident and being arrogant?

- Arrogance is often about comparing yourself to someone and thinking you are better than them and like you are competing with them but not in a good way,
- Confidence is different, it is about feeling good about yourself without having to make others feel less good about themselves – it's more about being content with yourself and appreciating the things about you that are good

So, now we are going to <u>answer with some confidence</u>, what are three aspects of yourself that you are satisfied with, including two physical features?

- Have each participant share positive qualities they listed.
- Discourage "qualified" statements (e.g., "I guess my stomach is not too horrible"). If you get "qualified" statements, accept them and ask the participant for an additional statement that is completely positive (e.g., "Okay, can you give me one more statement you had that is completely positive?").
- Note: If participants have a difficult time generating discussion about this exercise, you may comment on your own experience by saying, for example, "When I did this exercise, I remember thinking that it was challenging because it was so different from the way I usually look at myself in the mirror."
- Note: As needed to generate discussion, ask participants to share more detail about the positive features they list (e.g., "Tell us more about what you like about your hair.")

Hopefully, you recognise the positive things about yourselves and will remember them, particularly as the pressure of the appearance ideal surrounds you.

Okay, let's now practice more ways to resist the appearance ideal.

4) DISCOURAGING PURSUIT OF THE APPEARANCE IDEAL (15 MINS)

Some people in their daily lives wish or want to achieve the appearance ideal. They think or behave in certain ways that support this ideal. This means that they might also talk to others about this ideal and how to achieve it.

In this part of the session, we'd like you to discourage a person who seeks to achieve this unrealistic ideal.

I will play the part of the person pursuing the appearance ideal and I'd like you to tell me what you think a good reply would be, think back to the costs we discussed last week.

- Leaders take the role of either a severe dieter or eating disordered individual for each participant. Let each participant spend approximately two minutes attempting to dissuade you from pursuing the appearance ideal (do two role plays if necessary). Make sure <u>each participant</u> tries to talk you out of pursuing the appearance ideal.
- Reassure the participants that they can say the first thing that comes to mind, that there are no rules and you won't be offended by anything they say!

- Tips on being "in character:"
  - Parrot, or echo back, any pro appearance-ideal comments previously made by participants while you are playing an appearance-ideal role.
  - Focus on the unrealistic benefits of the appearance ideal ("I'll be happy all of the time if I'm thin," "Everyone will like me," "I'll have the perfect partner," "All my problems will be solved.")
  - Make statements that hint at the costs of pursuing the appearance ideal ("It will take time away from my schoolwork and friends, but I'll find a way to do it," or "I really don't think dieting like this is that dangerous") so that the participant can point out those costs to you.
  - <u>Be difficult to persuade (you and the participants should volley the role play back and forth several times), but it is OK to be playful with this exercise</u>. Feel free to go over the top a bit with the more resilient participants.

Now I would like to go through some examples of appearance ideal statements, and we'll practice how you could respond to them. I will play a person that is obsessed with the appearance ideal, and your job will be to convince me that I

shouldn't be. Each conversation will last about two minutes. If you can, think back to the discussions we've already had and use that to discourage me.

We'll model a conversation. Then we'll go around the group so each of you can have a turn. Let's have some fun with this, remember, I won't be offended by anything you say.

- ❖ The facilitators should model the role-play before having participants do them. Then select group members to participate, making sure each participant has a turn.
- ❖ Start with the liveliest participant, or if no one volunteers, start with the person next to you and go around the room.
- ❖ Depending on the group dynamics, you may want to offer the option for them to work together in groups of 2 or 3 but be sure that everyone voices an argument against the statements.

Sample statements for leaders appear below:

- ***I really want to be able to wear my new bikini for the summer, so I will start skipping breakfasts to lose some weight.***
- ***I'm sure that I'd be more popular if I had more followers online, I think I will start to filter my uploads more, so I look better.***
- ***I just saw an ad for this new weight loss jab; I'm going to order it right away. I can finally be as thin as I want.***
- ***I can't meet you for dinner tonight because I have to go spend a few hours at the gym. I only went for two hours yesterday.***
- ***I feel a little dizzy lately, which may be from these diet pills and laxatives I've been taking, but I don't care because I have already lost 10 pounds.***
- ***I'm thinking of going on a gluten-free vegan diet. It's so much healthier and I'm sure it'll help me finally lose that weight I've wanted to get rid of!***
- ***To be the best runner, I have to be down to my lightest weight. I am only doing this for my health—this will help me avoid injuries.***
- ***I have to be thin, or my life is ruined.***
- ***If I keep skipping meals, I'll be thin, and finally have the ideal feminine body shape.***
- ***Anyone could have the body of an influencer if they really wanted it.***
- ***If I don't wear the right makeup and edit my pictures, nobody will want to be friends with me – it takes hours, but I think it's worth it.***
- ***I'm weighing myself twice a day, if my weight goes up then I will just skip my next meal.***

- ***No one is ever going to ask me out unless I drop some of this weight.***
- ***I am never going to be selected by the dance team unless I lose 10 pounds.***
- ***I want to make sure I don't gain weight this year, so I am going to only eat a banana for breakfast and an apple for lunch every day.***
- ***I'm sorry I can't come out tonight, I've joined this gym and signed up for a beauty box subscription, I'm in my overdraft already!***
- ***I am training for a marathon right now and need to lose another 5 lbs, so I'm going to double my long runs this weekend.***
- ***My trainer says that if I cut out breakfast, I could be a better athlete.***
- ***I'm so busy I never have time to eat. I know I could probably make time, but I like how much weight I'm losing.***
- ***I'm trying to stay thin for my boyfriend, when I see him talking to other girls I always think he will leave me if they are thinner than me.***
- ***I just got an app on my phone that helps me track my calories. It says that in order to lose 10 pounds by next month, I can only have half of what I usually eat.***
- ***If I want to go out tonight, I'll have to skip lunch and dinner today.***
- ***I really want a thigh gap; I think I'll spend an hour on extra thigh exercises each day this week.***
- ***Do you think vaping will make me skinny? I've heard it's a great way to suppress your appetite.***
- ***I hate all of the pictures I took this weekend; I look too big and can't post any of them. I should lose weight.***

❖ Leaders should generate additional statements as needed and may tailor the statements to be appropriate for their group members.

Exercise debriefing

How did it feel to have these conversations?

❖ Let participants reflect on how it felt to argue against someone who is fixated on pursuing the appearance ideal.
❖ As needed, ask additional questions to prompt discussion (e.g., "What was challenging about the role plays?" or "What was positive about them?").

Could you imagine challenging people in this way when they make appearance ideal statements?

- Elicit some responses – validate that this will be a new experience and takes time and practice.

What would be beneficial about doing so?

- Promote discussion on why it is helpful to speak out against pressure to conform to the appearance ideal.
- Please let participants come up with the ideas.
- As needed, ask additional questions to prompt discussion (e.g., "Tell me about a situation in which you could imagine challenging appearance ideal statements.").
- Examples may include:
    - It starts to break the cycle
    - It shows it's okay for people to be different
    - It can help people early on to recognise things may not be healthy
    - It's good to question as long as we do it kindly
    - If we do nothing, then it's like saying it's okay

5) BRIDGING EXERCISES (5 MINS)

Home-based assignment for next session:

Great, now we would like to ask you to do two bridging exercises before our next session.

First, we'd like you to find out from other people what they think about the cost of the appearance ideal. To do this, we'd like you to chat to about three people and ask them! These can be family members, friends, someone on a sports team or someone you know through school. They may think that there aren't any costs so it could be interesting for you to share some of what you have learned.

- If there is a challenge for some of your neurodiverse participants, consider asking them to look online to find three other people who critique the appearance/ thin ideal and then this can be discussed instead.

As we will be chatting about this next week, you may like to take some notes or if possible, record your chat if you have permission. We'd really like to hear who you talked to and what you discovered next week.

- **Pull the Community Interview Form from your packet (Bridging Exercise #3).**

For the second exercise, we'd like you to think of yourself as a social activist – someone who can make a difference and change the things around us that keep the appearance ideal going.

We'd like you to come up with a top 10 list of things we can do to resist the appearance ideal. We know that 10 can sound a lot but think of as many as you can. The goal of this exercise is to do something that will actually change your environment/the world, at least a little bit, in a way that will benefit others. Think of yourself as a social activist who is combating the appearance ideal. Please write your top 10-list and bring it to the next group.

Remember, like last time, if you're more creative and don't like the idea of writing a list, you can use other ways!

Does anyone have some ideas for this right now? Let's think of a few together so it's clearer.

- **Refer to the Top 10 List Form (Exercise #4). Elicit one or two examples.**

- Examples:
  - Invite friends to join you in un-following influencers and fashion magazines that promote the appearance ideal.
  - Post a comment on social media to a company or influencer about an ad that is promoting the appearance ideal and tell them why you have a problem with this – or compliment a positive post you see.
  - Share positive body image content on social media 'all bodies are good bodies'
  - Make a pact with friends to stop pro-appearance-ideal talk for a week (or more).
  - Identify a younger friend or relative and commit to helping her fight the appearance ideal as they grow up.
  - Cover all of the mirrors at home for a week so that other women can be freed from the pressure of looking perfect every day.
  - Put post-it notes on mirrors in women's bathrooms saying things like 'appreciate your body' or 'your body doesn't define your worth'.
  - Make a social media post that challenges the appearance ideal and share it with family and friends.
  - Start a social media page aimed at challenging the appearance ideal and invite your friends to join.
  - Throw a "Take Back our Bodies" party with friends (male and female) that challenges the appearance-ideal pressures created by the media and other external sources.
  - Put post-it notes that say, "You're great the way you are" into weight-loss books at a library or book shop.
  - Put up an "accept your body" poster in the girls' bathrooms at school

- Make a “stuff people say” about body image concerns video and post it on social media.
- You may not like wearing school PE kit and want to challenge your school on how to make this more acceptable, you may feel the same about other things about the school uniform– explain to school the impact this has on you, maybe even the food choices and prices in the school canteen.
- Use less social media – take it off your phone and only use it on your laptop or tablet if you have one.

Can someone tell me what the bridging exercises are for this week?

- Talk to three people about the main costs of pursuing the thin ideal and jot down notes
- Make the top 10-list women can do to challenge the appearance ideal.

We will discuss the bridging exercises next session, so please do your best to do them!

6) WRAP-UP (5 MINS):

Can everyone tell me something that “worked for you” in this session, or “hit home” or that you appreciated from today? We will go around the group—who would like to start?

- Have each participant share one thing they liked the most.

Next meeting, we will talk more about resisting the appearance ideal and how to challenge our personal body concerns. Does anyone have any questions before we leave today?

Thanks again for coming. We are looking forward to seeing you next week!

SESSION 3

Materials: Nametags
Extra home exercise packets

Topic Areas:

1. Reinforcing Voluntary Commitment (2')
2. Community Interview Debriefing (10')
3. Body Talk shutdowns (Disrupting Appearance ideal Statements) (10')
4. Reasons for Signing Up (Optional Session) (10')
5. Behavioural Challenge (10')
6. Top 10 List Debriefing (15')
7. Bridging Exercises (3')
8. Wrap-up (Time Permitting)

Session Overview: The focus of Session 3 is to further discuss how to resist the appearance ideal, how to challenge personal body-related concerns, and how to respond to future pressures to be meet the appearance ideal. The in-session exercise is to practice making statements that counter the appearance ideal.

1) REINFORCING VOLUNTARY COMMITTMENT (2 MINS)

Welcome back everyone, again, it is important to note that participation is voluntary. Are each of you willing to verbally participate in today's session?

- Go around the room and get a verbal affirmation that they are willing to actively participate.

2) COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS DEBRIEFING (10 MINS)

Last week we asked you to you talk to three people within your community (friends, classmates, etc.) and ask them to discuss the main costs of pursuing the appearance ideal. We also asked you to take notes as you're interviewing these members or to record the conversation - Is each of you willing to share who you spoke to and how it went?

- Go around the room and have **each participant** share who they spoke to and what they talked about.
- Be reassuring and encouraging, acknowledge that these may have been difficult conversations and congratulate efforts made.

What did you learn about how friends and other people around you feel about the costs of pursuing the appearance ideal?

- Elicit some responses – there is value in opening up the conversations, opinions differ and can change – you need to be curious and open-minded. It can be challenging and sometimes confrontational. There are higher costs for some than others.

3) DISRUPTING APPEARANCE IDEAL STATEMENTS – QUICK COMEBACKS (10 MINS)

We often do not notice some of the more subtle ways the appearance and beauty ideal messages are constantly being pushed in our day-to-day lives.

Can anyone think of some ways that you or others might be encouraging the appearance ideal without even knowing it?

- Possible responses include:
  - Complimenting others' weight loss
  - Commenting on what or how much you are eating
  - Devoting a lot of time to thinking about how you can cut calories
  - Complaining about your body and talking about celebrities who are either very thin or look as though they have gained weight

Can anyone think of some ways that you or others might promote the appearance ideal, through social media, without even knowing it?

- Possible responses include:
  - Only leaving positive comments on photos where that person fits the appearance ideal
  - Only posting photos of yourself where you look "perfect" and filtering or taking multiple photos to get 'the perfect one'
  - Only following celebrities/influencers that fit the appearance-ideal

In the last session we asked you to talk someone out of pursuing the appearance ideal in an extended role-play game. This week we are going to do something a little different—we would like each of you to briefly challenge "appearance-ideal" statements with a quick comeback. Your goal is simply to shut-down the body talk and not to have a conversation about it.

For example, if I say: "Does this shirt make me look fat?" You could say: "I think it's best if we don't think about appearance issues like that."

I would like each of you to counter two appearance-ideal statements I make.

- ❖ Role-play using counter appearance-ideal statements to resist pressure from peers.
- ❖ Ask each participant to generate a counter appearance-ideal statement in response to two statements that you share.
- ❖ Go around the circle twice.
- ❖ If participants provide a lengthy answer, gently interrupt them and ask them to provide a response in just a sentence or two.
- ❖ Reassure the participants that they can say the first thing that comes to mind, that there are no rules and you won't be offended by anything they say!

Sample statements:

- ***Wow, look at the size of her!***
- ***She has really put on weight over the holidays.***
- ***I think if I cut out dairy and gluten, I can really lose a lot of weight.***
- ***Summer is coming up, I'm going to do this diet I saw on Tik-Tok, do you want to join me?***
- ***I would never be friends with someone that heavy.***
- ***I'm thinking about Botox to get rid of my wrinkles, what do you think?***
- ***My trainer says I need to stop eating breakfast if I want to get to my ideal weight.***
- ***My brother says I look too fat, what do you think?***
- ***I think it'd be really cool if we could both achieve a thigh gap.***
- ***You'd be so much prettier if you did something with your hair.***
- ***If I don't lose some weight, I may be dropped from the gym team.***
- ***I hate my body so much—I wish I could just wake up in a different one.***
- ***You know if you just stopped eating cheese, you would lose enough weight to look attractive.***
- ***Buy a size smaller, it would be good motivation for you.***
- ***Have you seen the dark hair on her arms? Hasn't she heard of waxing?***
- ***Only skinny girls get partners.***
- ***No way am I wearing that dress, my hips are way too big.***
- ***Do these jeans make me look fat?***
- ***My skin is awful; I could never go out without my make-up on.***
- ***She really doesn't have the body to be wearing that outfit.***
- ***I really wish I had the body of a model.***
- ***I'm going to give up carbs because I heard it makes you lose weight.***
- ***My trainer is working with me so that I lose enough weight to go to a size 6.***

- ***Do I look fat in these clothes?***
- ***I'm way too fat to be eating this.***
- ***You are so thin, how do you do it?***
- ***I look like a ghost; I'm going for a sunbed this weekend.***
- ***I'm thinking of becoming vegan because I hear it helps you lose weight.***
- ***You are so thin, you have nothing to worry about.***
- ***I could never wear my hair naturally; it always looks so messy.***
- ***If I don't lose some weight, I know they're going to cheat on me.***
- ***Did you see her pigmentation? Hasn't she heard of brightening creams?***
- ***Let's start doing hot yoga, I heard you burn almost 1000 calories per class.***
- ***Summer holidays are coming up; do you really think you should be eating that?***
- ***Can you believe she posted that photo on Instagram? That outfit looked terrible, you could see her stomach rolls!***
- ***Coach says to eat only vegetable salads for lunch.***
- ***I'm trying a new juice cleanse; you should do it too!***
- ***They told me they only date girls with a tiny waist.***
- ***No one wants to date a fatty.***

Role play debriefing

How did it feel to do this and just shut down a conversation?

- ❖ Elicit some responses – difficult, awkward, empowering…

Do you think you could challenge your friends and family if they make appearance-ideal statements?

- ❖ Encourage discussion with additional questions as necessary (e.g., "Which statements were more challenging to respond to?" or "What would it be like in real life to reject the appearance ideal?").

4) REASONS FOR JOINING THE GROUP (10 MINS)

- ❖ **NOTE: If you did not require body image concerns to enrol in this class, please just go directly to the next section (behavioural challenge) and ask what participants do not due because of body image concerns.**
- ❖ At this point, it is helpful for participants to share the reasons they decided to come and join in.

What body image concerns prompted you to come and join this group?

- Facilitators can give examples of their own body dissatisfactions and model supportive comebacks if the group seems hesitant. It is best to start with the most outgoing student.

- Have participants discuss as much as they are comfortable sharing. The purpose is to allow participants to share specific body image concerns and have the group challenge the thoughts and feelings that participants have about specific body parts.

- If necessary, ask "Would you be willing to say what body image concerns you have? Almost everyone has some type of concern!" Encourage participants to give specific, rather than vague answers (e.g., a specific body image concern, rather than a general interest in the topic.) **You could link back to the 'pet-peeve' in session 1 as a reminder**.

5) BEHAVIOURAL CHALLENGE (10 MINS)

Listening to everyone, it sounds like it would be helpful to challenge some of your fears and concerns related to your body image.

What types of things do you not do because of body image concerns?

- Examples may include wearing (or not) certain clothes, going to or avoiding specific places, always wearing their hair up, won't go out without makeup, won't go out without straightening hair or lashes on, not eating in public, restricting foods etc.

We are going to do a challenge to help you feel better about your bodies. We would like to challenge you to do things that you don't at the moment because of body image concerns. Doing this can increase your confidence and reduce your fears.

Examples include:

- ***Wearing shorts to the gym if your legs are an area of concern for you.***
- ***Going to the pool in a swimsuit.***
- ***Exercising in public.***
- ***Wearing fitted clothes out in public.***
- ***Wearing your hair up if you are self-conscious about what you look like with it up.***
- ***Not straightening your hair if you always do.***
- ***Stop mirror or body checking. If you always check in the mirror to make sure you look okay – don't do it. Or if you often check a part of your body (like sucking in your tummy), stop!***

- ***Don't filter or change a photo before you upload it.***
- ***Wear that item of clothing you love but have been too self-conscious to wear.***
- ***Wearing a fitted sports top with nothing over it or gym leggings when working out.***
- ***Not wearing make-up when going somewhere you usually would.***
- ***Going to the gym if you usually avoid it because of body image concerns.***
- ***Revealing a part of your body, such as your feet, that you tend to cover up (i.e. wearing sandals).***

Are you willing to do two behavioural challenges in the next week or the same challenge twice?

We would like to hear how it went next week.

Please take a moment to think of two things you would like to do but haven't done yet.

- **Refer to the Behavioural Exercise Form (Exercise #5). Have them record their plan on the form.**
- Note that the purpose of this exercise is not to simply have participants do something they would not normally do (e.g., wear a tight shirt because it just isn't their style preference), but that it **needs to be something they would otherwise do if they did not have body image concerns** (e.g., would like to wear a tight shirt, but do not because they think it makes their stomach look too fat).
- Group leaders should help participants select challenges that are appropriate and that they will be able to do in the next week (e.g., do not select wearing a bathing suit to the pool if it is winter).
- As needed, encourage participants to be specific in their plan (e.g., who will they do the activity with [if anyone], when will they do it, where will they do it, and how will they do it).

Now let's go around the group and share the two things that you will do this week.

- **Have each participant share with the group two behavioural challenges that they will do in the next week.**
- You may also wish to do this exercise and share with the participants what your plan is.

6) TOP 10 LIST DEBRIEFING (15 MINS)

The second exercise from last session asked you to list 10 things that we could do to resist the appearance ideal—what you can avoid, say, do, or learn to fight this social pressure. We like to call it "body activism."

Can each of you share three items on your list?

- **Refer to the Top 10 List Form (Exercise #4).**
- Have each participant share three items, encourage discussion around the value of this and how it gives them a voice to challenge social pressures.

We would like each of you to do at least two acts of body activism this week and then let us know how they go at the next session. Take a moment to choose the two forms of body activism that you will do. Now let's go around and share the two things that you will do this week.

Refer to the Body Activism Form (Exercise #6).

- Have each participant choose two behaviours from their list to do during the next week.
- As needed, encourage participants to be specific in their plan (e.g., who will they do the activity with [if anyone], when will they do it, where will they do it, and how will they do it).
- As needed, also remind participants that body activism is intended to have an impact beyond the individual level (e.g., among friends, on the school campus, in the community, etc.).

7) BRIDGING EXERCISES (3 MINS)

So, for the bridging exercises this week, we would like each of you to do two behavioural challenges relating to your personal body image concerns and engage in two body activism exercises.

We would also like you to do a third exercise. Would you be willing to write a letter to your younger self, describing how to avoid developing body image concerns? Draw from what you have learned in these sessions. The goal is to give yourself advice on things you can do, say, avoid, or learn to help yourself develop body acceptance. Remember, if writing a letter feels difficult, you can use creative ways to do this such as artwork or creating a social media post or video like we've done before.

- If participants struggle with this concept, you can position it as 'what advice would you want an older version of you to give you?' and encourage them to revisit the costs that they have learned.

Refer to the Letter to a Younger Self Form (Exercise #7).

Can someone tell me what the bridging exercises are for this week?

- Two Behavioural Exercises
- Two Activism Exercises
- Advice to your younger self letter or alternative

8) WRAP-UP (TIME PERMITTING):

Can everyone tell me something that "worked for you" in this session, or "hit home"?

- Have each participant share one thing they liked the most.

Once again, thanks for coming. See you next week for the final session!

SESSION 4

Materials: Nametags
Extra home exercise packets

Topic Areas:

1. Reinforcing Voluntary Commitment (2')
2. Behavioural Challenge Debriefing (10')
3. Body Activism Debriefing (10')
4. Letter to a Younger Self Debriefing (10')
5. Discussion of Benefits of Group (10')
6. Self-Affirmation Exercise (10')
7. Closure (3')

Session Overview: The focus of Session 4 is to discuss participants' experiences with the behavioural challenge and body activism exercises, and to discuss how the ways in which we talk about our bodies may promote the appearance ideal. This final session focuses on having participants come up with more positive alternative ways of talking about their bodies and encouraging participants to continue to challenge their body image issues in the future.

1) REINFORCING VOLUNTARY COMMITTMENT (2 MINS)

I'm excited to have one last chance for us to meet together today. I'd like to make sure everyone else is ready to participate as well.

- Go around the room and get a verbal affirmation that they are willing to actively participate.

2) BEHAVIORAL CHALLENGE DEBRIEFING (10 MINS)

Last week we asked you to do something that you don't normally do because of concerns about your body.

Let's go around the room and describe what each of you did and how it turned out.

- Have <u>each participant</u> discuss their experiences.

- If they did not do the exercise, ask about the barriers to doing it. How can they overcome them? Is there something they can do that might be easier to try out first? Encourage participants to continue challenging their body-related concerns.

How did you find this exercise? What did you learn?

- Elicit some responses – that no-one notices the things I think they do, that it wasn't as bad as I expected…

We appreciate that you were willing to try something new. Hopefully you will continue to challenge yourselves and your body image concerns in the future in a similar way.

3) BODY ACTIVISM DEBRIEFING (10 MINS)

Last time we also asked you to do two body activism exercises. Let's go around the room so we can hear what each of you did and how it went.

- Go around the room so each participant describes what they did and what happened.
- As needed, ask questions to prompt additional discussion (e.g., "X, it sounds like you enjoyed doing this exercise, tell me more about what made it enjoyable" or "X, what aspects of this exercise were challenging?").

How do you think this type of exercise could make a difference?

- Elicit some responses – raises awareness that appearance ideals are everywhere but we don't always notice them, builds confidence to have a voice, can build a community where people feel noticed, can be empowering… It's good to model these behaviours – think about 'social contagion'

Do you think you will continue to do more body activism in the future? If so, what would you do?

- Give participants an opportunity to talk themselves into doing more body activism activities in the future.

4) LETTER TO YOUNGER SELF DEBRIEFING (10 MINS)

Last week we asked if you would be willing to write a letter to your younger self about how to avoid developing body image concerns.

We are now going to go around the group so each of us can share our letter or the other way we did the exercise.

- Have each participant read their letter or share the alternative format they chose – if they did an alternative, have them discuss this to increase dissonance.
- After each participant finishes, respond by thanking her and/or making a positive comment about her work.

Everyone clearly spent a lot of time on this and did a great job. How did it feel to do this?

- Elicit some responses - difficult, self-reflection, cathartic, a relief, it was like giving myself a hug

How would your younger self react to that message?

- Elicit some responses – make me think, realise that I'm doing it, someone may be saying it but I wasn't hearing it, reassured, supported, heard.

5) DISCUSSION OF BENEFITS OF THE GROUP AND CLOSURE (10 MINS)

Given that this is our last session, I wanted to talk about things you may have learned from participating in this group.

Can you tell me some of the benefits of body acceptance?

- Elicit some responses – liberating, self-esteem, more conscious of it, more time and money, feeling authentic and different, self-confidence, less guilt, revolutionary.

Have you noticed that you feel differently about your own body?

- Elicit some responses – realism, I'm not buying into it, validation, will stop weighing, will stop editing, or they may not feel different at this stage.

How has your participation in the Body Project changed what you do, or will do in the future, to promote your own body acceptance?

- Elicit some responses – stop buying things, have confidence to shut down the conversations, think about others around me and how it impacts them, think about food rules and behaviours.

Do you think this group has affected how you feel when you interact with people?

- Elicit some responses – be mindful of my actions, words and deeds. Think more about who people are and not what they look like.

Do you think your use of social media has changed as a result of this group?

- Elicit some responses – tailoring feeds, training the algorithms.

What else do you feel you have gained out of this group?

- Elicit some responses – Inspiration, Power, Hope, realised I'm not alone, sense of community.

Did any particular activity really stand out as helpful to you?

- Elicit some responses

- **Try to get all participants to reflect on any growth they have shown or insights they have learned. The idea is for them to consolidate what they have learned.**

6) SELF-AFFIRMATION EXERCISE: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – WHAT NEXT? (10 MINS)

As we come to the end of our sessions, we would like to encourage you to continue challenging some of your body-related concerns. Part of doing this is talking about our bodies in a positive, rather than a negative, way. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- ***fter***
- ***Make a pledge to end complaints about your body, such as "I'm so flat chested" or "I hate my legs." When you catch yourself doing this, make a correction by saying something positive about that body part, such as, "I'm so glad my legs got me through netball practice today."***
- ***The next time someone gives you a compliment, rather than objecting ("No, I look terrible"), practise taking a deep breath and saying, "Thank you."***
- ***Pledge to do the mirror exercise once per week.***
- ***If you use social media, pledge to focus on the experience your photos/posts represent, rather than how you look (e.g., "My body did such a good job keeping me healthy and energised while I went camping")***

- ***Keep a 'Body Appreciation Jar' – Everyday, write down something your body enabled you to do.***

Can each of you choose one of these ideas (or one of your own) and do it sometime during the next week and let us all know how it goes?

Consider this an "exit exercise." Doing these kinds of things makes it more likely that you will talk about yourself in a more positive way. Think of which specific exercise you can do. I'd like to go around the room and ask each of you to share.

Refer to the Self-Affirmation Exercise Form (Exercise #8).

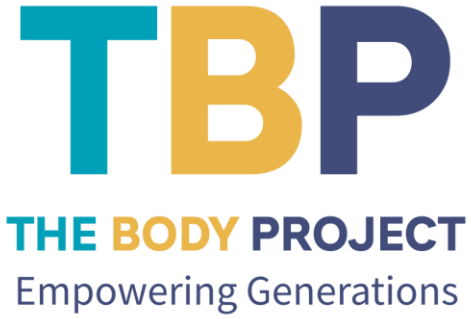
- ❖ Have each participant state which affirmation exercise they are willing to do during the next week.
- ❖ Have them record this in their workbook.

7) CLOSURE (3 MINS)

Thanks again for deciding to be a part of this group and sticking with it. We have been very impressed with your thoughtful comments and participation—they are much appreciated! It's been great to meet you all, we've really enjoyed working with you!

Is there one last thing you'd like to share before we leave?

- ❖ Have each participant share if they wish to.



The Body Project Participant Workbook

This workbook contains the information that you need to complete the bridging exercises between sessions.

There are also some blank pages at the end for you to make notes as we go through if you want to as we know that there will be lots of interesting discussions and it may feel like a lot to remember.

You are free to take pictures of the group work in session 1 but please be mindful to keep in line with the group agreement ☺

We would love to be able to use your work and share your ideas in sessions with others (obviously we won't identify you) – if you are happy for us to do this, please send a copy of your workbook to: Thebodyproject@glos.ac.uk

SESSION ONE, EXERCISE #1: LETTER TO A YOUNGER GIRL

Please write a letter to a younger girl who is struggling with body image concerns. Write about the costs associated with pursuing the appearance ideal. Think of as many costs as you can.

If writing a letter isn't for you, instead of writing a letter, you may want to make a reel or story on social media, or a short video that you can share with us, or you can also do it as a voice note if that helps. Another option could be to use artwork to do this, and we can talk about it next week.

Feel free to work with a friend or family member in generating ideas or use any of the ones we discussed in the group. Please bring your work to our next meeting so we can discuss your responses and feelings about this assignment.

SESSION ONE, EXERCISE #2: MIRROR EXERCISE FORM

Please stand in front of a mirror and look at yourself and write down your positive qualities. Please list as many as you can, we'd love to see 15! This includes physical, emotional, intellectual, and social qualities. For instance, you may like the shape of your arms, the strength of your legs, your long dark hair, the sound of your laugh, or the fact that you are a good friend. Please make sure to include at least some physical attributes on your list. You can think about what your friends or family would say about you.

1_____

2_____

3_____

4_____

5_____

6_____

7_____

8_____

9_____

10_____

11_____

12_____

13_____

14_____

15_____

SESSION TWO, EXERCISE #3: COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS

Please talk to three people and ask them to discuss the main costs of pursuing the appearance ideal, these can be family members, friends, someone on a sports team or someone you know through school.

Please take notes as you're talking to them, jotting down important points and key takeaways from your discussion. If it's easier, and you have permission, you can record the sessions and then you can tell us the key things next week.

Interview #1:

_____

_____

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_____

Interview #2:

_____

Interview #3:

SESSION TWO, EXERCISE #4: TOP 10 ACTIVISM LIST

Please generate a top 10 list of things girls/women can do to resist the appearance ideal. What can you avoid, say, do, or learn to battle this beauty ideal?

In the session, we discussed things like:

- Invite friends to join you in un-following influencers that promote the appearance ideal.
- Post a comment on social media to compliment a positive post you see.
- Share positive body image content on social media 'all bodies are good bodies.'
- Make a pact with friends to stop pro-appearance-ideal talk for a week (or more).
- Identify a younger friend or relative and commit to helping her fight the appearance ideal as they grow up.
- Cover all of the mirrors at home for a week.
- Put post-it notes on mirrors in women's bathrooms saying things like 'appreciate your body' or 'your body doesn't define your worth'.
- Make a social media post that challenges the appearance ideal and share it with family and friends.
- Put up an "accept your body" poster in the girls' bathrooms at school
- You may not like wearing school PE kit and want to challenge your school on how to make this more acceptable, you may feel the same about other things about the school uniform– explain to school the impact this has on you, maybe even the food choices and prices in the school canteen.

You could use these as examples or think of some of your own.

Please write your top 10 list down and bring it to the next group.

1_____

2_____

3_____

4_____

5_____

6_____

7_____

8_____

9_____

10_____

SESSION THREE, EXERCISE #5: BEHAVIOURAL EXERCISE FORM

We would like to challenge each of you to do two things that you currently do not do because of body image concerns to increase your confidence. For example, wearing shorts in the summer, going to the pool in a swimsuit, exercising in public, going out without make-up on, or posting unedited photos on social media.

We would like each of you to do two behavioural challenges next week (or the same one twice) and then let us know how it turned out during the next session.

The behaviours I plan to change are:

_____

_____

_____

To do this, I will:

_____

_____

_____

I will do these new behaviours by (date): _____

I will know I've succeeded in changing these behaviours when I:

_____

_____

_____

Completing these new behaviours is important to me because:

_____

_____

_____

SESSION THREE, EXERCISE #6: BODY ACTIVISM FORM

The second exercise from last session (number 4) asked you to list 10 things that we could do to resist the appearance-ideal – what you can avoid, say, do, or learn to combat this social pressure. This might be referred to as "body activism."

Please choose two things from your list to do during the next week. You may want to write your body activism goal on this sheet to remind yourself of it.

This week I will:

1_____

_____

_____

_____

2_____

_____

_____

_____

SESSION THREE, EXERCISE #7: LETTER TO A YOUNGER SELF

Please write another letter, this time to a younger version of yourself (approx. two pages), on how to avoid developing body image concerns. Use any of the information you have learned in these session, and any additional ways you may think of on your own.

The goal is to help the younger version of you understand the different things they can do, say, avoid, or learn that will help them develop or maintain a positive body image.

If writing a letter isn't for you, you may want to make a short video that you can share with us, or you can also do it as a voice note if that helps. Another option could be to use artwork to do this, and we can talk about it next week.

SESSION FOUR, EXIT EXERCISE #8: SELF-AFFIRMATION EXERCISE FORM

Part of challenging body-related concerns involves talking about our bodies in a positive, rather than negative, way. We discussed some examples of this in the group, for instance, making a pledge to end complaints about your body or accepting compliments rather than objecting to them. Please choose three ideas that we talked about, or one of your own, to practise over the next week.

I pledge to myself that I will:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

PLEASE USE THESE PAGES TO MAKE ANY NOTES OR DOODLES THAT MAY HELP THROUGH THE SESSIONS!