



But I Hate My Body:

Cracking the Code on
Body Acceptance
One Teeny Tiny Step at a Time

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Marci RD NUTRITION

FOOD & BODY IMAGE HEALERS™

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If you are reading this guide, you may be considering the notion of body acceptance. Or perhaps someone in your life is urging you to consider body acceptance. Maybe you have heard the word body acceptance and thought to yourself, “Why in the world would I accept THIS body?”

Before we go any further, I’d like to tell you that it’s ok if you deeply wish your body were different. You don’t have to feel badly about that wish. Given our culture, it’s only natural to strive towards a “better,” possibly “smaller” or even “more toned,” version of yourself. But perhaps you also know that all of this striving has created years of frustration and even self-hatred.

Body acceptance is a super challenging idea for nearly everyone. We have been brainwashed daily, since birth, to feel deep shame about our size and appearance. So even dipping the toe in the waters of body acceptance naturally feels wrong, terrifying, and deeply threatening. This response is quite normal.

In fact, I just got an email that you may relate to. I’ll share part of it with you.

“I do feel that I am living in a body that I don't want to be in. This doesn't feel like ME. SO. How does one implement these ideas (of body acceptance) if I know that losing weight would help me feel how I want to feel? Not for someone else - just for me.”

It’s a great question.

I’ve created this guide as a starter to help you begin to consider the idea of letting go of changing your body.

You may wonder why I, and so many other practitioners out there, want you to strive to accept your here and now body when you know that changing it would help you feel better.

While I can't speak for all of the body positive advocates out there, I'll share with you my perspective - and it relies solely on my pragmatism. I do believe that weight loss helps people resolve certain negative feelings about themselves. This is because we exist in a culture where our sense of self lives in the container of our appearance. So when we successfully change our bodies to fit the prevailing narrative of beauty and health, we naturally feel better. We feel more attractive, more worthy, more accomplished, successful, and effective. Simply put, we feel "better."

The conundrum is not whether you would feel better if your body changed. The conundrum is what to do when pursuing body change is not sustainable, does not give you the "results" you desire, or is out of alignment with your core values as a human being (i.e. dieting and excessive exercise prevent you from connecting socially and being present with your family). If your willpower hasn't gotten you the body you want or believe you "should have" if you just worked hard enough, you are in great company. With a failure rate of over 95% and clear evidence proving that dieting is the #1 predictor of future weight gain, you are in the majority.

So acceptance begins with the acknowledgement of reality.

The reality is that our bodies' rebel against our efforts to control them and a weight-focused paradigm has failed us for decades - over a century, in fact. When you are able to fully accept that the avenue for weight loss is a non-option given its abysmal track record, you are forced to contend with the other options in front of you.

This is what acceptance looks like. It's not being at peace with reality, nor is it surrender or resignation. It's looking at the facts of "what is" so that new doors, new possibilities, and new choices might open in front of you.

Those of us in the body positive camp believe that there are plenty of other choices that do, in fact, exist which can help you feel less emotional pain, less negativity, and greater health in relationship to your body. We call it self-care. But it's a self-care that is comprised of sustainable and kind habits rather than numbers-based outcomes.

It takes some serious heavy lifting to rewire the narrative that, in order to feel better and to become healthier, your body has to change.

Here's the good news - It's NOT impossible.

I do want to say that, in order for the narrative to change, you have to work really hard at it. It requires behavior changes, mindset changes, and surrounding yourself with body positivity on the regular. Sadly, you can't think or wish your way to body acceptance.

Below is a getting started guide to help you begin to discover the world of body acceptance. Think of it as a little sampler to explore at your own pace. Take what resonates and leave what doesn't. Let these resources lead you down a new rabbit hole.

Take a deep breath.
Open your heart.
And let's see what unfolds.

*The recommendations below are certainly not exhaustive and are presented in no particular order.

Things to Watch

- [Body Positivity or Body Obsession? Learning to See More & Be More](#)
- [Poodle Science](#)
- [Have You Hated Your Body Enough?](#)
- [TED Talk Why Thinking You're Ugly is Bad For You](#)
- [Beauty and Body Image: That's What She Said](#)
- [Rewiring How You Look at Yourself](#)

Things to Read

- [Defining Self-Acceptance...Or At Least My Definition](#) by Marci Evans
- [An Imperfect Human's Guide to Body Positivity](#) by Nora Whelan & Andrew Richard
- [What If Body Acceptance Doesn't Work? How About Body Neutrality](#) by Melissa Fabello
- [Your Body Knows Best](#) Anna Sweeney
- [When Body Acceptance Feels Like Giving Up](#) by Jessi Haggerty
- [The Not So Sexy Origins of Body Shame](#) by Hilary Kinavey & Dana Sturtevant of Be Nourished
- [What If I Can't Love My Body? Exploring Body Respect, Acceptance, Trust, and Love](#) by Rachael Hartley
- [Body Image Remix](#) by Summer Innanen
- [Body Acceptance Letters](#) by The Body Project
- [Jumpstart Your Body Acceptance Journey](#) by Valery Kallen
- [Grieving the Thin Ideal](#) by Meredith Noble

Things to Listen To

- [Food Psych Episode #108](#): The Roots of the Body-Positive Movement with Connie Sobcak
- [Food Psych Episode #45](#): Fat Acceptance and Body Positivity with Virgie Tovar
- [Food Psych Episode #46](#): Conquering Body Shame and Weight Obsession with Harriet Brown
- [Fearless Rebel Radio with Summer Innanen #79](#): Body Image and Body Positivity
- 101
- [Body Kindness Episode #52](#): Radical Self-Acceptance with Body Image Activist and Author Rosie Molinary
- [Nutrition Matters Episode #88](#): Weight Neutrality with Sumner Brooks
- [The Mindful Dietitian Podcast](#) with Isabel Foxen Duke

All my best,

Marci

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About Marci

Marci Evans MS, CEDRD-S, is a Certified Eating Disorder Registered Dietitian and iaedp approved supervisor, certified Intuitive Eating Coach, certified ACSM personal trainer, and owner of Marci RD Nutrition Consulting.



Marci is a self-proclaimed Food and Body Imager Healer®. She has dedicated her career to counseling, supervising, and teaching in the field of eating disorders. Her group practice is located in Cambridge, MA where she manages an amazing team of women who all specialize in the treatment of food and body concerns. She also holds three adjunct teaching positions in New England and co-directs the eating disorders specialty dietetic internship at Simmons College.

In 2015 she launched her online training platform for dietitians, [The Food and Body Image Healers® Online Training Institute](#). She volunteers for a number of national eating disorder organizations including the iaedp certification committee and is serving as an eating disorder resource professional for The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. She has spoken locally and nationally at numerous conferences and media outlets. She loves social media so tweet her [@marciRD](#), follow her on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), and check out her blog at [www.marciRD.com](#).

You can reach out to Marci and her team of Clinicians if you want to get support on your Journey to Body Acceptance, support with the help of a professional.