

Body checking explained.



WHAT IS BODY CHECKING?

Body checking is when you use mirrors, old images, social media, measuring tapes, or scales to compare our bodies to others, social standards or a former version of ourselves.

You are body checking if:

- You find yourself “double checking” if you are okay repeatedly in the mirror
- You changing that outfit just “one more time” to hide the part of your body that just feels “gross”
- You’re wrapping your fingers around your forearm to make sure you’re still “okay” or engaging in other methods to check changes in a body part(s)

Body checking can lead to an unhealthy obsession with searching for the flaws of your body day in and day out. For many who body check, this can occur all day. Every day.

Let’s be clear

We aren’t talking about the occasional walk to the mirror to check if there is spinach in our teeth, if our blouse matches our pants, or we because don’t like our outfit and it is uncomfortable. Occasional body checking is normal.

Body checking becomes disruptive when:

- It repeatedly occurs throughout the day
- You engage body checking to try to soothe an insecurity
- It is associated with extreme stress, anger, sadness, fear, or guilt
- It results in multiple attempts to try to reconcile perceived flaws through subtle (changing clothes) or extreme measures (cosmetic surgery)
- It leads to negative self-talk, shame and guilt.

11 TIPS TO STOP BODY CHECKING!

1. Cover your mirrors
2. Write down all the ways you body check
3. Tally up how many times you try to body check each day. Make a goal to decrease that number from one week to the next.
4. Take a social media break. Or unfollow all of the accounts that trigger body checking.
5. Follow people on social media that are in the same size body as you or larger. What are their lives like? Focus on how they are impacting the world.
6. Ditch the diet, *dieting will skyrocket body checking*
7. Resist the urge to dig through old photos or memories on social media. If you want to check out old photos- try reflecting on the experience instead of how your body looked.
8. Practice taking and sharing imperfect photos
9. Keep a journal and use body-positive journal prompts to examine your relationship and build trust with your body
10. Pick one or two things every day to respect your body intentionally
11. Practice *joyful movement* instead of exercise focused on changing your body

Diet culture has a way of ensuring us we are always inadequate, and we are the only ones who have ever felt this way. We may feel alone in our thoughts and feel like something is wrong with us if we don’t meet societal expectations of our body.

How has body checking robbed you of your time, energy, and happiness?