



Dove Real Beauty Talks

Beauty

On Your Own Terms

Activity Workbook



Welcome

This is your personal guide to redefining beauty and building body confidence.

It's designed to help you reflect, reset, and take control of how you engage with beauty and your body. Through thoughtful exercises, you'll explore what beauty means to you, identify behaviours that uplift or drain you, and create a vision for body confidence and beauty that feels authentic to you.

Remember, this isn't about perfection. It's about progress.

The most important thing is just showing up and giving each exercise a go. If you can, try to do these exercises somewhere calming, maybe with a cup of tea, listening to your favourite music, in a comfortable chair.

Let's begin.

Embracing body image as it evolves

Body image isn't fixed. It evolves throughout the day, across life stages, and as our bodies change. Experiences such as puberty, pregnancy, menopause, or managing a health condition naturally shift how we see and feel about our bodies.

What makes this journey challenging is the way society's beauty ideals create pressures for women to look a certain way. But the truth is, your body is meant to change. It's a dynamic, living part of you, responding to the ebb and flow of life.

Approaching your body's changes with respect, appreciation, and acceptance is key to nurturing body confidence.





Section 1 - How to start your body confidence journey

Making a commitment to healing your relationship with your body is a powerful first step to building body confidence. Writing it down is scientifically proven to strengthen motivation, reinforce values, and make it more likely that you'll create meaningful change.

1. Write a body confidence commitment to yourself

The more personal you make it the better. Here's some inspiration:

- *I commit to keeping an open mind and learning new ways to relate to my body.*
- *I commit to discovering what beauty on my own terms means for me.*
- *I commit to learning new ways to appreciate and respect my body.*

Write Your Commitment Here:

.....

2. Define one small action you'll take to honour your commitment this week

Choose something achievable but challenging. Here's some inspiration:

- *Thank your body for what it allows you to do (e.g., my arms for allowing me to hug my friends).*
- *Unfollow social media accounts that make you feel pressured to look a certain way.*
- *Move your body in a way that feels good. Not to change how you look, but to celebrate what your body can do.*

Action:

When and where will you do it:

3. Define why this commitment is important to you and how it reflects your values

.....

.....

4. Share your commitment for support and encouragement

Who can you share your commitment with to support you?

.....

You might consider inviting a friend, a sister, or a colleague to join you to create a powerful circle of accountability and mutual growth

Sign your name and the date as a declaration of your commitment:

Signature: Date:



Section 2 - What is body confidence?

Visualising body confidence helps you focus on the positive changes you're working toward, strengthening your motivation, clarifying your goals, and guiding you there.

1. Reflect on the relationship you want to have with your body

Use the prompts below to explore what body confidence could look and feel like for you.

- **If you weren't worried about how you look, what's the first thing you'd do differently?**
(E.g., "I'd speak up more in work meetings and share my ideas")

.....

- **What else would you do, think, or feel if you didn't worry about the way you look?**
(E.g., try something new, like a dance class? Have more mental energy?)

.....

- **How could more body confidence help you lead the life you want?**
(E.g., focus on personal passions? Be kinder to yourself?)

.....

2. Fast forward to success

Close your eyes and picture yourself 3 months from now, feeling confident and more at peace with your body: set a timer for three minutes and get detailed with your vision. What are you doing in this vision of your life? How do you feel emotionally, physically, and mentally? How are your relationships, work, or passions impacted by this confidence?

3. Capture the feeling

Write a paragraph, draw a picture, or create a short voice note describing this future version of yourself.

Use present-moment language: Think "I am..." instead of "I will be..." to make it feel more real and empowering.

Use sensory details: How do you walk, talk, and carry yourself? What emotions stand out most?

.....
.....
.....

4. Commit to one action

Based on your vision, what's one small action you can take this week to move closer to this version of yourself?

Action:

When and where will you do it?



Section 3 - Beauty ideals' influence on your body image

Unrealistic beauty standards drain our time, energy, and well-being. This exercise will help you explore what chasing beauty ideals has cost you and how letting go of them could bring more meaning to your life.

1. What are the costs?

Write a list of 10 ways chasing beauty ideals has impacted your:

Time (e.g., hours spent worrying), **Energy** (e.g., self-doubt), **Money** (e.g., products or treatments), **Relationships** (e.g., settling for less than you deserve).

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2. Imagine letting go

Now, think about what life could look like if you let go of society's beauty standards. What would you gain back in time, energy, or focus? What meaningful things would you prioritise instead? How would your life be better?

3. Write to Inspire

Write a short letter to a girl in your life (or your younger self) about why chasing beauty ideals isn't worth it. Share one lesson you've learned and one hope you have for them about body confidence.

Dear

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Love

.....





Section 4 - Define beauty on your own terms

By reflecting on your routines, you can make intentional choices that empower your self-expression. It's about understanding what serves you and what might be holding you back.

1. Real beauty audit

In the table below, write down your daily beauty routine and identify whether it feels helpful or unhelpful to you.

Ask yourself: Does this behaviour align with my values? Does it support my well-being and self-expression? Does it feel like pressure, anxiety, or striving for society's standards?

Be honest and thorough — this is for you.

We've added some examples to help you get started:



Step/Action	How does it make me feel?	Helpful or unhelpful? Why?
Applying skincare products	Relaxed and cared for	Helpful — supports my skin's health
Checking my reflection 5 times before leaving	Anxious and self-critical	Unhelpful — it makes me focus on my 'flaws'
Wearing long shirts that cover my stomach	Less worried about what other people think	Unhelpful — other people's opinions don't determine my self-worth



2. Redefine your routine

In the space below, summarise what you'd like to add, remove, or dial-up in your beauty or body routine to make it more your own.

Here's a quick guide:

Add: What inspires joy and self-expression (e.g., *playful accessories that reflect my personality*).

Remove: What feels like a drain or pressure (e.g., *overthinking my outfit choices*).

Dial-Up: What could you embrace more fully or give extra attention to (e.g., *caring for my natural hair—it's part of who I am*).

Add:

Remove:

Dial-Up:

3. Your plan

From your reflections, write one thing you'd like to put into action quickly:

One change I'll make tomorrow is:

Building support for your body image

Support is essential on your body image journey. Start by opening up to a trusted friend. Sharing your thoughts can lighten the load and deepen your connection.

If body image concerns are impacting your mental health, consider speaking to a doctor or a mental health professional. They can provide guidance, tools, and resources to help you move forward.

Finally, practice self-kindness and patience. Talk to yourself the way you'd talk to a close friend — with compassion and encouragement.





You've got this

Congratulations on investing your time and energy into this workbook.
You've taken a meaningful step toward embracing your authentic self.

Small, consistent actions can create lasting change, whether it's letting go of unhelpful beauty habits, or redefining beauty on your own terms. Body confidence doesn't happen overnight, it's an on-going commitment we make to ourselves.

Keep this workbook as a reminder of your commitment to action and your progress. Revisit the exercises whenever you need a boost. And don't forget — you're not alone on this journey. Share your reflections and experiences with other women in your life.

Finally, remember that your body is worthy of appreciation, acceptance and respect, just as it is.

Try to always live by 'Beauty On Your Own Terms'.

Acknowledgements:

This workbook has been brought to you by the Dove Self-Esteem Project in collaboration with Dr Phillippa Diedrichs, a body image expert and Professor of Psychology at the Centre for Appearance Research, UWE Bristol.

The Dove Self-Esteem Project has been reaching millions of young people with body confidence education since 2004 (find out more at dove.com/selfesteem) and is now expanding the invite to women.

Some activities in this workbook were inspired by established techniques and interventions proven to boost well-being. For more information see:

- Halliwel, E., & Diedrichs, P.C. (2019). Cognitive dissonance-based interventions to facilitate positive body image and embodiment. In T. L. Tylka & N. Piran (Eds.), *Handbook of positive body image and embodiment: Constructs, protective factors, and interventions* (pp. 360–373). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/med-psych/9780190841874.003.0034>
- Knittle, K., Heino, M., Marques, M.M. et al. The compendium of self-enactable techniques to change and self-manage motivation and behaviour v.1.0. *Nature Human Behavior*. 4, 215–223 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41562-019-0798-9>
- Michie, S., Johnston, M., Carey, R. (2020). Behavior Change Techniques. In: Gellman, M.D. (eds) *Encyclopedia of Behavioral Medicine*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-39903-0_1661
- Stice E., Rohde P., Shaw H. (2015). *The Body Project: a dissonance-based eating disorders prevention intervention* (2nd edition, online). Oxford University Press, New York. <https://doi.org/10.1093/med-psych/9780199859245.001.0001>





Glossary

Beauty ideals

The standards society sets for women to be considered beautiful and attractive. These ideals are not based on fact and are shaped by media, culture, gender stereotypes, racism, and capitalism.

Beauty on your own terms

How you choose to engage with beauty when you set aside societal pressures and focus on your own joy, creativity, and self-expression. It's aligned with your values and identity.

Body image

How we think and feel about our bodies, including their appearance (what they look like) and functionality (what they do).

Body dissatisfaction

Negative feelings, thoughts, and behaviours toward your body, such as shame, embarrassment, or frequent body-checking (e.g., constantly checking your reflection).

Body confidence

A sense of appreciation and acceptance for your body, despite any perceived 'flaws.' Seeing it as a tool for living, rather than an object for others to judge.

Helpful beauty behaviours

Behaviours that reflect your identity and make you feel comfortable in your own skin. They support your health, self-expression, and self-care without feeling like an obligation.

Unhelpful beauty behaviours

Behaviours done out of a sense of obligation to meet society's standards or to please others. They often feel draining and anxiety-inducing, rather than a personal choice.



Let's change beauty