

CHAPTER 2

LOVE YOURSELF

#Embodied

“To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.”

– Ralph Waldo Emerson, *nineteenth-century
American philosopher and poet*

MY STORY: Ryan Sage, 27 years old, she/her, UK

I think that my body image is pretty solid right now. I'm happy with how I present myself to the world and I don't spend a lot of time thinking about my looks. This has changed a great deal throughout my life though.

As a teen I was really dissatisfied with my body. Maybe that's true for every teen? At any rate, I am not sure I even appreciated how dissatisfied I was until I went to university and experienced a different lifestyle. I partied a lot at university and my new habits led to weight loss. Initially this just happened, but then I found myself spending a lot of time focused on my appearance. It was as if being thin suddenly made me want to keep being thinner. I wanted to stay thin, tone my body, be tanned, have the perfect make-up and clothes. I got so much positive feedback when I invested this time into my appearance that I couldn't stop. It was so validating! I got a lot of preferential treatment and everyone wanted to be my friend. It was a high schooler's dream come true!

When my university years ended, I started working and had to become a real adult with more responsibility. The partying slowly ended. I started working and then got into a graduate program and I was just too tired to go out. Initially, I started to gain some weight and I felt a lot of internal struggle about my body changing. What if people thought I was failing because I was gaining weight? But I gradually found myself skipping make-up, dressing more comfortably, and focusing on other aspects of my identity aside from my appearance.

Different facets of my identity have likely factored into my body image development. I was born and raised in Malaysia and didn't move to the UK until 2014. Growing up in an Asian family, the body ideal is really skinny. But Asian families are critical and you're always too big or too small it seems. I think being a minority and more visible in the UK has affected me. I don't feel discriminated against, but I do feel like I'm viewed as exotic or something. I also identify as bisexual and sometimes it bothers me a bit that people

tend to see me in the butch/femme binary when I either have short or long hair. I'm really just enjoying being a human and I don't want to be on display or representing any particular group of people. I am just who I am.

If I could offer advice to my younger self, I'd tell her to focus on developing who she is and don't worry about how she looks. Of course, my younger self wouldn't have believed that advice. I think when you're younger and figuring out how you fit into the world around you, your appearance factors more into your identity than it does later in life. At some point, we outgrow some of those appearance concerns. It's like we're all swimming in this water – this culture that values appearances above all else – and we don't realize it until we outgrow it. Then we come to see how toxic that water really is.

Ryan's story is an honest reflection on the experiences so many of us have trying to fit in, wanting to be liked – and wanting to like ourselves. She reminds us that getting to know ourselves and becoming comfortable with ourselves is a process. But it's a process you can actively engage with and start or improve upon today.

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU'LL LEARN

- what it means to strive for embodiment in an appearance-focused world,
- the science surrounding the physical limits of changing our bodies, and
- strategies for improving your body image.

One of the most beautiful qualities I observe in people is a willingness to just be themselves without apology. At its best, this can look like a sort of confident contentedness. Sometimes, it may be acting goofy or silly without any care to how others will view you. Other times, it may be someone explicitly saying, “I don't care what others think about me.” This very human authenticity can be contagious. When people feel good about themselves, others notice and respect that. This can also create a space for more people to feel good about themselves. But where does this begin? How do we become comfortable in our own skins?

When you were a young child, you almost certainly were accepting of yourself. You didn't know to feel self-conscious or wish you were taller or shorter or thinner or more muscular or blue-eyed, or blonder. At some point, the outside world infiltrates our minds and tells us we're imperfect and should improve ourselves – eat differently, dress differently, buy different products, try to reshape who we are physically to, in turn, like who we are psychologically. This logic is seriously misguided, however. The cultural belief that changing our exterior will improve our interior is not supported by science. We cannot dye our hair or purchase the perfect pair of jeans to achieve high self-esteem.

EXPERT ADVICE:

Drs. Lindsay and Lexie Kite, body image advocates, authors of *More Than a Body*, USA

“Positive body image is an inside job. When we keep attempting to fix an internal, psychological problem with outside, physical solutions, those quick fixes will never really solve our problem, nor will they prepare us to respond effectively to future body image concerns.”

Let's talk limits

An important part of developing a positive body image is understanding that the cultural myth that your body is infinitely malleable – if you just try hard enough! – is wrong. It's an appealing myth, because who doesn't like to think that beauty, health, happiness, and success are all within reach? (Beauty, health, happiness, and success, of course, are discussed as completely interwoven, which is also wrong.) The hard truth is that there are real limits to what any of us mere mortals can do to change our appearances. Of course, if you have endless time, money, and an unusually high pain tolerance, cosmetic surgery has come a long way. But more importantly, there's plenty we can do to try to boost our mental health without relying on superficial fixes.

There are many factors that affect your height, body size, body shape, and everything else about your appearance – and *many* of them aren't within your control. One large, scientific study found that at least 80% of our height is heritable. In other words, you're however tall you are mostly due

to how tall your biological parents are. Nutrition, medical care, and general health may affect your height a bit, but not a whole lot.

Although weight *may be* more easily changed than height, it's also very much influenced by our genes (up to 80% of the variation in weight in the population is associated with genes). Although advertising for diet plans and products make it seem like body size all comes down to willpower, science suggests this is a tremendous simplification of reality; our genes have a lot to do with our size and shape. Not only are our bodies' sizes and shapes mostly genetically determined, but our genes influence our tendency to store fat, fat distribution patterns, and metabolic efficiency. Recent research suggests that our body size is linked to our appetites, which are also determined by genetics. Some people feel hungry more often and have a hard time eating less, and other people don't care as much about food because they don't feel hungry as often. Being hungry is a pretty miserable experience, and it's not a good idea to ignore hunger because you risk not only feeling very cranky, but also not giving your body the nutrients it needs.

The bottom line is that our appearances are very much attributable to our genes and we cannot easily and dramatically transform them to meet cultural beauty ideals.

But what about health?

You may have accepted that not everyone will be a tall, slender, toned underwear model, but what if you have concerns about your body size and shape because you've read or been told by a medical professional that weight is associated with health? Unfortunately, a lot of what you've probably heard about weight and health is wrong – or at least incomplete.

There is a growing body of research suggesting that the links between weight (or body size) and health are *really* complicated. Scientists and doctors have argued that people who are relatively heavy are at risk of health problems such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and some forms of cancer. However, it is becoming clear that there are many factors that contribute to our health aside from our weight. For example, if you exercise and are in good physical shape, you may improve your heart health. Eating foods that nourish our bodies is important so that we *feel good*. Getting enough sleep is also an important way to protect our health (discussed in Chapter 12), as is avoiding substance use problems (discussed

in Chapters 7 and 12). There are many steps we can take to live a long, healthy life, and it is important to focus on behaviors we can change instead of the things we can't, such as our height or body shape. Trying to change our bodies to improve our health is often nearly impossible (we're fighting our genes!) and misguided in that we would be better off focusing our efforts on factors that are somewhat more controllable.

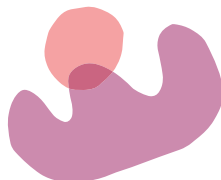
MYTHS AND MISINFORMATION:

People who are heavy can't also be healthy and live long lives.

There is a great deal of importance placed on thinness as valuable for not just attractiveness but also health in our culture. However, research suggests that being underweight is more problematic for both our health and longevity than is being relatively heavy. Although there is scientific evidence that links weight and health, these links are *complicated* and not completely understood. Regardless, not every larger person will have health problems, and many people who are smaller may have health problems. In other words, you can't determine a person's health based on their body size and people of any size can adopt behaviors that can improve their health.

The Health at Every Size (HAES) movement encourages people to focus on healthy behaviors, no matter what their size. HAES is an anti-diet, body positivity, diversity acceptance movement that is consistent with the evidence and ideas presented in this book. Importantly, the HAES movement reminds us that all people deserve to be treated with respect and should not be discriminated against because of their size. We all should care about our health and how our body functions more than we care about looking like our favorite celebrities or influencers – and our behaviors should reflect this.

HAES presents an important counterpoint to all the fads and diets out there that can be incredibly harmful (see Chapter 4). The more we are self-accepting and supportive of others' self-acceptance, the easier it will be for all of us to reject these fads.



EXPERT ADVICE:

Betsy Brenner, author of *The Longest Match: Rallying to Defeat an Eating Disorder in Midlife*, USA

“Bodies come in all shapes and sizes. Treat yours with kindness and compassion. If you give yourself both nourishment and self-care, you will be able to fully engage in living your best life. You deserve it and your body will thank you!”

Embodiment

It might seem counterintuitive, but changing your appearance is unlikely to permanently transform your body image. Consider what happens when you get a great new haircut. At first, you feel like a better version of yourself, and others might comment on how wonderful your hair looks. Then, a couple of weeks pass, and both you and the people around you get used to your new haircut; it ceases to make you feel special. The same tends to happen as a result of any change to your physical appearance; the boost to your body image is likely to be short-lived.

Connecting to our physical selves is a psychological process referred to as **embodiment**. Body image scientists describe embodiment as the ways in which we engage with and experience our worlds through our bodies. Our bodies allow us to be in the world; they are containers for our personalities, intellects, thoughts, beliefs, emotions, hopes, and so much more. According to Dr. Niva Piran, the creator of the Developmental Theory of Embodiment, we experience embodiment as dynamic and complex. We relate to our bodies on a personal and psychological level but we also experience our bodies in terms of how others relate to them. It is when we try to view our bodies as others do that we tend to focus on our physical selves as a collection of parts – parts that need to be fixed to be more pleasing to others. When we focus too much on how we look and are viewed by others, we may lose attunement with how we feel. The ultimate goal is a sense of self that is empowered by a sense of embodiment – of comfort in our own skin – without relying on our appearance to feel embodied. Because our appearance inevitably changes with age, and beauty ideals are constantly changing, our appearance is not likely to be a stable source of comfort.

Q&A:

What if I just can't do it? I want to develop a positive body image, but I just don't like so much about how I look and I've never felt really comfortable with myself. What should I do?

First of all, know that you are not alone, and *many* people feel how you do. Second, I want you to know that the advice I offer in this book is not intended to invalidate these concerns or suggest that body image development is an easy process. For many of us, these are complicated and difficult issues.

Most people don't like some aspects of their physical selves and most people don't always feel comfortable in their own skin. It's important to appreciate that this is normal and that the goal isn't necessarily to wake up each day, jump out of bed, and feel madly in love with everything about who you are! As you'll read throughout this chapter, an important part of developing a positive body image is focusing in on what you *do* like about yourself and being grateful for your body's ability to move you through your life.

If you are really struggling, it may be a good idea to find yourself some extra support; there are resources at the end of this and every chapter that may help in this regard. A therapist with expertise treating body image concerns is ideal (although other therapists may also be helpful). Working through your feelings about your physical appearance and your comfort with yourself can be easier with someone else's help. You do *not* need to have a mental illness or disorder of some kind to benefit from therapy.

Strategies

Body image concerns are not merely superficial but can affect many aspects of people's lives. This also means that developing a positive body image and a sense of embodiment can have positive consequences for both mental and physical health and well-being. Unfortunately, there's no pill you can take to banish body dissatisfaction, but there are six strategies I share below that rely on your cognitive and emotional resources to help improve body image. Some of these suggestions might be easier to embrace than others; we all live in an appearance-focused world that seems to work against embodiment. But adoption of these body image-improving strategies is likely to make you both happier and healthier. I encourage you to try them out on your path to developing a more satisfying relationship with your body.

1. Reflect on your values

One strategy that body image scientists recommend for body image improvement is to "live what we value." Start by considering what it is, exactly, that

you value. You can start by thinking about what you hope to achieve in your life. Maybe you're aiming for professional success or maybe you most want to focus on your relationships with others. Consider what you want others to value about you. Are you a reliable friend or coworker? Are you fun to be around?

An appreciation of beauty or the adoration of others might be components of our value systems. However, maybe we value compassion, diversity, and equality more? Although improvements have been made recently, the beauty and fashion industries have rarely promoted images and advertisements that embrace people of all different shapes, sizes, colors, and ability statuses. It's worth considering the extent to which we want to take our cues from industries that devalue so many of us. Further, it's unlikely that the people we care about and enjoy are in our lives because of their physical appearance; we experience their (internal) beauty in a variety of ways. Living our values can mean embracing our own and other people's bodies as they are. This might begin with appreciating that some people naturally have relatively small bodies, and some naturally have larger bodies; people's body sizes are not a direct indication of their habits, health, or personality. We all have a natural body size that we're likely to hover around when we're adequately nourishing ourselves and engaging in a healthy amount of physical activity. Not everyone will be slender – even when they maintain “healthy” habits.

The psychologist Renee Engeln refers to our cultural obsession with our appearance as ***beauty sickness***. It's not that she doesn't appreciate why we care about how we look. She suggests the problem is when we care about our looks more than other – arguably more important – aspects of our lives. If we spend too much time and mental energy focusing on our appearance, we might have less time and energy for hobbies, friends, or family.

2. Respect yourself

Your body is your home for the rest of your life. It's easy to get caught up in the present tense and not think long-term but you want your body to be a comfortable, healthy home for many years to come. To accomplish this, you need to treat yourself with respect and care.

Body respect is listening to your body's needs and honoring them. Body respect does *not* mean eating too little or avoiding foods that are nourishing (or entire food groups). Body respect is *not* pushing yourself too much when it comes to physical activity or leaving yourself tired out and unable to attend to other matters in your life. Body respect is *not* staying up all night or sleeping less than seven or eight hours per night; adequate rest and

sleep is a critical part of showing yourself respect. Body respect is *not* abusing substances like nicotine, alcohol, or drugs that can cause lasting damage to the body (and mind). Body respect is *not* engaging in unsafe or unwanted sexual behaviors; you deserve to enjoy physical intimacy on your own terms. Body respect is *not* forgetting to take necessary medication or avoiding medical providers for regular check-ups or health care treatment.

I know you know all of this; your mom, dad, teacher, and/or medical providers have been telling you all of this for as long as you can remember. However, sometimes we hear this sort of advice so often that we don't frame it in terms of self-care. It can be surprisingly hard to take care of ourselves because we are often bombarded by cultural messages that suggest we should ignore our physical signals, such as signals of hunger or exhaustion.

Embodying Body Respect

We are all works in progress and can continue to find ways to honor and respect our bodies across our life. What are some specific activities that you would like to commit to that embody body respect? Remember, a *perfect* body and a perfect body image don't exist. Just aim for progress, not perfection!

What is something you can do every day to honor and respect your body?

What is something you can do each week to honor and respect your body?

What is something you can do each month to honor and respect your body?

Note: This exercise is adapted from Wood-Barcalow, Tylka, and Judge's *Positive Body Image Workbook*.

3. Focus on functionality

Our bodies are much more than a façade; they serve vital functions that allow us to live our lives and experience our worlds. Focusing more on what your body *does* as opposed to just how it *looks* can be a useful step towards body positivity.

Body functionality is a term used to describe the many physical functions of our bodies: breathing, sleeping, walking, singing, dancing, engaging with other people and anything else a body can do. Although many people feel dissatisfied with their bodies or even “at war” with them, our bodies aren’t deliberately trying to hold us back from living our lives. One way to reorient ourselves towards our body’s capabilities is through writing and reflection. In one study, women were asked to write statements about ten functions of their bodies and how those functions contributed to their well-being. The women who took part in this simple exercise showed improvements on measures of body image during the study.

Try concentrating on your own body functionality, and even making a list of the ways that your body serves you well. Referring back to your list later might boost your positive feelings about your body following any initial improvement.

4. Practice body appreciation and gratitude

Do you ever look in the mirror and feel grateful instead of critical? What would happen if you started to focus on the parts of yourself that you enjoy? Research suggests that expressing gratitude for our bodies can actually improve body image. Gratitude allows for an optimistic approach to the world; an appreciation of the positive aspects of your life. Gratitude may improve body image – and well-being in general – because it can lead you to focus on assets rather than deficits and to see elements of your life you may take for granted. Individuals who express gratitude have been found to be less depressed and anxious and to experience more positive relationships.

Research suggests that even a simple exercise that involves listing five qualities about your body that you are grateful for can lead to some improvement in your body image. It seems to help if you think about multiple aspects of your body – not just your appearance but your health and functionality. Also consider *why* you are grateful for these qualities.

Spend some time thinking about and listing the physical features that you do genuinely like and put this list to good use. (Are you sensing a theme

here? Sometimes it seems we need to sit down and write down what we actually *like* about ourselves in order to bring ourselves away from the ledge. It's all too easy to jump into a pit of body dissatisfaction and despair without some structured tasks to refocus our thoughts about our bodies.)

You can also aim for a routine, such as expressing gratitude about your body every night when you brush your teeth. The key is to pair your gratitude exercise with another behavior that you're already in the habit of practicing daily. This way, the habitual behavior serves as a reminder to stick with the gratitude exercise.

Body Appreciation Scale

The Body Appreciation Scale is a survey used by body image scientists to determine the extent to which people feel good about and *appreciate* their bodies. Complete the survey by circling your response to indicate whether the question is true about you never, seldom, sometimes, often, or always. Scoring information is below.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
I respect my body.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel good about my body.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that my body has at least some good qualities.	1	2	3	4	5
I take a positive attitude towards my body.	1	2	3	4	5
I am attentive to my body's needs.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel love for my body.	1	2	3	4	5
I appreciate the different and unique characteristics of my body.	1	2	3	4	5
My behavior reveals my positive attitudes towards my body; for example, I walk holding my head high and smiling.	1	2	3	4	5

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Always
I am comfortable in my body.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel like I am beautiful even if I am different from media images of attractive people (e.g., models, actresses/actors).	1	2	3	4	5

Note: This is a revised version of The Body Appreciation Scale (BAS-2), which was created by Tylka and Wood-Barcalow in 2015. To find your score, add up your responses and divide by 10. This gives you the average number for your response. In Tylka and Wood-Barcalow’s original study, the average person scored between 3 and 4; in some research examining adolescent girls, the average score was closer to 4.

5. Engage in protective filtering

An important part of developing a positive body image is navigating the array of external influences that are apt to make you feel dissatisfied with your body. There are many potential triggers of body dissatisfaction, ranging from your mom to your Instagram feed. You can benefit from becoming more aware of how a variety of different people and environments make you *feel*, and then responding to those feelings in protective ways.

Body image researchers refer to this as **protective filtering**. This is not the same as maladaptive avoidance of anxiety-inducing situations or phobic behavior; you can function in a psychologically healthy manner while still avoiding certain celebrities on social media. Some forms of media can be avoided more completely than others. For example, you might decide against watching television shows such as *Love Island* or *The Bachelor*, which feature people in objectified roles with a focus on their appearance. You can decide not to buy or flip through magazines that are full of articles and ads displaying emaciated women or selling beauty products. Social media poses particular challenges and opportunities when it comes to our body image, but I’ll discuss that in more depth in Chapter 8.

We can’t protect ourselves from all the people and messages that may make it difficult to maintain a positive body image, but we can practice

eliminating many of our personal triggers. This can become easier when we remind ourselves that we are *protecting* ourselves and allowing our mental health to flourish; doing this is one way we can take care of ourselves.

Q&A:

I'm having a rough time. What is the fastest way to improve my body image?

You may want to start by thinking about what experiences trigger your body dissatisfaction. Is it when you are scrolling on social media? Is it when your mind is wandering, and you are thinking negative thoughts about yourself?

If you're not sure what your body dissatisfaction triggers are, I would start by limiting your time on social media and unfollowing accounts that are celebrity/beauty focused (I'll discuss this a lot more in Chapter 8). This can be an easy way to focus more on yourself and remove yourself from unrealistic appearance ideals. It may be difficult at first, but you can turn notifications on your phone/tablet/computer off so you don't know if there is something new to check and you can try to limit your social media time to a certain number of minutes (10 or 15) one or two times per day.

Another important skill to develop is redirecting your negative thoughts. We all have an inner critic that seems to zoom in on our flaws. But when this critic identifies a personal quality that it's unhappy with, redirect it. Instead of humoring these negative thoughts, tell yourself, "Stop! This isn't helpful. I deserve better than this," and work on refocusing on a positive quality that you appreciate about yourself. I know this may seem a bit silly at first, but over time it will become more natural and will have a positive impact on your body image. Taken together, these two strategies – eliminating a source of body dissatisfaction and working on how to respond to that dissatisfaction – can truly help you to feel better about yourself. It may not feel natural to begin with, but what do you have to lose? It's *free* and the benefits could be far-reaching!

6. Reframe your goals for exercise and eating

This book has entire chapters dedicated to your eating (Chapter 3) and exercise habits (Chapter 11), but it's important to mention both here as well. Not only can the health habits that you maintain affect your body image, but how you *think* about these behaviors is also important. Let me provide an example. If you go for a run, but you think of it as obligatory or as

punishment (for eating? for living?), you're unlikely to enjoy that run. But if you think of running as something you do to help yourself feel good, improve your health, and take care of yourself, you might actually enjoy running more and find it easier to sustain this behavior. Further, this mindset will likely support your positive body image instead of detracting from it.

The key is to reframe our behaviors in ways that make healthy ones sustainable. Punishing or shaming ourselves for not doing all the "right" things is rarely an effective approach to health (mental or physical) and can reinforce negative body image. Easing ourselves into healthy habits can be more effective for achieving enduring change.

This is about YOU

As I mentioned in the Introduction, I can offer you evidence-based strategies for body image improvement, information about mental and physical health, and approaches to wellness that are supported by science, but your body image is about *you*. You don't owe anyone a smaller or bigger body, a different shaped body, or even a healthy body image. You get to decide how to feel about all of this and what actions to undertake *for yourself*.

Your body is not the center of your identity. I hope you think of your body in terms of the ways it allows you to connect with others, and that you can be self-compassionate and willing to continue to grow, learn, and become the best version of yourself (I'll discuss this a lot more in Chapter 13). Ultimately, it is up to you to decide what work you want to put into nurturing a positive body image. Emil's story reminds us that we may find ourselves at crossroads during our lives when we must determine if it would be advantageous to reevaluate how we think about and care for our bodies.

MY STORY: Emil Xavier, 20 years old, he/they, USA

Body image is a complicated topic for me right now. I started to model about four months ago and it has definitely had a negative effect on my body image and mental health. I've lost a significant amount of weight across this time – something I felt I needed to do to be successful in this industry. I've always wanted to model and

I decided it was time to just go for it. Now I'm really trying to work on my health while still making it as a model.

To begin this new career, I had to have marketing materials made, including professional photos and a personal web page. I've made videos that include me walking and talking about myself. I've begun to work with two different agencies. Fortunately, I haven't gotten negative feedback from them about my body. But on jobs people don't really hold back in offering feedback. Designers are picky and won't cast you if they don't think their clothes will fit you just how they want them to. I've been told that I don't have the right body type. People in the industry are often looking for a certain look. There's increasing diversity in fashion in terms of including people of color, immigrants, and people who are queer, but when it comes to weight there's not that much representation out there still.

I know that this new environment I've put myself in has toxic features, but I love fashion and design and always have. To be a model for fashion week in Philadelphia and New York this season was pretty exciting. I'm trying to figure out how to be healthy in this environment. I'm working on eating more intuitively and making sure I'm eating enough. I know that I have to take care of myself better than I have been.

I live with my mom, and she's expressed concern about me modeling. I know she is watching out for me and wants to help me. We're learning to talk about all of this in ways that are useful. I know she wants what is best for me.

I'll graduate from college this semester with a degree in psychology. I am planning to pursue a master's degree in psychology or social work at some point. I definitely want to help young people who are struggling. I know what that's like because I came to this country when I was ten years old, and I didn't even speak English. I was bullied for not fitting in. I didn't feel understood by anyone. I think I can really empathize with people from all walks of life.

Looking back on my childhood, I wish I could tell myself that those struggles to fit in will make you into a certain sort of person.

It'll help you become sympathetic and ready to help others. The challenges will make you tougher, passionate, and able to achieve whatever you really want to. I wish I had appreciated that you learn something about yourself every day. And you get stronger. I think I keep getting stronger.

SUMMING UP #EMBODIED:

- Body dissatisfaction is common, and people experience varying degrees of it. You can learn to feel better about your body, but it will likely require some attention to your current thought patterns and habits.
- Body image can be improved by focusing on the aspects of your body that you genuinely appreciate, are grateful for, and the ways your body enables you to experience the world.
- You can protect your body image by filtering out negative external influences, such as appearance-focused content on social media and television.
- Your body image can benefit if you think about your health habits – especially your eating and physical activity patterns – in terms of self-care rather than self-punishment.

FIND OUT MORE:

- Sisters Lexie and Lindsay Kite wrote *More Than a Body: Your Body Is an Instrument, Not an Ornament* (Harvest, 2021) to describe both their personal experiences and their research on positive body image.
- *MeaningFULL: 23 Life-Changing Stories of Conquering Dieting, Weight, and Body Image Issues* (Unsolicited Press, 2021) is a book full of stories of real-life experiences. The author, Alli Spotts-De Lazzer, is a therapist who offers motivational tips about how to develop a positive body image that she's learned through her many years working in the field.
- References that support this chapter's content and additional resources can be found at the book's companion website: www.TheBodyImageBookforLife.com.

