

## WEIGHING IN ON A

## Positive Self Image



“  
Just who are  
you, anyway,  
and how will  
you find your  
path toward  
maintaining  
a positive  
self- image?  
”

How do you perceive yourself? When you look in the mirror, are you happy with what you see? Do you think of your personality as passive or active? Is it in your nature to be amazingly creative or always critical? If you ponder other people’s perceptions of you, are they generally positive or negative? Just who are you, anyway, and how will you find your path toward maintaining a positive self- image?

To begin, consider your physical attributes. No matter what, you’ve got to love your body. Even if you think it is in dire need of an overhaul, remember, your body is beautiful; it is special. Don’t let a poor body image lead you to low self- esteem, depression and eating disorders. Instead, take steps to bolster your self-image. Change the way you think about your body. Improve your personal image by implementing a healthier eating plan, exercising on a regular basis and getting the rest your body requires. Not only will you feel better about yourself, your hair, skin and bones will thank you, too.

As for your mental state, The Mayo Clinic recommends a five-step plan for boosting your self-esteem. It begins with identifying troubling conditions or situations, becoming aware of your beliefs, and pinpointing negative or inaccurate thinking. Did you know that a stiff neck, stomach problems or a change in sleeping patterns could be a physical response to negative thinking? Behavioral responses like eating when you are not hungry, avoiding tasks and spending increased time alone can also be linked to negative or inaccurate thinking. The fourth step is to challenge negative thinking. Do you frequently jump to negative conclusions? Finally, you need to change your old thoughts and beliefs by replacing them with positive thoughts and beliefs. Be hopeful, kind and encouraging to you. Forgive yourself and focus on the positive.

One of the tools the Mayo Clinic recommends is to write in a daily journal. It can help you achieve “a balanced, accurate view of yourself, and accepting your value as a human being may help you feel happier and more confident. That may rub off on others, too, including your children, family or friends.”

For more information on how you can improve your self-image, visit [www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com), which provided information for this article.