

Movement Without Shame

Care and Appreciation Can Make a Difference

For many of us “working out” can be something that only brings to the surface feelings of shame. Many people who have struggled with an eating disorder have a hate-hate relationship with any type of exercise.

Growing up with the messages that working out is punishment for what you ate or exercising has to be done to insure you are as small as possible can cause damage to your view of movement. It can make you feel as if working out is a horrible activity that feels like a chore or a punishment.

Compound this shame many people feel when it comes to movement while working out in public settings. When they feel certain they are being criticized for the shape of their body.

I have been working with clients who battle eating disorders for years and one of the big hurdles most face is the shame they feel from engaging in movement. Especially when someone is struggling with sizeism because they don't fit the “appearance ideal” standards communicated to us by our culture and society.

Many are terrified by the thought of walking into a gym. The belief they are being stared at and judged is petrifying. So much so, that they will skip ever trying movement classes or joining a gym, no matter how motivated they may be.

Healing your relationship with movement begins by healing your relationship with your body. Now, realistically speaking, if you've been taught to hate your body since the moment you were little, loving it will not come easy or quickly.

Instead, you can start by giving your body the respect it deserves.

A wonderful way to embark on this journey is to write an appreciation letter to yourself for all the things your body has allowed you to experience.

The battles your body has been able to beat.

The day-to-day activities that we all might take for granted. Like holding the hand of someone we love.

It sounds simple, but it will take awareness and intention to write down and acknowledge your body for how it has been working positively in your life.

Finally, read your appreciation letter to your body aloud. This can help foster your new perspective and appreciation of the power your body holds. Begin the process of respecting your body and giving yourself the opportunity to move toward celebrating the care movement can give your body.



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