

10 ways to become body positive

The theme for this year's Mental Health Awareness Week is body image. With 70% of 18-30 year old women and 43% of men being dissatisfied with their bodies, perhaps it's time we started accepting ourselves for who and what we are*.

Dr Lynne Green, Consultant Clinical Psychologist at XenZone, has put together some tips to help you accept and love your body:

- 1 Tell yourself at least one thing you like about yourself not related to your weight or looks everyday
- 2 Surround yourself with positive and supportive people. When someone criticises you, your mindset and outlook can become negative and critical. Separating yourself from negative people will benefit you long-term
- 3 Accept who you are, body and soul. Feeling good and accepting your whole self is more important than how you look
- 4 Start telling yourself what you like about your body instead of what you don't. Accentuating those body parts also helps you to feel good
- 5 Celebrate your uniqueness. Avoid pressurising yourself to look like others or comparing your appearance today to an 'old self'. Our bodies are constantly changing through adolescence, pregnancy and age, etc - and we are all different
- 6 When you look in the mirror, appreciate your body for what it can do.
- 7 Take care of yourself - whether that's exercising, cooking, meditating, seeing friends or reading a book
- 8 Replace negative thoughts with positive ones before they get a chance to take root in your head and become accepted as 'fact'
- 9 Be more critical of the social media accounts you follow. Unfollow or hide any posts, accounts or hashtags that make you feel bad about yourself. Following positive accounts will have a positive effect on your mind
- 10 Ask for help. It is ok not to feel ok. If you are struggling with how you feel about your body, talk to friends or a trusted adult or seek support. Help is out there