

Body image is very important for everyone, both males and females. Every human being desires to look and feel good, be well and enjoy more out of what life has to offer. However, we don't always acknowledge this nor take the right steps to get there. We live in an instant society where we look for immediate gratification. Looking and feeling really good for longer than a few minutes, does actually take more time, attention and work.

Wellness is a holistic process where body, mind and spirit should be involved. Body image is not just a vanity issue but it has a serious impact on how we feel, the choices we make in life and therefore our wellness. There are many factors that affect wellness and our body image such as, diet and nutrition, physical activity, attitude, self-esteem and confidence and how we manage our stress. Of course, how well we communicate, or manage our time also impacts our wellness. Daily laughter and meditation are great habits for everyone. Other important elements that should be considered are community network supports, spirituality, love, respect, forgiveness and healing. We have to recognize our potential and believe we can achieve and surpass our dreams.

We need to create and maintain a healthy body image through challenging times. As teachers you know that balance and equilibrium are not a constant phenomenon and we need to be vigilant. This means we need to make wise choices, manage our stress, and live a healthy life. Stress is part of everyday life. Taking care of ourselves is even more important. Feeling good starts from within and we are *the only one* who can take action. We do need to examine our choices, habits, and our responses. This will help

in empowering us and therefore feeling good. Our attitude and feeling well really does affect healing our body and how we see ourselves. How we respond to circumstances is generally determined by our attitude, habits and how we feel. We communicate in different ways and body image is another way we convey how we feel about ourselves which sets the tone for how others treat us. Unfortunately, most people have not been socialized nor have had much training in non-verbal messages that we send by how we view ourselves.

Body image and how we carry ourselves is an important issue for everyone. Many changes in life can have an impact on how we feel. How we love and respect ourselves plays a very important role on our body image, how well our body heals, and ultimately wellness.

Colours and lighting also affect our mood. This means the colours and lighting in our physical environment and what we wear are important. Colours emit energy and we need to pay greater attention to them. This not only affects the person who is wearing the colour but also those around them.

Here are some simple suggestions about colours:

- Add colours whenever possible in the room.
- Use more appropriate and warm lighting.
- Wear bright colours that are suitable to your complexion.
- On a rainy gloomy day wear a bright yellow or red blouse or sweater and watch people's reactions and comments.

Dieting is not a long term solution for

healthy weight loss and maintenance. There is good reason why the diet industry is worth over \$33 billion. Fad diets do not work. Over 90 per cent of women overestimate their body size. Failing to lose weight and acquire a super model body will certainly lower our self-esteem. Men are not immune to the effects of media and advertisements. There are a lot of expectations for men to be macho, strong, sensitive, tall, dark and handsome, and don't forget to have a great six pack! By cherishing who we are, our body size, and our uniqueness, we appreciate and love ourselves.

Dressing for our body type is very important to how we look and even feel on the inside. There are many body shapes and sizes and *everyone* can and should feel good about themselves. There are also many different styles of fashion to suit personality, lifestyle, occasion and mood. Being the best we can and should be is absolutely crucial for all of us.

Having fun every day should be part of everyone's life. Did you know that on average, adults laugh about 15 times per day? In contrast, a four-year-old laughs about 300 times per day. I am not talking about a three sec chuckle or giggle but rather a real belly laugh. We do take in more oxygen when laughing, it reduces stress, increases our will to live, and improves the immune system. We need to have more fun and laughter *is truly the best medicine*.

By eating well, being active, and having a positive attitude, we become more energetic, live well, make healthier choices,



manage our stress better and enjoy a happy life. By taking care of ourselves, we are able to give more and receive more in life. Looking and feeling good and having a healthy body image are possible for everyone. We just have to decide to get there and be attentive to our bodies, minds and souls.

Floria offers workshops, training, and individual consultations on a variety of topics. You can visit her website www.recognizeyourpotential.com or contact her at 902-477-9100.

*Recognize your potential
and surpass your dreams.*

**did you
KNOW?**

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) invites NSTU members to sign up for our Wellness email list at **Be_Well@nstu.ca**.

Please contact Erin at ekeefe@nstu.ca to provide her with your NSTU email address. The **Be_Well@nstu.ca** list will provide information about the EIP and other wellness topics.

