CHAPTER -1
INTRODUCTION
1.1 HISTORY

Indian society has seen a proliferation of middle age working women. Women, especially working more in the 1990s than in the 1980s, and women constitute the majority of membership of formal education programs in the country. One reason for women’s increased interest in education sector could be that in Indian society, a woman is expected to achieve a “cultural ideal of moral” (Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990; Polivy, Garner & Garfinkel, 1981) that is represented through visual images presented by the media.

The cultural ideal. The ideal for Indian society is a thin, attractive woman, as evidenced by images in the media. Television and the print media emphasize the physical appearance of women more than of men.

There is a western society’s nation that the fashion has come to be associated with women. George Simmel address clothing’s power as both maker of socioeconomic status and a mean by which human express their collective identities. Clothing is a direct manifestation of an individual’s interaction with the society at large. Veble in his tickle down theory narrate that the fashion trends originate in the upper class, diffused to the lower one via copycat consumption, and followed by more trends created by the elite to again distance themselves from social underlings. Clothing is a social necessity and a universal need; yet clothing is not about protection rather about showing socioeconomic status, veb status that people in a inclement climate, go ill clad in order to appear well dressed. The difference in male and female clothing is a reflection of the economic difference. Women become representative of husband’s socioeconomic status. Their clothing comes to reflect that they are able to purchase garments and accessories at will, to change wardrobes with the season and to refrain from physical activity. However, with the women stepping into all spheres of economic activities things have changed in the sense that the women now are independent for their needs. This has become
possible due to women education. All this has not only made women economically independent but also brought about a change in their psychological make up, which is reflected in their consumer behaviour. They are constantly out to establish their identity. Flugel believes that women use modesty and body concealment for sexual allure, as a form of what he terms “Exotic exposé” as women have diffused sexual centers that is, the whole body is sexualised. Women’s clothing becomes more highly charged than that of man, under these conditions it is surprising that women should be at once the more modest and the more exhibitionistic, since both their shame and their attractiveness relate to the whole body. “However, clothing is not merely an expression of other factors such as economics of sexuality, but rather it is constitutive of our identity further. Fashion and clothing are instrumental in process of socialisation into sexual and gender roles.

Women use clothing as a means of improving their appearance and consequently self-esteem. Therefore who are dissatisfied with their bodies may use clothing to compensate for their dissatisfaction by enhancing their appearance and temporarily improving their body image.

The body image may not always be accurate clothing that exaggerates certain body parts may be selected instead of clothing that camouflages.

In number of studies it was found that the difference between perception of the nude body and the perception of the clothed body in relation to body cathexis using a modified version of body cathexis scale results indicated that the women were significantly more satisfied with their clothed bodies than with their nude bodies. The result also revealed that clothing was not only a body covering, but that it functioned to improve body image perception.

Individuals who were more satisfied with their bodies and had a favourable attitude towards clothing were more likely to be satisfied with ready-to-wear clothing, enjoy shopping, be confident in choosing proper clothes, to be heavy
purchase of clothing that would enhance their self image because of the negative feedback they receive as a result of being overweight.

Individuals construct and interpret body images through processes of appearance management (Kaiser, 1997). Appearance is an important part of the self-concept and consequently of body image satisfaction. Interest in appearance multifaceted and expressed partially through the amount of time, energy, and resources expended on appearance. Appearance management includes such behavior as dieting, exercising, weight training, cosmetic use, and selection of apparel to enhance one’s appearance (Rudd & Lennon, 1994).

According to Cash and Hicks (1990), body image concerns are strong motivators of dieting and exercising behavior. Weight-related discontent is the most important source of negative body image. Studies have shown that overweight persons, especially women, have a more negative body image (Brodie & Slade, 1988; Cash, 1990; Cash & Green, 1986; Cash, Winstead, & Janda, 1986). Since physical attractiveness is highly valued and the media tend to focus on a young and thin body as an important factor of physical attractiveness, individuals tend to increase their exercise involvement and dieting behaviors to reach an ideal body image (Cash & Hicks, 1990). Money spent on fitness and exercise in the form of health club memberships and home exercise equipment has increased since the 1990s (Grogan, 1999).

1.2 CONCEPT

A concept is a fundamental category of existence. In contemporary philosophy, there are at least three prevailing ways to understand what a concept is.\(^1\)

- Concepts as mental representations, where concepts are entities that exist in the brain.
- Concepts as abilities, where concepts are abilities peculiar to cognitive agents.
• Concepts as abstract objects, where objects are the constituents of propositions that mediate between thought, language, and referents.

Concepts are mental representations that allow us to draw appropriate inferences about the type of entities we encounter in our everyday lives. Concepts do not encompass all mental representations, but are merely a subset of them. The use of concepts is necessary to cognitive processes such as categorization, memory, decision making, learning, and inference.

1.2.1 Self-concept
Self-concept is the image that we have of ourselves. This image is formed in a number of ways, but is particularly influenced by our interactions with important people in our lives.

➢ "Self-concept is our perception or image of our abilities and our uniqueness. At first one's self-concept is very general and changeable... As we grow older, these self-perceptions become much more organized, detailed, and specific." (Pastorino & Doyle-Portillo, 2013)

➢ "A self-concept is a collection of beliefs about one's own nature, unique qualities, and typical behavior. Your self-concept is your mental picture of yourself. It is a collection of self-perceptions. For example, a self-concept might include such beliefs as 'I am easygoing' or 'I am pretty' or 'I am hardworking.'" (Weiten, Dunn, & Hammer, 2012)

➢ "The individual self consists of attributes and personality traits that differentiate us from other individuals (for example, 'introverted'). The relational self is defined by our relationships with significant others (for example, 'sister'). Finally, the collective self reflects our membership in social groups (for example, 'British')." (Crisp, R. J. & Turner, R. N., 2007).
1.2.2 Components of Self-Concept:

Like many topics within psychology, a number of theorists have proposed different ways of thinking about self-concept.

According to a theory known as social identity theory, self-concept is composed of two key parts: personal identity and social identity. Our personal identity includes such things as personality traits and other characteristics that make each person unique. Social identity includes the groups we belong to including our community, religion, college, and other groups.

Bracken (1992) suggested that there are six specific domains related to self-concept:

- Social - the ability to interact with others
- Competence - ability to meet basic needs
- Affect - awareness of emotional states
- Physical - feelings about looks, health, physical condition, and overall appearance
- Academic - success or failure in school
- Family - how well one functions within the family unit

Humanist psychologist Carl Rogers believed that there were three different parts of self-concept:

1. Self-image, or how you see yourself. It is important to realize that self-image does not necessarily coincide with reality. People might have an inflated self-image and believe that they are better at things than they really are. Conversely, people are also prone to having negative self-images and perceive or exaggerate flaws or weaknesses. For example a women might believe that she is clumsy and socially awkward when she is really quite charming and likeable, or a women might believe that she is overweight, when she is really quite thin.
Each individual's self-image is probably a mix of different aspects including your physical characteristics, personality traits, and social roles.

2. **Self-esteem, or how much you value yourself.** A number of different factors can impact self-esteem, including how we compare ourselves to others and how others respond to us. When people respond positively to our behaviour, we are more likely to develop positive self-esteem. When we compare ourselves to others and find ourselves lacking, it can have a negative impact on our self-esteem.

3. **Ideal self, or how you wish you could be.** In many cases, the way we see ourselves and how we would like to see ourselves do not quite match up.

   As mentioned earlier, our self-concepts are not always perfectly aligned with reality. Some women might believe that they are great at working, but their working area might tell a different story. According to Carl Rogers, the degree to which a person's self-concept matches up to reality is known as congruence and incongruence. While we all tend to distort reality to a certain degree, **congruence** occurs when self-concept is fairly well aligned to reality. **Incongruence** happens when reality does not match up to our self-concept.

   Rogers believed that incongruence has its earliest roots in childhood. When parents place conditions on their affection for their children (only expressing love if children "earn it" through certain behaviours and living up to the parents' expectations), children begin to distort the memories of experiences that leave them feeling unworthy of their parents' love. Unconditional love, on the other hand, helps to foster congruence. Children who experience such love feel no need to continually distort their memories in order to believe that other people will love and accept them as they are.

   Self-concept is the way people think about themselves. It is unique, dynamic, and always evolving. This mental image of oneself influences a person’s
identity, self-esteem, body image, and role in society. As a global understanding of oneself, self-concept shapes and defines who we are, the decisions we make, and the relationships we form. Self-concept is perhaps the basis for all motivated behavior (Franken, 1994). The Self-Concept is a complicated process of gaining self-awareness. It consists of mental images an individual has of oneself: physical appearance, health, accomplishments, skills, social talents, roles, intellectual traits, and emotional states and more – all make up our self-concept.

The development process begins at about six or seven months of age. The child begins to recognize “self” as distinct from surroundings. They stare at anything they see, including their own body parts; hands, feet, toes, and fingers. As they grow, their sense of identity expands through interactions with others – creating self-esteem levels that become the “booster” for the ability to interact. There are two theories that describe how interactions shape our self-views. One defines perceptions of the judgments of others called Reflected Appraisal. It is the notion of receiving supportive and nonsupportive messages. It states that positive appreciation and a high level of self-value is gain when supportive messages are received. In contrast, receiving nonsupportive messages leads to feeling less valuable, lovable, and capable. Everyone that you and I interact with influences these self-evaluations. Either from your past or from present – all shapes how you view yourself, especially from our significant others. The strength of messages from significant others become stronger and eventually affect the health, when they are nonsupportive depression, for instance, leads to less physical activity.

Self-concept, the individual’s perception of self, affects relationships, functional abilities, and health. Self-concept (1) is unique to the individual; (2) can be positive or negative; (3) has emotional, intellectual, and functional
dimensions; (4) changes with the environmental context; (5) changes over time; and (6) has a powerful influence on one’s life.

The classification of self-concept is defined in many different ways by various researchers and practitioners over years. According to Purkey and William (1988), the popularity and attention of self-concept has been raising since decades of ignorance. Self-concept is mainly regarded as the realisation of our own existence; who we are, what is our purpose and how we fit into the society. Self-concept can be defined in a very complex manner. For example, it can be explained as a cognitive representation of oneself that gives coherence and meaning to one’s experience, including one’s relations to other people. It organises past experiences and plays an important role in assisting us to recognise and interpret relevant stimuli in the social environment (Hewstone, Stroebe & Jonas, 2008). Nonetheless, self-concept can also be clarified as simple as a statement where Fromm (1956) describe as “life being aware of itself.” After understanding the notion self-concept, we then can proceed to use different approaches to search a suitable answer to the question of “Why do we ‘see’ ourselves in the way that we do?”

In an experiment done by Montemayor and Eisen (1977), women were studied and questioned for their existence. When the women in the experiment were asked “Who am I?” the most common answer given are descriptive and are usually about their appearance. For example, “I have brown eyes, I have brown hair and etcetera”. Children tend to mainly focus on the description of physical features of their body, address, procession and play activities; kids’ self-concept is more concrete as well as less abstract. In comparison, teenagers were observed and were asked the same question. As teenagers with wider knowledge of their existence, they will probably come up with more profound words and not only focus on the physical parts of body but somehow personal beliefs, motivation and interpersonal characteristics. For example, “I am a
human being. I am a moody person, etc”. Consequently, adolescence’s answers seem to be more abstract but less concrete. By asking this question to both childhood and adolescence, significant increase can be seen in self-conceptions and categorised in followings: occupational rule; existential, individuating; ideological and belief reference; the sense of self-determination; the sense of unity; interpersonal style; and physical style (Montemayor & Eisen, 1977). The experiment has proven that aging does massively affect the way of seeing ourselves in everyone. In particular, Werner (1957) stated that “whenever development occurs, it proceeds from a state of relative globality and lack of differentiation to a state of increasing differentiation, articulation, and hierarchic integration.” From Werner’s statement, it indicates that development begins from a simple process and build up to become more complex which mean someone in the stage of childhood has rather simple thought compare to older people. In fact, comparison of self-concept between childhood and middle age is not of much use as both have different characteristics. They are simply at the different stage of development and the way teenagers and adults see themselves is totally different from each other. Thus, different stage of development of a person rationales why we see ourselves the way we do.

There are many ways to get an education--to learn about the world, other people,, and yourself. Learning and discovery occur continually, in all situations: where and when you want to and where and when you don't. Classroom learning, or formal learning, is indisputably advantageous, notwithstanding the numerous and silent. When the concept of learning is considered or discussed, the knee-jerk association that most often emerges is that learning takes place in a classroom--structured, deliberate, purposeful, rigorous, and, most important, positive. At a pragmatic level, learning is also expected to be a means to an end and a lead-in to career, high salary, status and a good secure life pre- and post-retirement. It is documented formal learning
that makes a lifelong difference. It's almost formulaic; it is a sacred cow. Few choose to truly question the current paradigms of formal learning involving the who, where, why, when, how, how much, by whom, and to what extent. Those most heavily invested in education and learning--teachers, educators, parents, politicians, and students--seem to be reluctant to openly and affirmatively acknowledge the big mental wallop from the unplanned-for learning--the peer learning, learning from modelling behaviors in the family, learning from the streets and learning on one's own through conventionally questionable activities such as television, daydreaming, reading trashy novels and comic books, or masturbating. Then too, there's learning from mistakes and failures, learning from observing the blunders and habits of others, learning from many different kinds of pain and disappointment, learning by delaying gratification. All adults, and many young adults, consciously and/or intuitively know about the qualities of informal learning--frequency, uniqueness, endurance. We have only to look inside ourselves to marvel at what we do know, can do, and have discovered, just from being in a state of semi-permeable consciousness people struggling to learn, the one thing the ease with which we misperceive failed performance and the degree to which this misperception both reflects and reinforces the social order. Class and culture erect boundaries that hinder our vision--blind us to the logic of error and the ever-present stirring of language--and encourage the designation of otherness, difference, deficiency received perception; shift From the over privileged to the underprivileged, families of every strata of society break their backs to give their children every advantage to succeed within their intellectual and financial means. Schools, teachers, and extracurricular activities are scrutinized, criticized, weighed. Parents believe that they will and can exert control, if only given sufficient support, resources, and teacher excellence. Schools believe that they can prevail, if only given sufficient support, resources, and parental involvement. Nevertheless the tide is large, strong always present. Mere will and effort, however well managed and
well intended, cannot stem the tide of tiny, silent, accumulating, and inevitable paths from which informal learning and discovery occur. The randomness of haphazard positive and negative information is generally far beyond and miles in front of most classrooms. Parental guidance and oversight have, fortunately or not, built-in limitations as children grow up, a fact to which most parents would attest.

Academic rhetoric, political blame, post-modern educational philosophies, righteous--sounding moral ideologies, and controversial pedagogical band-aids might be unnecessary if each person on the planet were raised in the most ideal of circumstances. We all understand what those circumstances should be; but relatively few are raised in a Dreamland that may or may not exist, except in our minds. Even the very wealthy or well-educated are not exempt from imperfect lives and aborted dreams. Everything imaginable--as well as that which is as yet unimaginable--constitutes the real-world learning spectrum: continually available, consistently potent. Until we acknowledge the vast number of learning opportunities over which we have little control, and cease being sanctimonious and unrealistic about those influences outside of a classroom or the family's living room, we cannot exploit their value. Through deliberate and thoughtful combinations of informal learning with formal education lie the authentic and total development of a person.

The components of self-concept are identity, body image, self-esteem, and role performance. Personal identity is the sense of what sets a person apart from others. It may include the person’s name, gender, ethnicity, family status, occupation, and roles. Personal identity develops during childhood from self-reflection and feedback from others. Erikson’s psychosocial theory stresses the importance of the family, peer group, and community in forming the personal identity.
Self-concept is an individual’s perception of self, including self-esteem, body image, and ideal self. A person’s self-concept is often defined by self-description such as “I am a mother, a working women, and a volunteer. The working women should be observant for self-descriptive statements when assessing the client’s self-concept. A healthy self-concept is necessary for overall physical and mental wellness. Three basic components of self-concept are the **ideal self**, the **public self**, and the **real self**. The ideal self is the person would like to be, such as a good, moral, and well-respected person. Sometimes, this ideal view of how a person would like to be conflicts with the real self (how the person really thinks about oneself, such as “I try to be good and do what’s right, but I’m not well respected”). This conflict can motivate a person to make changes toward becoming the ideal self. However, the view of the ideal self needs to be realistic and obtainable, or the person may experience anxiety or be at risk for alterations in self-concept. Public self is what the person thinks others think of him and influences the ideal and real self. Positive self-concept and good mental health results when all three components are compatible. A positive self-concept is an important part of a person’s happiness and success. Individuals with a positive self-concept have self-confidence and set goals they can achieve. Achieving their goals reinforces their positive self-concept. A person with a positive self-concept is more likely to change unhealthy habits (such as sedentary lifestyle and smoking) to promote health than a person with a negative self-concept. A person’s self-concept is composed of evolving subjective conscious and unconscious self-assessments. Physical attributes, occupation, knowledge, and abilities of the person will change throughout the life span, contributing to changes in one’s self-concept. Positive self-concept enhances healthy relationships. Self Concept is an important term for both **social psychology** and **humanism**.

**Lewis (1990)** suggests that development of a concept of self has two components:
1. The Existential Self

This is the most basic part of the self-scheme or self-concept; the sense of being separate and distinct from others and the awareness of the constancy of the self” (Bee 1992).

The child realizes that they exist as a separate entity from others and that they continue to exist over time and space. According to Lewis awareness of the existential self begins as young as two to three months old and arises in part due to the relation the child has with the world. For example, the child smiles and someone smiles back, or the child touches a mobile and sees it move.

2. The Categorical Self

Having realized that he or she exists as a separate experiencing being, the child next becomes aware that he or she is also an object in the world. Just as other objects including people have properties that can be experienced (big, small, red, smooth and so on) so the child is becoming aware of him or her self as an object which can be experienced and which has properties. The self too can be put into categories such as age, gender, size or skill. Two of the first categories to be applied are age (“I am 3”) and gender (“I am a girl”).

In early childhood, the categories children apply to themselves are very concrete (e.g. hair color, height and favorite things). Later, self-description also begins to include reference to internal psychological traits, comparative evaluations and to how others see them.

Carl Rogers (1959) believes that the self concept has three different components:

- The view you have of yourself (Self image)
- How much value you place on yourself (Self esteem or self-worth)
- What you wish you were really like (Ideal self)
1.2.3 Dimensions of self concept

Self knowledge — who am I?

Globle self is term used to describe the composite of all basic facts, qualities, traits, images and feelings one hold about one self

It includes...

- Basic facts - sex, age, race, occupation, cultural background
- Persons’s position with social group
- Qualities or traits that describe typical behavior feeling moods and other characteristics (generous, hot headed ambitions, intelligent, sexy)

Self expectation --- who or what do I want to be?

- Expectation for self flow from various sources
- The ideal self constitutes the self one want to be.
- Self expectation develop unconsciously early in childhood and are based on image of role models such as parents.

Self evaluation --- how well do I like myself?

- Self-esteem is the evaluative and affective component of self concept.

Social self --- how person perceived by others?

1.2.4 Factors affecting self-concept

Self-concept can be affected by an individual’s life experiences, heredity and culture, stress and coping, health status, and developmental stage. The working women of middle aged needs to evaluate each of these factors and the influence each has on the persons’s achievement of a healthy self-concept.
Adulthood

The natural process of aging will lead to significant changes in a person’s self-concept. Over the course of a lifetime, an adult will experience changes in one’s roles, body and identity. Young adults strive to develop relationships, careers, and often a family. Older adults attempt to define themselves by their accomplishments. Major life events in adulthood will continuously shape a person’s self-concept, such as obtaining a college degree, getting a job, marriage, divorce, losing a job, retirement, and the death of a significant other. How the individual views and copes with these changes will determine the influence and impact they have on the person’s self-concept.

Life experiences

Life experiences, including success and failure, will develop and influence a person’s self-concept. Experiences in which the individual has accomplished a goal and achieved success will positively reinforce the development of a healthy self-concept. Difficult experiences and/or failures can negatively impact a person’s self-concept unless they have coping strategies to deal effectively with these challenges to their self-concept. Coping strategies are learned as a person encounters and deals with various situations in life.

Heredity and Culture

Heredity and Culture Individuals typically grow up learning and integrating their family’s heredity and culture into their life. Beginning at birth, heredity and culture shape and influence a person’s self-concept. Individuals who have integrated their heredity and culture into their life tend to have a healthier self-identity and self-concept.
Stress and Coping

Stress and Coping Everyone experiences stress at some level each day. Common stressors include financial, work-related, relationship, and health issues. Individuals react and deal with stress in different ways depending on their past experiences and success and failure with dealing with stress. Individuals who learn and use effective coping strategies to deal with stress will most likely develop a positive self-concept. People who become overwhelmed with stress may feel hopeless and powerless, leading to a feeling of low self-confidence and self-esteem. The working women may need to teach effective coping strategies and techniques for handling stress.

Health Status

Health Status People tend to take their good health for granted. When they become ill, their altered health status can change their self-identity and self-concept. Alterations in body image can result from such health issues as amputation, cancer, mastectomy, trauma, or scarring. The working women needs to monitor for changes. Adults gradually adapt to the changes in self-image resulting from physical changes and health challenges, at the same time developing and introducing new roles. The factors affecting self-concept are altered health status from the loss or disruption of a body part; developmental processes, such as pregnancy or menopause; and experience, such as frequently failing.

Developmental Stage

Developmental Stage Growth and development begins at birth and continues into adulthood. Typically a person will achieve specific developmental tasks as one passes through each stage of life. The successful accomplishment of each task will influence and reinforce the development of a healthy self-concept. Individuals who experience developmental delays or situations in
life that prevent or delay the accomplishment of developmental tasks can have a negative self-concept.

A person's self concept is continually developing during each life stage and is closely linked to their emotional and social development. Culture the image that you have of yourself today will not be same that you reflect on when you are 40, 60 or 80 years old

**Physical, intellectual, emotional and social changes will effect self-concept over time.**

Physical capabilities will change as you experience health, fitness, illness and disability at different points in your life. In western society older people generally are viewed negatively, this is different for some ethnic groups who value age more. A person's physical features, their clothes and their non-verbal behaviour all influence and express aspects of their self-concept.

How we present ourselves and how we believe other see us is particularly important to us as young adults. As we get older appearance and the way we present ourselves tend to have less impact on our self-concept

**Gender**

Gender stereotypes do not reflect the reality of most people's lives in British society, they can still shape self-image and self-esteem. Gender stereotypes can be both positive and negative, e.g can induce guilt, a sense of inadequacy and lack of self-confidence, especially if the person is unable or unwilling to match the stereotype of men and woman in a particular situation. Think about age, Think about appearance, Think about gender. Ethnicity affects self-concept by influencing people's feelings of belonging to a particular culture or social group. Appearance gender refers to the way ideas about masculinity and femininity are applied to men and women in our society. In western society
there are a number of gender stereotypes associated with male and female roles, behaviour, images and general social expectations.

Gender difference can also be a factor that determines how people see themselves in any ways. According to Harter and Masarh men believe that they can perform physical activities and mathematics better compared to women whereas women in the other hand think that they are better in reading and music (Harter, 1982; Masarh, 1989). Such situation does not only occurred in normal women. For those gifted women who are more advanced in cognitive development, rate their competence in this way as well, according to Seigle &amp; Reis (1998). These two experiments imply that all the men and women see their competence in sex stereotypical ways which means those men and women both accept this stereotype as a fact. Moreover, self-concept of academic performance in children of different gender reflects one of truths; boys and girls see themselves differently. According to Harter (1990, 1998), as soon as children reaches the stage of adolescence regardless of their gender difference, they are increasingly less satisfied with their physical appearance. This is especially true for the case of female adolescence. This phenomenon is created by society and media which extremely consider physical appearance as basis for self-evaluation and it affects the self-concept of both male and female teenagers nowadays, it is particularly true for women. In addition, female teenagers see themselves more incompletely as in physical appearance compared to that of male teenagers. From this case, it clearly clarifies how gender affects the view of oneself in physical appearance. In Hupfer &amp; Detlor research (2006), it suggested that women are more interested with relationship-building through internet usage. The assumption is implying that women see themselves as more socialable than men do. From all these three cases between gender difference and how difference both genders see themselves, it indicates gender is one of reasons why we do see ourselves the way that we do.
Friendships
Friendships tend to boost a person's self esteem and self-confidence, and help to develop social skills. Overall, friendships make an important contribution to an individual's emotional and social development and the formation of their self-concept. Think about Jared's relationships?? Abusive Physical, emotional and sexual abuse has a damaging effect on an individual's self-concept, particularly their self-esteem. A person who experiences abuse is likely to develop a negative self-image and lower self-esteem. Lack of self-confidence and self-worth may make the person vulnerable to further abuse of self-harm.

Family

Family and Socialisation The relationship that an individual develops within their family, school or college and at work will have a powerful effect on their self-concept. Early relationships are built on effective attachments to parents and close family members. The sense of security and feelings of being loved that can develop from these bonds are key ingredients in a positive self-concept. Poor family relationships can have a lasting effect, emotional insecurity, poor self-esteem, negative self-image, lack of confidence, low self-worth, poor relationship skills. Think about family unit.

Income

However when people live on a low income compare they lifestyle and opportunities with those on a higher income they may feel they are somehow less valued or less capable. Those with a higher income are often able to purchase items to boost their self-esteem. Media Television and magazines are often criticised for presenting inappropriate stereotyped images of men and woman, which then readers try and copy. Unattainable body images, wealthy lifestyles are often featured on tv. These media images can affect an individual's body image and self-concept if they believe them to be true or very desirable.
Think about the media surrounding Jared? Income in itself may not have a direct effect on an individual's self-concept

**Education**

Education Educational experiences can have a major impact on a person's self concept. Teachers and fellow students can effect our self image and self esteem. At this stage children and young people are very open to suggestions about who and what they are like. School can be again both positive and negative, leaving some individuals feeling incapable, having a negative view of themselves, their skills and self-worth. What about Jared's education? Emotional health & Well being An individual will generally become more emotionally mature as they age. Often we can recognise our personal strength and limitations. Emotional maturity and self-knowledge play an important part in an individuals ability to establish and maintain close personal relationships well as working relationships with other.

Self-concept develops throughout life. An infant whose needs are met develops a positive self-concept and develops a sense of self distinct from the primary caregiver. Toddlers develop a sense of autonomy and self-image and are self-centered. Positive and negative self-concept develop based on feedback from significant others. Adolescents are quite interested in appearances and social status. They cannot separate their body image from their self-concept and are usually self-critical.

However it can also lead to people being treated differently, perhaps in an unfair or discriminatory way, and thereby effects their sense of self-worth and self esteem. Think about culture, Relationships People form different types of relationships at different stages of their life. Family relationships tend to be the most important during infancy and childhood. Friendships become more
important through adolescence. A whole range of new personal and working relationships are formed as the individual progresses into adulthood.

1.2.5 Importance of a Positive Self-concept

In today’s world it can be difficult to build and maintain a positive self-concept - however, it is both possible and important to do so. Unfortunately, studies have shown that significant populations of women, as well as some men, are dissatisfied with their bodies and/or suffer from low self-confidence and self-concept which can have extremely detrimental effects on relationships. Building a positive self-image can benefit your life as an individual as well as your relationships in many ways.

For Individuals

There are many factors that influence how individuals view themselves and their bodies. These factors can be biological, social, or psychological. Having a positive self concept is important for many reasons, not the least of which is that it can improve an individual’s overall quality of life. There are many steps people can take towards improving their self-confidence and self-concept clarity (how clear they are about their own personality characteristics and preferences).

For Couples

Individuals’ self-concept can have very real effects on their relationships, particularly those that are romantic and/or sexual. Research has found that people with high self-concept clarity - people who are clear about who they are and what is important to them - report higher relationship satisfaction and commitment. There is a direct correlation between the level of people’s self-concept clarity and the level of intimacy they will invest in their relationships.
Individuals with low self-confidence can have more difficulty forming intimate bonds with their partners, which can cause relationships to suffer.

On the other hand, relationships benefit when both partners develop positive self-images. Individuals who have a healthy self-concept are often more open, expressive, and intimate with their significant others, which leads to more secure attachments. This is because when people perceive themselves as loveable and trustworthy, they will be more likely to openly and securely love and trust their partners.

Being self-confident also has a positive effect on people’s satisfaction with their sexuality and sexual interactions. Pleasurable sexual activities require disclosure of private aspects of the self that people with poor body images are often uncomfortable with. People who are discontented with their bodies often experience sexual problems, such as the inability to orgasm, while individuals who are comfortable and secure with their bodies often find their sexual experiences to be more enjoying and fulfilling. Being confident and familiar with your body will improve almost any sexual experience.

1.2.6 Building a Positive Self-Concept

Research has proven that building a positive body image and having an overall healthy self-concept are important in creating intimate and fulfilling relationships. Exercising with your partner, eating healthy, and participating in activities you enjoy can all help to create better self-images and stronger relationships, which will lead to a happier life.

Self-concept can be defined as the view one has of herself and her abilities. A child’s self-concept begins to develop at birth. It begins with how adults respond to her. Parents and caregivers create a positive emotional bond with an infant through warm and caring interactions with a lot of eye contact and touch. This positive emotional bond with parents and caregivers promotes a
child’s healthy self-concept. It is the basis of a relationship in which the child feels the parents’ and caregivers’ love, acceptance, and respect. As the child grows, her ability to interact successfully with her environment promotes a healthy self-concept. This is critically important in early childhood. The development of a positive self-concept at an early age empowers the child to feel competent, try new things, and strive for success. As parents, we have the opportunity (and responsibility) to help build a positive self-concept in our children. Children with a positive self-concept have a "can do" attitude. They believe in their ability to complete tasks without help, or with minimal help. They do not exhibit problematic behaviors as doing so would be against their positive self-concept.

Children with a negative self-concept have a "can't do" attitude. They become frustrated easily and give up on difficult tasks. These children may exhibit behavior problems if "naughty" or "bad" is a part of their self concept.

1.2.7 How to develop positive self concept from childhood

1. Be mindful of the language use to describe children. Do not label them with words such as 'lazy', 'naughty', 'aggressive', or 'stupid.' Instead, look for and point out child's strengths.

2. Provide them with opportunities for success. Give child age-appropriate tasks she can complete on her own. Having done so will give her a sense of pride and help build a "can do" mentality and positive self-concept.

3. Show children that you have faith in their goodness and in their abilities. This is a matter of language choice. For example, if a toddler, out of frustration, hits another child, you might say, "You naughty girl! How can you be so mean! I can't believe you hit him! You're in big trouble!" Or, you could say, "You got frustrated and hit him. It's not ok to hit. I know you didn't mean to hurt him. How can you express your frustration
in different ways? Would you like a stress ball to squeeze?" Which do you think leads to a positive self-concept?

Alternatively, let's use the example that child is working on a puzzle and is having trouble getting it to fit together properly. If you see frustration building, you might say, "Looks like you can't do that puzzle. Why don't you forget about that one and try something easier?" Or you can offer encouragement and help. "You've gotten several pieces in the right place. If you keep working on it, I'm sure you'll get it. Would you like me to help you with a couple pieces?" The second leads to success while the first leads to failure.

Give her the opportunity to explore her environment, ask questions without feeling like a nuisance, and engage in make-believe play activities.

Failure is also a learning tool for children, and we don't want to shield them from all failures. In fact, children with positive self-concepts who experience failure can accept mistakes or weaknesses because they know they are overall competent.

Parents sometimes think they must point out mistakes and often correct the child in order to make her competent. This is dangerously false. Constant criticism erodes self-confidence as always pointing out their failures and weaknesses. When you emphasize what your children do right, however, children will feel good about themselves and continue to strive to meet that positive self-concept.

Giving child opportunities to do things for himself will help him to develop that 'can-do' attitude. Allowing him to dress himself (no matter how mismatched or odd his choices are), putting things within his reach, such as his plates and utensils in a low drawer, handy snack packs on a low shelf in
the refrigerator, clothes hanging on a low rack so that he may choose for himself, and step stools so he may reach the sink himself, will all help aid in making him feel competent, and therefore, confident.

Allowing him the freedom to try and climb the tree or ride the bike without training wheels will also help him discover his abilities. Hovering parents inhibit competence in young children. Have faith in their abilities while remaining close by to offer assistance if they ask.

**The effect of behaviour**

Misbehavior is the usual outcome of discouragement and a poor self-concept. It is so much more satisfying to behave properly that most children would if they had confidence in their ability to succeed. Encouragement is not the same as praise. Encouragement recognizes his capabilities and expresses faith in your child as he is. Use words that encourage, not discourage your children.

**Words that Encourage:**

You can do it!
I have faith in you.
You're doing well.
I see you put a lot of effort into that.

**Words that Discourage:**

Be careful. You usually color outside the lines.
That's probably too hard for you.
You can do better that that!

Most of the room is clean, but you left your socks out. Be careful with your parental power. While it is important to establish and enforce limits, when parents try to dominate their children, it strips them of self-respect and erodes
their self-esteem. When self-respect is lost (or not developed), the potential for violence and deviant behavior is fostered. Children who feel powerless often behave destructively towards themselves and/or others. This acting out is an undesirable attempt at gaining some control over their environment. As a parent, use your power wisely while demonstrating respect and appreciation for your child's growing need for self-determination and a strong self-concept. A healthy self-concept is the foundation for the positive development and overall well-being of a child. When a child has a healthy self-concept, he sees himself as being loved, loving, and valuable. A child with a healthy self-concept is also better able to reach his full potential. He does better in school. He is better able to set goals for himself and make decisions. He is more willing to learn new things and try new activities. With a healthy self-concept, a child has better relationships with family members and friends. He can control his behavior and get along with others.

1.2.8 Improving Self concept in adulthood

Improving your self-image, like improving any skill, takes time and practice. Developing good self-esteem involves encouraging a positive (but realistic) attitude toward yourself and the world around you and appreciating your worth, while at the same time behaving responsibly towards others. Self-esteem isn't self-absorption; it's self-respect.

By working from the inside out (focusing on changing your own way of thinking before changing the circumstances around you), you can build your self-esteem. The goal of this positive thinking is to give yourself a more positive self-concept, while seeing yourself honestly and accepting yourself, and removing the internal barriers that can keep you from doing your best.

1.2.9 Positive Self concept
There are many ways a person can change negative thoughts and self-criticism to more realistic and positive thoughts. Focusing on all of them at once may be overwhelming, but focusing on a few at a time and reminding yourself of these positive approaches regularly can change your self-esteem.

Read the positive thought strategies below and choose several that would help you most. Write them down and remind yourself to pause and change your way of thinking each time you are being critical of yourself. As you become more comfortable with each new way of thinking (for example, learning not to apologize or accept blame for other's anger) try adding a new positive thought strategy to your list.

**Characteristics of a Positive Self-Concept**

Characteristics of a client with a positive self-concept include:

- Self-confidence
- Ability to accept criticism and not become defensive
- Setting obtainable goals
- Willingness to take risks and try new experiences

**Positive thought strategy**

Avoid exaggerations.

Correct your internal voice when it exaggerates, especially when it exaggerates the negative. Try to avoid thinking in extreme terms ("I always make that mistake" or "I'll never get that promotion.")

Nip negative thoughts in the bud.

Sometimes putting a stop on negative thinking is as easy as that. The next time you start giving yourself an internal browbeating, tell yourself to "stop it!" If
you saw a person yelling insults at another person, you would probably tell them to stop. Why do you accept that behavior from yourself?

- **Accentuate the positive**: Instead of focusing on what you think are your negative qualities, accentuate your strengths and assets. Maybe you didn't ace the test you were studying for, but maybe your hard work and perseverance led to a better grade than you would have had. Maybe you felt nervous and self-conscious when giving a presentation at work, but maybe your boss and co-workers respected you for getting up and trying. Accept flaws and being human.

- **May be you did get nervous and blow that presentation at work - so what?** Talk to your boss about what went wrong, try to address the error in the future, and move on. All people have flaws and make mistakes. Your boss, co-workers, friends, family, postman, congressman, and favorite movie star have all made mistakes. They've forgiven themselves; so can you.

- **Accept imperfections.** Perfection is a high goal to aim for -- you don't need to start there or even end there. Make doing your best your ideal -- what more can you realistically do? Focus on what you've gained from the process and how you can use it in the future. Avoid focusing on what wasn't done or 'should have' been done differently. Allow yourself to make mistakes and then forgive yourself. Try laughing instead of criticizng.

- **Don't bully yourself!** "Should have, could have, would have ... " Try not to constantly second guess yourself, criticize yourself for what you "should" have done better, or expect too much from yourself. Don't put standards on yourself that you wouldn't expect from others. It's great to want to do well, but expecting yourself to be perfect (which is impossible) and then punishing yourself when you fail is a vicious cycle. Using expressions like "I should have" is just a way of punishing yourself after the fact.
Replace criticism with encouragement: Instead of nagging or focusing on the negative (in yourself and others), replace your criticism with encouragement. Give constructive criticism instead of being critical ("maybe if I tried to do ____ next time, it would be even better" instead of "I didn't do that right.") Compliment yourself and those around you on what you have achieved ("well, we may not have done it all, but we did a pretty great job with what we did").

Don't feel guilty about things beyond your control: You are not to blame every time something goes wrong or someone has a problem. Apologizing for things and accepting blame can be a positive quality, if you are in the wrong and if you learn and move on. But you shouldn't feel responsible for all problems or assume you are to blame whenever someone is upset.

Don't feel responsible for everything: Just as everything is not your fault, not everything is your responsibility. It's okay to be helpful, but don't feel the need to be all things (and do all things) for all people. This is taking too much of a burden on yourself AND limiting those around you. Let others be responsible for themselves and their actions -- you shouldn't feel responsible for their happiness.

Do feel responsible for your feelings: Just as you can't "make" other people happy, don't expect others to "make" you feel happy or good about yourself. In the same way, they shouldn't make you feel guilty or bad about yourself. You create your own feelings and make your own decisions. People and events may have an affect on your emotions, but they can't dictate them.

Treat yourself kindly: People often feel more comfortable treating themselves in ways they wouldn't consider treating others. Do you criticize yourself with terms like "stupid" "ugly" or "loser"? Would you use those terms to describe a friend? Remind yourself that you deserve to be treated
as well as you treat others. Do something nice for yourself sometimes -- either in thought (give yourself a compliment) or action (treat yourself to a nice dinner or new book.)

- **Give yourself a break**: You don't need to be all things to all people or please everyone. Give yourself permission to decide you're doing the best you can. Remind yourself when you're doing things well -- don't wait to hear it from someone else.

- **Choose the brighter side of things**: You can choose how to interpret comments and events, so try for the more positive interpretations. If someone says, "You look good today," don't ask yourself "What was wrong with the way I looked yesterday?" Accept compliments graciously (don't ask yourself why you haven't been complemented on something else or why you haven't complemented you before.) Look at temporary setbacks as opportunities for growth.

- **Forgive and forget**: Try not to hang on to painful memories and bad feelings - this is a sure fire way to encourage negative thoughts and bad moods. Your past can control you if you don't control it. If you can, forgive past wrongs and move on. (Don't forget that forgiving yourself is an important part of this process, too!) If you have a hard time forgiving or forgetting, consider talking through your emotions with a good friend or counsellor, but try not to dwell. It's important to work through things, but you can't let the past determine your future.

- **Focus on what you CAN do, not what you can't**: Avoid "can't" thinking or other negative language. If you say something often enough, you may start to believe it, so keep your statements positive, not negative. Don't be afraid to seek help in accomplishing things, but remind yourself that you don't need approval from others to recognize your accomplishments. Focus on what you're able to do. Remind yourself of all your capabilities and positive qualities.
Using just one or two of the above strategies on a regular basis can greatly increase your positive self-image and self-esteem. Making these internal changes will increase your confidence in yourself and your willingness and ability to make external changes and improve your life.

1.2.10 Negative Self-Concept

- Self concept in simple words means what you think of yourself. Your views and perceptions about yourself are termed as self concept. How you think about yourself affects your behavior to a great extent. When you have a positive view of self, you are confident, have high self esteem and resulting to a positive self concept. On the other hand, when you are low in love of self, and don't have a positive opinion of self. Criticize and judge yourself a lot, blame your self and have high degree of self doubt, all these contribute to a negative self concept. The seven reasons given here are my views based on famous theories or schools of psychology.

Reasons for negative self concept.

1. Sigmund Freud, the father of psychodynamic theories stated that humans are driven mainly by the sexual drive (also called libido) and the aggressive drive. Freud explained that the libido mainly consisted of the id, ego and the superego. The id works on the pleasure principle that demands the immediate gratification of all impulses and engages in primary process thinking commonly known as wish fulfillment. Parts of the id spills into the ego which tries to gratify the ids' demands in a socially accepted way, it works on the reality principal and engages in secondary process thinking. The superego is the storehouse of rules and regulations a person learns from his/her parents and society. They are absolute moral standards.
2. When the person is dominated mainly by the superego, the ego tries constantly to find a balance between the ongoing conflicts between the id and the superego. One side a person wants to fulfill their desires and on the other side has moral and social obligations. Since the superego is dominating, it pressurizes the individual to comply, if the individual fails to comply, he/she faces a lot of guilt. This guilt often leads to a negative self concept.

3. Abraham Maslow gave a hierarchy of needs. Needs low in the hierarchy must be met before needs higher in the hierarchy can be satisfied. At the base of this hierarchy deep roots are observed pertaining to the need of belongingness, love, security, and basic needs like hunger, thirst, warmth. Above those lie aesthetic needs like beauty and order, cognitive needs like to know, to be aware, and esteem needs like to achieve, be competent. At the tip of this hierarchy stands self actualization.

4. Generally people satisfy their basic and lower order needs like food and shelter, safety and security, but they do not fulfill their need for love and belongingness. They lack these needs and thus, stunt their personal growth. The lack of these needs often lead to frustration and thus lead to a negative self concept.

5. Erick Erickson gave a series of psychosocial developmental stages. At each stage individuals are faced with conflict or crises. How they deal with the crises can have an effect on their development. When dealt with positively can lead to a positive concept and if not dealt with can lead to a negative self concept. Let us see some of these crises, at infancy one falls in the crises of trust versus mistrust, at the early childhood one falls in the crises of autonomy versus shame or doubt,
between the ages of three to five one falls in the crises of initiative versus guilt, between the ages of six to puberty one falls in the crises of industry versus inferiority, at adolescence one falls in the crises of identity versus confusion, at early adulthood one falls in the crises of intimacy versus isolation, at late adulthood one falls in the crises of generativity versus stagnation, and finally at old age one falls in the crises of integrity versus despair. When a crisis is not resolved it leads to a negative self concept. An example, in early adulthood the individual is faces the crises of intimacy versus isolation. If the person is not able to resolve this crisis and hence feels a sense of isolation, that sense of being isolated can lead to a negative self concept.

6. Behaviorism states that reinforcement and conditioning play a dominant role in shaping a persons behavior. Behaviors are learnt through experiences in the environment. Behaviorism has two main principles, classical conditioning and operant conditioning. When a person behaves in an unacceptable manner, depending on the feedback or response of the people around him/her, that behavior is punished or reinforced. This will have an impact on the person. More than often people are not aware of the impact of their response on the opposite person. Consider the example, when a boy behaves in a way that is not acceptable to his mother, she might hit him or shout at him and say "you are a bad boy". This statement may make the boy feel that he is not good and he may start to develop a negative self concept of him self as "I m a bad boy".

7. When trying to understand the reasons why people develop a negative self concept it must be remembered that first n foremost it is the person's perception of him/her self. Thoughts and feelings affect and shape our behavior and emotions. They contribute to the maximum extent in the development our sense of self. A psychologist Albert Ellis
developed a technique called as **A B C D E** technique. Ellis introduces the rational emotive therapy. The ABCDE technique involves:

- **A** activating agent
- **B** belief
- **C** consequence
- **D** dispute irrational beliefs
- **E** effect

feelings lead to thoughts and thoughts lead to behaviors. Therefore all thoughts have some kind of feelings underlining them. We can not stop or control the activating agent may it be an object or an event, so to change our consequence to a situation we have to change our belief system. Most of the time, we are not aware of the fact that we as individuals consistently talk to our self, we are consistently talking to our selves. In my opinion we talk to our selves in two ways. We are either motivating our self or we are consistently judging or criticizing our selves. When our inner self, our inner voices are too harsh in judging our every move, it creates pressure on us and if we don't behave in accordance with our own expectations, we feel guilty. These thoughts and feelings often lead to our negative self concept.

Another reason for a negative self concept thought the concept may be temporary is the biological factor. Biologically, a negative self concept can be explained in terms of chemical imbalances, i.e. sometimes when our hormones are not in balance they can produce discomfort that can lead to a negative self concept. Consider an example, sometimes a thyroid dysfunction can cause depression and lead to a negative self concept. Humans are social beings; they can not live in isolation. Each society forms its own sets of regulations which become the base of our
behavior. The society defines the roles we perform in our environment. It is the society that makes us what we are and it is through social comparison that we feel "accepted"; hence, we are obligated to obey the social norms. Unfortunately we humans are hedonistic in nature; we find it difficult to follow the social norms all the time. When we do not follow the norms, the society puts us under pressure. This pressure sometimes leads to a negative self concept.

It should be known that all the different factors work together to form either our positive or negative self concept. But the most important step is to realize and be aware of our environment, and know what the different aspects that shape us are.

1.2.11 Characteristics of negative self-concept.

- You feel uncertain and uncomfortable about yourself.
- You fear possible rejection
- Jump to conclusion
- Look at only one detail and disregard the big picture
- Blaming other
- What better way to deny our weakness than to blame other
- Being an overly nice people pleaser

1.3 SELF ESTEEM

Self esteem is a state of mind.

It is the way you think and feel about yourself. Having high self esteem means having feelings of confidence, worthiness and positive regard for yourself. People with high self esteem feel good about themselves. They feel a sense of belonging and security. They respect themselves and appreciate others. They tend to be successful in life because they feel confident in taking on challenges and risking failure to achieve what they want. They have more energy for
positive pursuits because their energy is not wasted on negative emotions, feelings of inferiority or working hard to take care of or please others at the expense of their own self-care. The amount of self esteem you have depends on many factors -- how you were raised, parental attitudes, life experiences, etc. Sometimes people lose self esteem and feel bad about themselves because of failures or disappointments in life, or because of the way others in their lives have treated them. It is important to know that self-esteem can be gained at any time in life. Ideally, it happens in childhood; realistically, most people have to cultivate it later in life.

1.3.1 Why develop Self Esteem?

The rewards of developing self esteem include being able to take risks, having positive relationships, not being held back by fears and insecurities, pursuing your dreams and desires, making good choices and reaching your goals. This module will give you practical methods to change the negative thoughts and behaviors that foster low self esteem and replace them with positive ones that build self esteem.

Feeling good about yourself is not a luxury; it is an absolute necessity!

1.3.2 Causes of low self esteem

It is believed that low self esteem is caused, in part, by negative emotional responses. Criticism, teasing, punishment and abuse, poverty, economic deprivation, failure in school and many other factors affect our feelings of self-worth. Even race, religion, the media, culture and sex have an influence on how we feel about ourselves. When negative thoughts and feelings take root early in life, they can become powerful thought patterns that form habits of thinking. Before long, we begin to think in ways that limit our growth and self-development. We begin to doubt ourselves and feel dissatisfied. We become afraid to accept challenges and feel unworthy, even when we do accomplish important things. The deeper these thought patterns take root, the lower our self
esteem falls, until we cannot envision what it is like to feel good about ourselves.

Self esteem is sometimes hidden by other behaviors used to compensate for the deeper rooted, more painful feelings we wish to avoid. Psychologists tell us that low self esteem often masks itself under a false front of superiority, perfectionism, over-confidence, “niceness” or “humbleness,” boastful or attention-seeking behavior, hyper-critical behavior or religious fanaticism. All of these behavior patterns are meant to shield us from the underlying feelings of sadness, inferiority, self-hatred, fear or insecurity. They allow us to "compensate" for these unacceptable or painful feelings by giving us a false sense of being "okay" or "right" or "better" than those around us.

Self esteem develops in childhood and forms patterns of thinking and behaving. These patterns tend to reinforce self esteem, whether low or high, and become habits. In some cases, these habits can be very destructive, causing us to feed and nurture feelings of low self esteem even when there are no reasons for it. In other words, things in our lives may have changed significantly since childhood, we may no longer be subject to the influences that contributed to our low self esteem, yet we perpetuate it by our beliefs and behaviors. We keep our self esteem low when we should be striving to raise it. How does this happen?

**Low self esteem is perpetuated by our behaviors, thoughts and actions. Items that contribute to low self esteem:**

___ A lack of faith, both in myself, other people and the world around me.
___ A lack of purpose or meaning in my life.
___ A lack of goals to motivate and guide me.
___ Dependence on others for a sense of importance or meaning in my life.
___ Failing to accept responsibility for my life and well-being.
___ Failing to recognize, appreciate and reward myself.
___ Adhering to false concepts and assumptions about myself.
Feelings of negativity toward myself and others.
Failing to develop my abilities and talents.
Comparing myself to others.
Feeling I have to prove myself to others.
Feeling a need to give in, please or agree with others to be accepted.
Feeling I have to prove myself to others.
Resisting, fretting or worrying about things I can do nothing about.
Not allowing myself the freedom to make mistakes and fail.
Not allowing myself freedom of self expression.
Being impatient, harsh or demanding of myself.

1.3.3 Letting go of negative attitude

We all experience negative attitudes and feelings at different times. It is when those feelings persist and affect way of thinking and reacting that problems arise. Low self esteem is accompanied by negative attitudes.

Finding something wrong in every situation
Being pessimistic about outcomes
Being unhappy because your expectations were not met
Believing that things will go wrong
Being easily distracted by irritations
Being unpleasant to be around
Complaining and finding fault
Believing your attitude is a legitimate consequence of a negative situation
Believing that positive people are dreamers, Pollyanna's, or fools

1.3.4 Increasing self esteem

If you have a positive body image, you probably like and accept yourself the way you are, even if you don't fit some media "ideal." This healthy attitude allows you to explore other aspects of growing up, such as developing good friendships, becoming more independent from your parents, and challenging
yourself physically and mentally. Developing these parts of yourself can help boost your self-esteem.

**A positive, optimistic attitude can help people develop strong self-esteem.** For example, if you make a mistake, you might want to say, "Hey, I'm human" instead of "Wow, I'm such a loser" or not blame others when things don't go as expected. Knowing what makes you happy and how to meet your goals can help you feel capable, strong, and in control of your life. A positive attitude and a healthy lifestyle (such as exercising and eating right) are a great combination for building good self-esteem.

1. **Liking yourself**

Developing self esteem is about liking yourself and appreciating your talents, abilities and attributes. This does not mean becoming egotistical or vain. It merely means acknowledging your good traits and qualities. Your self concept has a great deal to do with your self esteem. If you continually tell yourself you are a failure, a loser, a poor student or whatever terms you use to put yourself down, you are feeding your low self esteem and creating a negative attitude. You are reinforcing what others wrongly caused you to feel about yourself. If you accept that they were wrong, or perhaps ignorant in doing this to you, why would you chose to do the same thing to yourself?

2. **Taking action to improve yourself**

Building self esteem requires action; it is not something you can wish for, purchase or borrow. There are things you can do everyday to help build your self esteem. Here are just a few:

- practice positive thinking
- visualize success everyday
- accept compliments and believe them
- seek counseling through difficult times
- identify your values
- identify your goals
• be honest in expressing your strengths, talents, and skills
• learn from constructive criticism
• write down your accomplishments everyday
• give yourself credit every day
• take action on ideas you believe in
• nourish your physical, mental and spiritual self
• forgive those who have hurt you
• make time for self development every day

"It is only by taking risks everyday that we live at all."

The truth is, you cannot change or control anyone but yourself. When you learn not to spend time worrying about changing others and work on changing yourself, you are on your way to higher self esteem. Changing yourself can be as simple as wearing a different color that cheers you up or as difficult as getting rid of a habit, such as smoking. Change may mean learning new behaviors or letting go of negative or destructive relationships. Decide what you want and how you would like to change. Write your ideas below, then do the following exercise.

I would like to change...

I would prefer....I am

Find a quiet, comfortable place free from distractions. Close eyes. Let \mind relax and drift for a while. Think about what you've learned so far about self esteem and what it would mean to have higher self esteem. Pick one quality to develop or improve in life. It can be anything you want to achieve: more confidence, better study habits, popularity, strength to overcome life problems, better health, a more positive outlook, better relations with others, etc.

3. Positive affirmation:

"I am completely confident in all that I do. I do my best in everything I undertake. I feel good about myself, knowing that I am becoming more and more confident every day."
4. Letting go the past

We have trouble developing self esteem and confidence when we cannot let go of the past. We remember and relive in our minds things that happened that tore our self esteem down, thereby reinforcing low self esteem. We make excuses for ourselves or feel justified for feeling bad because of what others did or said to us. We allow past wrong actions of others to define who we are and how we feel. You may object and say, "But I had no choice in the matter when I was a child!" or "I didn't ask for this to happen!" This may be true but, as an adult, you do have a choice. Letting go of the past is not about burying it or trying to forget it. Many people block out bad memories from the past only to find them surfacing in later years in the form of fears, illnesses and phobias. Letting go is not pretending something didn't happen. That is only self-deception.

Self-esteem, generally conceptualized as a part of the self concept, has been the most commonly researched concept in social psychology. A study in the self can not be directly observed and so measurement of self esteem is difficult. The concept and term self esteem is used by professional and laymen alike and is a deceptively simplistic construct many seem to know what self esteem is, but few can define it precisely as Murk (1999) observed the diversity definitions tend to be impressive often. It is as though there are many ways to define self esteem as there are people trying to do so.

Self-esteem is a term used in psychology to reflect person's overall emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude toward the self. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs (for example, "I am competent," "I am worthy") and emotions such as triumph, despair, pride and shame. Smith and Mackie define it by saying "The self-concept is what we think about the self; self-esteem, is the positive or negative evaluations of the self, as in how we feel about it. Self-esteem is also known as the evaluative dimension of the self that includes feelings of worthiness, prides and
discouragement. One's self-esteem is also closely associated with self-consciousness.

Self-esteem is how we value ourselves; it is how we perceive our value to the world and how valuable we think we are to others. Self-esteem affects our trust in others, our relationships, our work – nearly every part of our lives. Positive self-esteem gives us the strength and flexibility to take charge of our lives and grow from our mistakes without the fear of rejection.

1.3.5 Building Self-esteem

Most women feel bad about herself from time to time. Feelings of low self-esteem may be triggered by being treated poorly by someone else recently or in the past, or by a women’s own judgments of herself. This is normal. However, low self-esteem is a constant companion for too many people, especially those who experience depression, anxiety, phobias, psychosis, delusional thinking, or who have an illness or a disability. Low self-esteem keeps away from enjoying life, doing the things you want to do, and working toward personal goals. **Self-esteem is all about how much you feel you are worth — and how much you feel other people value you.** Self-esteem is important because feeling good about yourself can affect your mental health and how you behave. People with high self-esteem know themselves well. They're realistic and find friends that like and appreciate them for who they are. People with high self-esteem usually feel more in control of their lives and know their own strengths and weaknesses.

1.3.6 What Influences a Person's Self-Esteem?

**Puberty and Development**

Some people struggle with their self-esteem and body image when they begin puberty because it's a time when the body goes through many changes. These
changes, combined with wanting to feel accepted by our friends, means it can be tempting to compare ourselves with others. The trouble with that is, not everyone grows or develops at the same time or in the same way.

**Media Images and Other Outside Influences**

Our tweens and early teens are a time when we become more aware of celebrities and media images — as well as how other kids look and how we fit in. We might start to compare ourselves with other people or media images ("ideals" that are frequently airbrushed). All of this can affect how we feel about ourselves and our bodies even as we grow into our teens.

**Families and School**

Family life can sometimes influence our body image. Some parents or coaches might be too focused on looking a certain way or "making weight" for a sports team. Family members might struggle with their own body image or criticize their kids' looks ("why do you wear your hair so long?" or "how come you can't wear pants that fit you?"). This can all influence a person's self-esteem, especially if they're sensitive to others' comments.

People also may experience negative comments and hurtful teasing about the way they look from classmates and peers. Although these often come from ignorance, sometimes they can affect body image and self-esteem.

As begin to improve self-esteem, you may notice that you have some feelings of resistance to positive feelings about yourself. This is normal. Don't let these feelings stop from feeling good, keep the following statement in mind — "I am a very special, unique, and valuable person. I deserve to feel good about myself."

**Low Self-esteem, causes Depression and Other Illnesses**
Before begin to consider strategies and activities to help raise self-esteem, it is important to remember that low self-esteem may be due to depression. Low self-esteem is a symptom of depression. To make things even more complicated, the depression may be a symptom of some other illness. Most people feel bad about themselves from time to time. Feelings of low self-esteem may be triggered by being treated poorly by someone else recently or in the past, or by a person’s own judgments of him or herself. This is normal. However, low self-esteem is a constant companion for too many people, especially those who experience depression, anxiety, phobias, psychosis, delusional thinking, or who have an illness or a disability may go through life feeling bad. Low self-esteem keeps away from enjoying life, doing the things you want to do, and working toward personal goals. People have a right to feel good about themselves. However, it can be very difficult to feel good about yourself when you are under the stress of having symptoms that are hard to manage, when you are dealing with a disability, when you are having a difficult time, or when others are treating you badly.

**Everybody has a right to feel good about themselves.** However, it can be very difficult to feel good about yourself when you are under the stress of having symptoms that are hard to manage, or dealing with a disability, when having a difficult time, or when others are treating badly. At these times, it is easy to be drawn into a downward spiral of lower and lower self-esteem. For instance, you may begin feeling bad about yourself when someone insults you, you are under a lot of pressure at work, or you are having a difficult time getting along with someone in your family. Then you begin to give yourself negative self-talk, like "I'm no good." That may make you feel so bad about yourself that you do something to hurt yourself or someone else, such as getting drunk or yelling at your children. By using some ideas and activities, avoid doing things that make feel even worse and do those things that will
make feel better about yourself. The ideas have come from, people who realize they have low self-esteem and are working to improve it.

1.3.7 How to raise self esteem

If a women have a positive body image, she probably like and accept herself the way she is, even if she don't fit some media "ideal." This healthy attitude allows her to explore other aspects of growing up, such as developing good friendships, becoming more independent from her parents, and challenging herself physically and mentally. Developing these parts of herself can help boost her self-esteem.

A positive, optimistic attitude can help people develop strong self-esteem. For example, if someone make a mistake he might want to say, "Hey, I'm human" instead of "Wow, I'm such a loser" or not blame others when things don't go as expected. Knowing what makes you happy and how to meet your goals can help you feel capable, strong, and in control of your life. A positive attitude and a healthy lifestyle (such as exercising and eating right) are a great combination for building good self-esteem.

Take very good care of yourself. As you were growing up you may not have learned how to take good care of yourself. In fact, much of your attention may have been on taking care of others, on just getting by, or on "behaving well." Begin today to take good care of yourself. Treat yourself as a wonderful parent would treat a small child or as one very best friend might treat another. If you work at taking good care of yourself, you will find that you feel better about yourself.

Eat healthy foods and avoid junk foods (foods containing a lot of sugar, salt, or fat). A healthy daily diet is usually: five or six servings of vegetables and fruit six servings of whole grain foods like bread, pasta, cereal, and rice two servings of protein foods like beef, chicken, fish, cheese, cottage cheese, or yogurt
Exercise. Moving your body helps you to feel better and improves your self-esteem. Arrange a time every day or as often as possible when you can get some exercise, preferably outdoors. You can do many different things. Taking a walk is the most common. You could run, ride a bicycle, play a sport, climb up and down stairs several times, put on a tape, or play the radio and dance to the music—anything that feels good to you. If you have a health problem that may restrict your ability to exercise, check with your doctor before beginning or changing your exercise habits.

Do personal hygiene tasks that make you feel better about yourself—things like taking a regular shower or bath, washing and styling your hair, trimming your nails, brushing and flossing your teeth.

Have a physical examination every year to make sure you are in good health.

Plan fun activities for yourself. Learn new things every day.

Take time to do things you enjoy. You may be so busy, or feel so badly about yourself, that you spend little or no time doing things you enjoy—things like playing a musical instrument, doing a craft project, flying a kite, or going fishing. Make a list of things you enjoy doing. Then do something from that list every day. Add to the list anything new that you discover you enjoy doing.

Get something done that you have been putting off. Clean out that drawer. Wash that window. Write that letter. Pay that bill.

Do things that make use of your own special talents and abilities. For instance, if you are good with your hands, then make things for yourself, family, and friends. If you like animals, consider having a pet or at least playing with friends’ pets.

Dress in clothes that make you feel good about yourself. If you have little money to spend on new clothes, check out thrift stores in your area.

Give yourself rewards—you are a great person. Listen to a CD or tape.

Spend time with people who make you feel good about yourself—people who treat you well. Avoid people who treat you badly.
Make your meals a special time. Turn off the television, radio, and stereo. Set the table, even if you are eating alone. Light a candle or put some flowers or an attractive object in the center of the table. Arrange your food in an attractive way on your plate. If you eat with others, encourage discussion of pleasant topics. Avoid discussing difficult issues at meals.

Take advantage of opportunities to learn something new or improve your skills. Take a class or go to a seminar. Many adult education programs are free or very inexpensive. For those that are more costly, ask about a possible scholarship or fee reduction.

Begin doing those things that you know will make you feel better about yourself—like going on a diet, beginning an exercise program or keeping your living space clean.

Do something nice for another person. Smile at someone who looks sad. Say a few kind

Make it a point to treat yourself well every day. Before you go to bed each night, write about how you treated yourself well during the day.

Replacing the negative thought with the positive one every time you realize you are thinking the negative thought.

Make your living space a place that honors the person you are. Whether you live in a single room, a small apartment, or a large home, make that space comfortable and attractive for you. If you share your living space with others, have some space that is just for you—a place where you can keep your things and know that they will not be disturbed and that you can decorate any way you choose.

The next step in this process is to develop positive statements you can say to yourself to replace these negative thoughts whenever you notice yourself thinking them. You can't think two thoughts at the same time. When you are thinking a positive thought about yourself, you can't be thinking a negative one.
In developing these thoughts, use positive words like happy, peaceful, loving, enthusiastic, warm.

- repeating your positive thought over and over to yourself, out loud whenever you get a chance and even sharing them with another person if possible.
- writing them over and over.
- making signs that say the positive thought, hanging them in places where you would see them often-like on your refrigerator door or on the mirror in your bathroom-and repeating the thought to yourself several times when you see it.

- **Pay attention to your own needs and wants.** Listen to what your body, your mind, and your heart are telling you. For instance, if your body is telling you that you have been sitting down too long, stand up and stretch. If your heart is longing to spend more time with a special friend, do it. If your mind is telling you to clean up your basement, listen to your favorite music, or stop thinking bad thoughts about yourself, take those thoughts seriously.

- You can work on changing your negative thoughts to positive ones by —

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Thought</th>
<th>Positive Thought</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am not worth anything.</td>
<td>I am a valuable person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have never accomplished anything.</td>
<td>I have accomplished many things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I always make mistakes.</td>
<td>I do many things well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am a jerk.</td>
<td>I am a great person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't deserve a good life.</td>
<td>I deserve to be happy and healthy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am stupid.</td>
<td>I am smart.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1.3.8 The six pillars of self esteem**

1. The Practice of Living Consciously
2. The Practice of Self-Acceptance
3. The Practice of Self-Responsibility
4. The Practice of Self-Assertiveness

5. The Practice of Living Purposefully

6. The Practice of Personal Integrity

Study was distributed to middle-aged women who were asked to reflect on their current self-esteem levels. The women at midlife were also asked to discuss their perceived self-esteem when they were college-aged. In general women reported inconsistent levels of self-esteem, many reporting that it depended on numerous external factors such as relationships, academic success family situations, appearance, and the media. Almost universally, the women at midlife reported that many of these same factors also influenced their self-esteem, but that they have become much more self-confident with maturity and age.

The practice of living consciously

“What determines the level of self-esteem is what the individual does.” It’s nice to talk about ideas, memorize inspiring words, and get an intellectual understanding of something. But it’s what we DO that leads to our self-esteem. Branden continues by saying: “A ‘practice’ implies a discipline of acting in a certain way over and over again—consistently. It is not action by fits and starts, or even an appropriate response to a crisis. Rather, it is a way of operating day by day, in big issues and small, a way of behaving that is also a way of being.”

Beautiful. “A practice (as a noun) can be anything you practice on a regular basis as an integral part of your life—not in order to gain something else, but for its own sake… For a master, the rewards gained along the way are fine, but they are not the main reason for the journey. Ultimately, the master and the master’s path are one. And if the traveler is fortunate—that is, if the path is complex and profound enough—the destination is two miles farther away for every mile he or she travels.”

The practice of self acceptance
“We can run not only from our dark side but also from our bright side—from anything that threatens to make us stand out or stand alone, or that calls for the awakening of the hero within. To find it humiliating to admit an error is a certain sign of a flawed self-esteem.”

“We break through to a higher level of consciousness and reach a higher ground of integrity. The greatest crime we commit against ourselves is not that we may deny or disown our shortcomings but that we deny and disown our greatness—because it frightens us. If a fully realized self-acceptance does not evade the worst within us, neither does it evade the best.”

The practice of self-acceptance. It’s the second pillar of self-esteem. acceptance— which we might best be able to sum up as “my refusal to be in an adversarial relationship with myself.”

And, in addition to the acceptance of our light, nothing does as much for an individual’s self-esteem as becoming aware of and accepting disowned parts of the self. The first steps of healing and growth are awareness and acceptance—consciously and integration.”

The practice of self responsibility

“I am responsible for my choices and actions. To be ‘responsible’ in this context means responsible not as the recipient of moral blame or guilt, but responsible as the chief causal agent in my life and behavior.” Responsibility.

Break it up into its two little word-segments: response-able. It’s simple: We’re responsible when we’re “able to respond” to life’s challenges as healthy, autonomous human beings. Not as victims, blaming this or that for our challenges or feeling shame or guilt for not living up to someone else’s/society’s standards, but as individuals who own our abilities to manifest our desires as we engage in life.

The practice of self -assertiveness

“To practice self-assertiveness is to live authentically, to speak and act from my innermost convictions and feelings — as a way of life, as a rule.” The
practice of self-assertiveness. It’s the fourth pillar of self-esteem. The essence of this pillar is to be REAL. To drive this point home, remember the idea that “authentic” and “author” come from the same root. Here’s another angle on the power and practice of self-assertiveness: “Warren Bennis, our preeminent scholar of leadership, tells us that the basic passion in the best leaders he has studied is for self-expression. Their work is clearly a vehicle for self-actualization. Their desire is to bring ‘who they are’ into the world, into reality, which I speak of as the practice of self-assertiveness.”

The practice of living purposefully

“To live purposefully is to use our powers for the attainment of goals we have selected: the goal of studying, of raising a family, of earning a living, of starting a new business, of bringing a new product into the marketplace, of solving a scientific problem, of building a vacation home, of sustaining a happy romantic relationship. It is our goals that lead us forward, that call on the exercise of our faculties, that energize our existence.”

Clothing has very different impact on our self esteem. The higher is self-esteem the less clothing affects it, but the opposite is also true - the lower is self-esteem the more power cloths and fashion have over a person.

I am not saying that people with high self-esteem do not care about what they are wearing. I am just saying that people with high self-esteem know that they are still the best no matter what they wear. People with high self-esteem choose the clothes they really like and that emphasize their personality, not those that other people want them to wear. People with high self-esteem create fashion, others follow it.

Be confident. If you choose to wear something, wear it because you like it and you feel comfortable in it. You can be a role model everyone will follow, no matter where you live, what you do, and who you are. Don't be afraid to express yourself and people will follow you because you are one of a kind.
What matters most is the way you behave. If you are developing your inner self constantly and persistently, if you try to become a greater, more interesting, kind, balanced, and confident person, people will love you in any clothes.

If your inner world is beautiful then your outer world will be too. If you are developing excellence it is going to show in every part of your life. You are going to wear all those clothes you desire, but you will not be a prisoner of the fashion.

You can not change the outer world first. No matter how expensive your clothes are, if you are unconfident inside, it is going to show.

Don’t make mistake on becoming addictive to cloths advertised by media. Become addicted in exploring and enjoying yourself. You can feel comfortable any time you want in any clothes you have if you decide to.

1.3.9 Why would self esteem clothing be important?

While it is true that genuine confidence has nothing to do with clothing, for most of us for whom a healthy Self Esteem is still a goal, looking good helps.

If you are truly confident in who you are and where you stand in life, in the community, in your family or workplace, then how you look will bear little impact on how you feel.

But very few people have that level of Self Esteem and for most of us the intrinsic link between the two is hardwired.

Even for those people in popular culture or media that we like to think are universally attractive, turning up to an event in the wrong outfit is likely to hurt! And be plastered all over the news.
If you are looking around at our cultural values, whether we like it or not, looking the part has to be one of them.

Adding to this, studies have shown that most people, from would-be employers to shop assistants and ourselves included, size each other up and form almost subconscious opinions about each other, from the very first glance. And unfortunately you don't get a second chance with first impressions... so self esteem clothing can "make the day".

We've all heard the phrase "Dress For Success", usually in a workplace context. However, dressing for success can also refer to dressing in a way that makes you feel better about YOU... always think what self esteem clothing can do for YOU!

Whether it's right or wrong, in the fledgling stages of building up a poor self image, "putting your best foot forward" is a step in the right direction and should be taken seriously if you are serious about changing your daily happiness levels.

The fact of the matter is, a lot of people dress in a way that is unflattering to their body type or dated.

If you suffer from low self esteem, I encourage you to approach your wardrobe as something of a project. Do the research on what looks good on your body type and throw out the things in your wardrobe that make you feel unattractive.

That includes the clothes you wear around the house - after all, low self esteem follows you everywhere.
Make sure you have an outfit that makes the most out of your appearance for every occasion and use them.

If you need to, design a self esteem clothing wardrobe in writing or diagrams with all the things that mix and match and the accessories and tape that to the inside of your wardrobe.

Once you have it figured out, you can forget about it. After all, it's just as easy to put on self esteem clothing as it is to put on horrible ones.

If you want to take it a step further, invest in a consultation with a high class hairdresser and find out what style suits your face the best.

You've probably watched the "make-over" shows on television with some envy at the complete turnaround the contestant's experience. It's time to do that for yourself. Identify what's letting you down and face it with determination.

Self esteem clothing and your appearance doesn't have to be the most important aspect in your life, or even the 10th most important thing, but it can be one area of your life that doesn't add to your low self esteem

1.4 BODY IMAGE

Body image is how you view your physical self — including whether you feel you are attractive and whether others like your looks. For many people, especially people in their early teens, body image can be closely linked to self-esteem.

Body image is a multifaceted psychological experience relating to physical appearance and self perceptions and attitudes encompassing perceptual, affective, cognitive and behavioural aspects (Cash, 2004; Cash & Pruzinsky, 1990). It is the picture we have in our minds of the size, shape and form of our
bodies and our feelings concerning these (Slade, 1988). Body image constitutes both ‘perceptual’ and ‘attitudinal’ components that are influenced by historical, cultural, social, individual and biological factors. Clothes or dress and body image have similar consequences on what one looks like and how one feels about themselves. Rudd and Lennon (2001) posit that body image includes how one perceives the physical body and thereby influences how the body is present to others through the medium of dress. Because body image is a mental picture we have of perceptual and affective components of our bodies, it affects how we interact with clothes, and how the ‘clothed appearance’ is presented publicly (Rudd & Lennon, 2001). Individuals

Body image includes:

- How we perceive our bodies visually
- How we feel about our physical appearance; how we think and talk to ourselves about our bodies
- Our sense of how other people view our bodies
- Our sense of our bodies in physical space (kinesthetic perception)
- Our level of connectedness to our bodies.

1.4.1 Importance of body image

Body image is a widespread preoccupation. In one study of college students, 74.4% of the normal-weight women stated that they thought about their weight or appearance “all the time” or “frequently.” But the women weren’t alone; the study also found that 46% of the normal-weight men surveyed responded the same way.

Encouragement to focus on appearance is at an all-time high in this culture, and with it comes the potential for a significant increase in negative body image.
According to the authors of The Adonis Complex, “There’s often a vicious circle here: the more a person focuses on his body, the worse he tends to feel about how he looks – obsession breeds discontent.”

Poor body image increases the risk for extreme weight/body control behaviors. Researchers have found that increased preoccupation with appearance and body dissatisfaction put people at greater risk for engaging in dangerous practices to control weight and size. Extreme dieting, exercise compulsion, laxative abuse, vomiting, smoking and use of anabolic steroids have all been associated with negative body image.

1.4.2 Positive Body Image

A positive body image is one that we should all strive for. This is when you know yourself and who you are. You have a very true perception of your size, shape, and weight. You see yourself as you are in the present. You accept yourself, even though you may be overweight. You believe in yourself and love yourself while still striving for something better. When you have a positive body image, no time is spent obsessing about food, weight, calories, exercise, etc. You are proud of who you are and feel comfortable in your own body.

We have a positive body image when we have a realistic perception of our bodies. We enjoy them just as they are. Positive body image involves understanding that healthy attractive bodies come in many shapes and sizes, and that physical appearance says very little about our character or value as a person. Healthy body image means that our assessment of our bodies is kept separate from our sense of self-esteem, and it ensures that we don’t spend an unreasonable amount of time worrying about food, weight and calories.
1.4.3 Negative body image

Negative body image can involve a distorted perception of size or shape, as well as more global feelings of shame, awkwardness, and anxiety about the body. People with negative body image tend to feel that their size or shape is a sign of personal failure, and that it is a very important indicator of worth. Poor body image has been linked to diminished mental performance, low self-esteem, anxiety, depression, sexual dysfunction, dieting and eating disorders.

Joan Brumberg, author of The Body Project, notes that the female ideal, and the pressure to achieve it, have become unrelenting. Not only are women encouraged to be thin, they are presented with a physical ideal that is diametrically opposed to the softness and curves more natural to the female body. The flip side of this experience is an ideal based upon exaggeration of male physiology. The authors of The Adonis Complex, state that hyper-muscularity has become increasingly important to men as a symbol of masculinity.

Very few women possess the genetics to naturally produce the ultra-long, thin body type so widely promoted, and when they do, it isn’t usually accompanied by large breasts. Moreover, there are limits to how little body fat a woman can possess and still have normal hormonal functioning. Below a certain level of body fat and dietary fat, a woman’s body cannot produce the estrogen needed for ovulation and menstruation. A woman also develops a higher risk of stress fractures because normal bone breakdown is accelerated in the absence of estrogen, and osteoporosis becomes more likely to negative body image.

Every day, however, we are told that these unattainable bodies are normal, desirable, and achievable. We compare ourselves to these ideals and feel displeased with our bodies for being so different, and when we fail to make
ourselves over in the image of these ideals, we feel even worse because we can’t seem to succeed at something so supposedly straightforward.

Studies at Stanford University and the University of Massachusetts found that 70% of college women say they feel worse about their own looks after reading women’s magazines. A study published in the Journal of Psychology of Men and Masculinity (2006) showed that not only did watching prime-time television and music videos appear to make men more uncomfortable with themselves, but that the discomfort led to sexual problems and risky behaviors. “People see the same images over and over and start to believe it’s a version of reality,” says Deborah Schooler, one of the researchers. “If those bodies are real and that’s possible, but you can’t attain it, how can you not feel bad about your own body?”

The media is a powerful conduit for transmission and reinforcement of cultural beliefs and values, and while it may not be exclusively responsible for determining the standards for physical attractiveness, it makes escaping frequent exposure to these images and attitudes almost impossible. Advertising, in particular, creates a seductive and toxic mix of messages for men and women. Jean Kilbourne, creator of the award-winning documentary Killing Us Softly, and author of Can’t Buy My Love: How Advertising Changes The Way We Think and Feel, says the impact on eating problems and body image may not be absolute, but it is real:

1.4.4 Factors affect body image

Body image, whether negative or positive, is shaped by a variety of factors:

- Comments from family, friends and others about our, their, and other people’s bodies, both positive and negative
- Ideals that we develop about physical appearance
- The frequency with which we compare ourselves to others
- Exposure to images of idealized versus normal bodies
- The experience of physical activity
- The experience of abuse, including sexual, physical, and emotional abuse
- The experience of prejudice and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, ability, sexual orientation or gender identity
- Sensory experiences, including pleasure, pain and illness

Size Prejudice

Intolerance of body diversity has a lot to do with the meaning of size and shape in our culture. Being thin and/or muscular has become associated with being “hard-working, successful, popular, beautiful, strong, and self-disciplined.” Being “fat” is associated with being “lazy, ignorant, hated, ugly, weak, and lacking in will-power.” As a result, “fat” isn’t a description like tall or redhead – it’s an indication of moral character: fat is bad. Size prejudice is absorbed at a very young age; children as young as five have ascribed negative characteristics to silhouettes of fatter children. In part, this is because size prejudice is also widely reinforced; media, friends, family, and even well-respected health professionals can echo the message that fatness is inherently wrong and dangerous, thereby exacerbating the pressure to control our bodies.

Family, Friends, and Lovers

If we grew up surrounded by people who spent a lot of time focused on their bodies (or ours), or who worried a lot about eating and exercise, chances are that we do, too. We learn from other people about the things that are considered important, and if appearance is considered critical, we’re going to feel that spending lots of time and energy on image is the right thing to do.
Sometimes the pressure from family isn’t about thinness as an aesthetic ideal. Sometimes it’s about the struggle to become integrated into a culture from another racial, ethnic, or religious background. Becky Thompson, in her book *A Hunger So Wide and So Deep*, says, “The culture of thinness in models has been used, erroneously, to dismiss the eating problems among women of color based on the notion that they are not interested in, or affected by a culture that demands thinness.” Research indicates that for African-American, Asian-American, and Latina women, increased assimilation into the “white culture” results in higher levels of body dissatisfaction. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the same may be true for men who come to accept being body-focused as the price of succeeding in American society.

**Peers and friends**

Peers and friends strengthen the development of body image through what researchers call “appearance training.” Conversations about clothes, looks, and attractiveness provide a context for paying attention to and interpreting appearance-related information. Friendships are particularly important in body image development because of the sheer amount of time involved, the value placed on friendships, and the ways in which friends create shared norms and expectations about appearance.

And when the group “vibe” about body image trends towards the negative, it’s difficult not to get dragged down. People report widely that their dining halls, bathrooms, locker-rooms and dorm rooms are filled with “bad body talk”: “I’ve got to get rid of this gut.” “Ugh, I hate the cellulite on my thighs.” “I feel fat.” Listening to so many of these conversations tends to reinforce the need to focus on appearance and make comparisons between ours and other’s bodies. It also increases the likelihood that we will find our appearance lacking.
Then there’s the issue of romance. Media messages, particularly those from advertising, strongly emphasize the role of appearance in romantic success. “Getting” the guy or the girl is reduced to possessing a stereotypical set of physical attributes, with no appreciation for personality, background, values, or beliefs. But studies suggest that people’s perceptions may not accurately reflect the body type preferred by a potential partner. Among heterosexuals, research using silhouettes of the opposite sex revealed a large gap between the perception and reality of attractiveness for both men and women. The body ideal that men thought women preferred was actually 15-20 lbs. more muscular than the one female respondents actually preferred. And the female silhouette that most men idealized was significantly bigger than the one the women expected them to prefer.

- One study of 263 women found that although they were generally more critical of social norms concerning the roles of women, they were not so critical of expectations about women’s weight and appearance. 48% of the participants had dieted in the past 3 months, almost half were dissatisfied with their weight, and low self-esteem was strongly linked to body dissatisfaction.
- Researchers speculate that transgendered individuals may be particularly at risk for body dissatisfaction and eating disorders, due to issues around estrangement from the body, dealing with biological gender, and managing the physiological aspects of surgery and hormone shots.

### 1.4.5 Improving body image

Some people think they need to change how they look to feel good about themselves. But all you need to do is change the way you see your body and how you think about yourself. Here are some tips on doing that:
• **De-emphasize numbers.** Neither weight nor Body Mass Index tell us anything substantial about body composition and health. Eating habits, activity patterns, and other self-care choices are much more important. For a more complete discussion of healthy weight, see our page on Weight Concerns.

• **Stay off of the scale.** It’s really hard to cultivate an attitude of body acceptance and trust when you are basically climbing on the scale to ask if it’s OK to feel good about yourself that day. It is always ok to feel good about yourself – don’t let a machine tell you any differently.

• **Realize that you cannot change your body type**: lightly muscled, bulky, or rounded, you need to appreciate your body and work with your genetic inheritance. As UCLA SNAC says, “Instead of thinking of it as a limit, think of it as your personal best.”

• **Stop comparing yourself to others.** Your physiology is unique to you; you can’t get a sense of your body’s needs and abilities with someone else’s body as a reference point. And the research has shown that frequent comparing tends to increase negative body image.

• **Limit the “body checking” that you do throughout the day.** Researchers have also found that negative body image is reinforced by lots of time in front of the mirror, or frequent checks of (perceived) body flaws. Instead, consider rearranging your living space so that you aren’t running into full-length mirrors every time you turn around.

• **Move and enjoy your body** – not because you have to, but because it makes you feel strong, energized, and peaceful. Walking, swimming, biking, dancing, Ultimate Frisbee – there are many activities that emphasize pleasure rather than controlling your body.

• **Spend time with people who have a healthy relationship with food, activity, and their bodies**. It will make a difference in how you feel about these issues – and yourself. Also, remember to set a good example for
others by refraining from “fat talk” when you are with friends and family. Think of it as the psychic equivalent of second-hand smoke: you don’t want other people exposed to that, right?

- **Practice thought -stopping when it comes to negative statements about yourself.** Distract yourself, refuse to get into the comments, and focus on what you like about yourself instead. You CAN reprogram your self-talk about your body, and positive statements are needed to replace the old messages. This approach works over time, even if the positive self-talk feels awkward or forced in the beginning.

- **Nurture your inner self.** Body image is linked to self-esteem for men and women both, so engaging in pastimes that leave you feeling good can actually help you to feel comfortable in your own skin. Particularly helpful are activities that are relaxing, soothing, spiritual, or that allow us to connect to others. Remember: when we don’t have ways to manage stress or anxiety, we are more susceptible to being critical of our bodies.

- **Question the degree to which your self-esteem depends on your appearance.** Although we are repeatedly told “Change Your Shape and Change Your Life,” basing your happiness on this foundation is likely to lead to failure and frustration, and may prevent you from exploring ways to truly enhance your life.

- **Recognize that your body is your own, no matter what shape or size it comes in.** Try to focus on how strong and healthy your body is and the things it can do, not what's wrong with it or what you feel you want to change about it. If you're worried about your weight or size, check with your doctor to verify that things are OK. But it's no one's business but your own what your body is like — ultimately, you have to be happy with yourself.

- **Identify which aspects of your appearance you can realistically change and which you can't.** Humans, by definition, are imperfect. It's
what makes each of us unique and original! Everyone (even the most
perfect-seeming celeb) has things that they can't change and need to
accept — like their height, for example, or their shoe size. Remind
yourself that "real people aren't perfect and perfect people aren't real
(they're usually airbrushed!)".

- **If there are things about yourself that you want to change and can,
do this by making goals for yourself.** For example, if you want to get
fit, make a plan to exercise every day and eat healthy. Then keep track of
your progress until you reach your goal. Meeting a challenge you set for
yourself is a great way to boost self-esteem!

- **When you hear negative comments coming from within, tell yourself
to stop.** Appreciate that each person is more than just how he or she looks
on any given day. We're complex and constantly changing. Try to focus
on what's unique and interesting about yourself.

- **Try building your self-esteem by giving yourself three compliments
every day.** While you're at it, every evening list three things in your day
that really gave you pleasure. It can be anything from the way the sun felt
on your face, the sound of your favorite band, or the way someone
laughed at your jokes. By focusing on the good things you do and the
positive aspects of your life, you can change how you feel about yourself.

Some people with physical disabilities or differences may feel they are not seen
for their true selves because of their bodies and what they can and can't do.
Other people may have such serious body image issues that they need a bit
more help. Working with a counselor or therapist can help some people gain
perspective and learn to focus on their individual strengths as well as develop
healthier thinking.
Many people that suffer from binge eating disorder do not have positive body images. Instead, they have very distorted images of how they see themselves. Here are some other ways to create a positive body image for yourself.

1. **Create a list of people that you admire. Write down why you admire each person. As you are writing the characteristics you like, take notice of what you are writing down.**

   For example, let’s say that you have a high regard for Oprah. Your list might include her generosity towards people, her willingness to support what she believes in, and her strong character that went for success no matter what background she came from. You do not admire Oprah because of her looks; you admire her for the difference that she has made in the world. For her contribution to society. How she has touched and changed so many lives.

2. **Remember a time in your life when you felt great about yourself.**

   Travel back in your life to a time when you were happy with your body. Maybe this was high school or college. Whatever the time, just close your eyes and remember how you felt. Let these good feelings radiate within you.

3. **Write down what you like about yourself now.**

   Take out a piece of paper and write down everything that you like about yourself: your legs, your eyebrows, your smile, your hair, etc. The key here is to focus on the likes of yourself instead of the many dislikes. Start appreciating what you do like about yourself. This will make you feel better overall.

4. **Notice how you carry yourself when you walk.**

   Do you walk with your head down looking at the ground? Do you slump your shoulders? Perk up! Start walking and making eye contact with people. Hold your head up high. Walk with your shoulders held back.
5. **Start exercising.**

If you haven’t exercised in a while, start off slow. Go for a walk outside on a nice day. If you are used to exercising, keep it up and change up your routine so that you don’t get bored. When you exercise you begin to feel good about yourself, even if it is for 15 minutes. Start off slow and work your way up.

6. **Spend time with positive people.**

Take a look at the people closest to you. Are they positive or negative people? Chances are if they are negative this attitude will reflect on you and your attitude. Try to limit your time with any negativity as this will only make you feel bad about yourself. You will focus on the things that you do not like about yourself.

Start feeling good about yourself and learn to accept yourself. Little by little you will notice changes that have occurred. Learn to be on your side instead of always being against yourself. Put your shoulders back and quit thinking about what you’re not. Love the person you are and the person that you are becoming.

**Body image and lack of self confidence**

Many people who have a self image problem lack self confidence because of believing that others won’t like their looks. Those people perform poorly during social interactions because of being conscious about their looks all the time. When those people manage to fix their self image problem they start to become more confident.

In short, if you have a self image problem then forget about clothes for now and work on fixing that problem! in most cases people can come to love their looks after discovering that they used to see a distorted mental image in their minds!
When that image is fixed you will feel confident around others and your social relations will improve as a result.

1.4.6 Clothing and positive body image

Every body feel more confident when wearing new clothes do you feel that you are looking better when you wear your favorite shirt? What’s happening here? And how can clothes affect your body image? The answer is simple; the mind considers clothes an additional part of your body.

After knowing these facts you can make use of this information to improve your self image by always picking up good clothes that suits you.

Never wear something that you don’t like or that you have doubts about. if you have some important event like a presentation or a job interview then wear your best clothes. This will help you improve your self image right before that event and so you will feel more confident while you are there.

Many people think about plastic surgery because they are not satisfied with their looks without understanding the fact that the problem could only be with their mental self image and not with their looks. Some people even report feeling no different at all after undergoing surgery. This usually happens because the problem was initially with their mental image and not their real looks.

How does your mind perceive clothes

The shocking truth about your mind is that it considers your clothes as an additional extension to your body. If you did wear something that looks bad then the mental self image you have in your mind will be bad until you wear something else and on the contrary wearing something that looks good will make your mind load a positive self image until you take these clothes off.
That’s why you may feel more confident when wearing some clothes while feel less confident while wearing other ones.

The mental self image is the image you have for yourself in your mind and if for any reason that body image become distorted you might think that you are ugly even if you are not.

1.5 BODY CATHEXIS

Body cathexis refers to person’s investment of mental or emotional energy in their own body. Body cathexis drives multiple behaviors, such as clothing choices and weight management, and cosmetics purchases. Studies show that people are more satisfied with their hair and eyes than theirs waists.

- Consumers who were more satisfied with their bodies were more frequent users of such preening products as hair conditioner, blow dryers, cologne, facial bronzer, tooth polish and pumice soap.

Body cathexis is a concept that is closely related to body image, but more specifically addresses the degree of satisfaction one has with his/her body (Kaiser, 1997). This construct is described as multidimensional and complex (Kaiser, 1997). As satisfaction with one’s body can be influenced by many different factors, such as cultural ideals and gender, body cathexis can vary from body area to body area (Kaiser, 1997).

Jourard and Secord (1955) found body part size to be a predictor of body cathexis proposed that females evaluate their present body by comparing it with the concept of an ideal body that is shared by most women. The results of Jourard and Secord’s (1955) study regarding female body cathexis suggested that a positive body cathexis is associated with possessing a relatively small body frame, with exception to the bust area. Within their study, Jourard and Secord (1955) also explored whether or not a shared ideal for body shape or size exists. The researchers uncovered a small variability in ideal sizes,
indicating the existence of a standard ideal body frame (Jourard & Secord, 1955)

In attempting to specify precisely the relationship between body-cathexis and self-esteem, researches have frequently been directed toward the question of the differential contribution of cathexis for specific body aspects. The differential contribution of cathexis for specific body aspects to self-esteem was examined with the use of a stepwise regression procedure. The results indicate that body aspects previously considered most important to self-esteem are largely a function of the failure of previous studies to examine the role of suppressor variables. Further, body aspects stereotypically considered important contribute minimally to self-esteem level, and the total proportion of variance in self-esteem accounted for by body-cathexis is contributed by a small number of body aspects.

Apparel as the product of standard sizing is reflected in female evaluation of self and body, i.e., body cathexis. A body cathexis scale developed by Rosen and Ross. Analysis of data indicated satisfaction with overall fit at lower body was less satisfying than at upper body and total body. Satisfaction with fit at specific sites below the waist (hip and thigh) was also generally less satisfying than at sites above the waist (neck and arm). Fashion at the time, close fit at lower body, reflected in blue jeans and slim skirts, no doubt influenced more stringent evaluation of fit at lower body. The body cathexis scores were slightly lower for lower body and lower body sites. Correlation for lower body fit satisfaction and lower body cathexis was statistically significant, confirming a relationship between the respondents' satisfaction with fit and feelings towards personal body.

The relationship between perceived somatotype and body-cathexis for female subjects and to determine the perceived ideal somatotype of college females. As subjects' self-perceived somatotype deviated from the ideal and moved
toward the mesomorphic and endomorphic, body-cathexis scores decreased. Contrary to stereotypic assumptions, perceived somatotype was unrelated to the fashion and clothing measures.

Body cathexis may be considered an integral part of body image and self-concept. It is the evaluative dimension of body image and is defined as positive and negative feelings toward one’s body (Jourard, 1958). In the world where body image acceptance and appreciation are vital parts of life among many Americans, there is a great amount of peer pressure placed upon young American adults to have a model perfect body. A significant amount of pressure to be socially accepted is placed upon college lecturers, in particular. Everyone looks a certain way, dresses in the same clothing and goes out to the same spots in town. Although it’s not necessarily a stated face that going to college makes more self-aware and self-conscious, for those who have experienced college life, they know the truth. Body cathexis, the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction people have with their bodies and their bodies’ separate parts (e.g., face, breasts, hips, waist, thighs, and feet) is an integral part of self-concept, body image, and self-esteem (Trautmann, Lokken-Worthy & Lokken, 2007). The truth is that when you enter college, are faced with a more subjective peer response, new lifestyle routines and new eating habits. Because of all these negligible factors, many women resort to binge dieting, unhealthy eating habits and hazardous health decisions.

College women report high levels of body dissatisfaction and weight concerns. Concerns about one’s weight, dieting, and related behaviors are so prevalent among college-aged women that they often are considered to be a normative part of the female college experience (Celio, Luce, Bryson, Winzelberg, Cunning & Rockwell, 2006). Upon entering college, women are faced with the self-unexplored territory of a college lifestyle and surroundings. Many women become more self-conscious of their body image perception, and resort to dieting and irregular consumption patterns.
An individual’s body cathexis, or degree of satisfaction with the body, is the evaluation of the appearance created through appearance management. This study will measure the degree of satisfaction with the appearance created through weight loss. An individual’s body cathexis is hypothesized to affect the individual’s clothing behavior. This research will investigate the relationship between body cathexis and clothing behavior to determine if a person with a higher body cathexis has a different clothing behavior than someone with a lower body cathexis. The relationship between created appearance and clothing behavior will also be investigated to determine if a woman who loses weight in a particular body area exhibits clothing behavior that is different than someone who did not lose weight. This study will also investigate the difference between current clothing behavior and clothing behavior prior to weight loss.

Body cathexis is a concept that is closely related to body image, but more specifically addresses the degree of satisfaction one has with his/her body (Kaiser, 1997). This construct is described as multidimensional and complex (Kaiser, 1997). As satisfaction with one’s body can be influenced by many different factors, such as cultural ideals and gender, body cathexis can vary from body area to body area (Kaiser, 1997).

Jourard and Secord (1955) found body part size to be a predictor of body cathexis in men, as males desired to possess larger body parts. They proposed that females evaluate their present body by comparing it with the concept of an ideal body that is shared by most women. The results of Jourard and Secord’s (1955) study regarding female body cathexis suggested that a positive body cathexis is associated with possessing a relatively small body frame, with exception to the bust area. Within their study, Jourard and Secord (1955) also explored whether or not a shared ideal for body shape or size exists. The researchers uncovered a small variability in ideal sizes, indicating the existence of a standard ideal body frame (Jourard & Secord, 1955).
Hwang (1996) defined body cathexis as a factor that aids in the formation of clothing behavior and attitude towards clothing. Many consumers perceive an innate problem with their body when their clothing fails to accentuate the body in a desired way. However, quite often, these consumers neglect to realize that clothing needs to be designed for the body and not vice versa. These consumers also frequently rely on outside influences when shaping their ideal body. Bodies of female fashion models are considered to represent the perfect figure, and women that fall short of those standards are left with negative thoughts about their own bodies (Labat & DeLong, 1990). In addition, individuals often have a perceived divergence in their ideal physical self and the actual self (Kaiser, 1997). This divergence between the actual body shape/size and ideal body shape/size means that the consumer has a desire to have a shape other than the one she possesses. Notions of an ideal physical self are formed from elements of society and standards of beauty to which the person has been exposed, and these often dictate the way they view themselves. The socially accepted standard of an ideal body has been found to create body image disturbances and contribute to negative body cathexis among women (Cusumano & Thompson, 1997).

1.6 CLOTHING INTEREST

Everybody owns a wardrobe which is fulfilled with clothing. People wear different clothes depending on weather, mood or a place they visit. It helps them to look smarter, to have better mood, or just keeps them warm. Many situations demand wearing smart clothes. situations also demand special behavior or courtesy. Having dinner in an exclusive restaurant demands not only a good suit or a party dress but also being polite and cultural. It is not the clothing that changes person’s behavior but the situation. Moreover, wearing beautiful evening dress demands straight standing or sitting, keeping legs together and speaking wisely. Another example is wearing jeans and a T-shirt while doing shopping or having a barbecue. Nobody expects that a woman
carrying many bags after doing shopping will be smiling or walking moving hips. And again the situation makes us to behave in a special way changing clothes do not change anybody into another person. Wearing a suit cannot change anybody into erudite or polite person. If one is rude and impolite even a Gucci suit does not change it. A women who usually is quiet and peaceful will not change into vampire because of a red mini-skirt and red shirt sometimes people change a little while wearing some special clothes. A working women who usually wears casual clothes will probably act smarter and more sophisticated while having a suit on. Also others will treat her more serious as a woman who know what she wants. However, she behaves different because of the clothes or because of a people’s new attitude towards her.

The social aspects of clothing have revolved around traditions regarding certain items of clothing intrinsically suited different gender roles. In particular, the wearing of skirts and trousers has given rise to common phrases expressing implied restrictions in use and disapproval of offending behaviour. For example, ancient Greeks often considered the wearing of trousers by Persian men as a sign of an effeminate attitude. Women's clothing in Victorian fashion was used as a means of control and admiration. Reactions to the elaborate confections of French fashion led to various calls for reform on the grounds of both beauty (Artistic and Aesthetic dress) and health (dress reform; especially for undergarments and lingerie). Although trousers for women did not become fashionable until the later 20th century, women began wearing men's trousers (suitably altered) for outdoor work a hundred years earlier. In the 1960s, André Courrèges introduced long trousers for women as a fashion item, leading to the era of the pantsuit and designer jeans and the gradual eroding of the prohibitions against girls and women wearing trousers in schools, the workplace, and fine restaurants. Corsets also have long been used for fashion, and body modification, such as waistline reduction. There
were, and are, many different styles and types of corsets, varying depending on the intended use, corset maker's style, and the fashions of the era. The clothing industry is a product of the modern age. Prior to the mid-19th century, virtually all clothing was handmade for individuals, either as home production or on order from dressmakers and tailors. By the beginning of the 20th century — with the rise of new technologies such as the sewing machine, the rise of global capitalism and the development of the factory system of production, and the proliferation of retail outlets such as department stores — clothing had increasingly come to be mass-produced in standard sizes and sold at fixed prices. Although the fashion industry developed first in Europe and America, today it is an international and highly globalized industry, with clothing often designed in one country, manufactured in another, and sold in a third. For example, an American fashion company might source fabric in China and have the clothes manufactured in Vietnam, finished in Italy, and shipped to a warehouse in the United States for distribution to retail outlets internationally.

The clothing industry consists of four levels: the production of raw mater principally fibres and textiles but also leather and fur; the production of fashion goods by designers, manufacturers, contractors, and others; retail sales; and various forms of advertising and promotion. These levels consist of many separate but interdependent sectors, all of which are devoted to the goal of satisfying consumer demand for apparel under conditions that enable participants in the industry to operate at a profit.

The dress of an individual and that dress affected others' behavior toward the individual, determine the types of behaviors, the types of dress manipulations, dress had a significant effect The most frequently operationalized concepts using dress manipulations were labeled “dress,” “status,” and “attractiveness.” Researchers using dress or attractiveness or attire as the primary dress
manipulation did not necessarily control for other dress variables (e.g., makeup, hair-style) in their research.

While dieting and exercise are popular methods of changing one’s body shape and body image, clothing is often the medium used to visibly project the change. Clothing can also be used to manage one’s appearance while experiencing weight loss. However, weight loss programs and fitness centers usually do not focus on clothing. Clothing is an extension of the bodily self and the body scheme (Schilder, 1950) and represents the nearest aspect of one’s environment. As such, it is an integral part of body image (Horn & Gurel, 1981; Kaiser, 1997) and can be used to not only change body image but to transfigure bodily appearances (Schilder, 1950).

According to Markee, Carey, & Pedersen (1990), individuals might use clothing as a way to camouflage perceived figure faults or flaws and bring their bodies closer to their perceptions of the norm, thus temporarily improving body cathexis, or satisfaction with the body. They contend that clothing may create a new and better perception of the body. Cash (1990) also contends that body image may be enhanced through aesthetic self-management – by wearing favorite clothes, jewelry, cosmetics, or fragrance.

Appearance is one of the most prominent ways to display and reinforce self-concept. Interest in appearance is multifaceted and may reflect characteristics central to self-definition through extensive time, energy and resources expended on appearance (Kaiser, 1997). In consumer research, it is argued that the social self is achieved through the purchase and use of products that portray an image consistent with (or a compromise between) the consumer’s actual and/or ideal self-concept (Sproles & Burns, 1993). Women who are dissatisfied with their body may buy and wear clothing that camouflage certain body parts or emphasize other body parts, both of which may help to bring the perceived body image more in line with the ideal body image. Dieting may also be used as a tool to help bring the perceived body image closer to the ideal.
By the research we can have a better understanding of what will be satisfactory to the consumer if we know: why people choose the clothes they do; how society influences them in their selection; the relationships between personal values, interests, attitudes, self-concepts and personality factors and the effect of clothing on individuals.

**Contemporary conception of beauty and clothing**

Contemporary women viewed beauty and fashion in diverse ways and the only consensus position was that a beautiful woman is one who looks healthy, clean, well-postured and appears to take care of herself. Among young women, this usually meant a "natural" look but among middle-aged women, there was more tolerance for "some help for nature."

The women in this study consistently defined beauty more as "personality" or the inner qualities of a person rather than external appearance. The quality of a relationship with a person or a person's attitudes toward life and other people were increasingly viewed as beauty -- a position that de-emphasized the role of clothing in achieving "beauty."

When pressed to described women of physical beauty, two different models emerged. One was of the contemporary, natural women. She has a free spirit, is liberated, and wears both casual clothing, such as jeans and casual shirts, or wears exotic dresses with extreme cleavage, no bras and often back-less design.

The other model of beauty was the woman who appeared healthy and had a good body. She wears attractive clothing but not exotic clothing.

**1.6.1 The Role of Clothing**

Clothing was worn to fit into women's groups or her life style. Clothing was much more individualistic in the sense that fashions were determined by many types of groups or segments rather than one fashion for the society as a whole.

A typical comment reflected this view: "People notice clothing because it explains a lot about your personality," Another woman amplified this view when she said, "You can't judge a book by its cover but clothing gives a good
clue about which people are alike "a good dress is not as important in lifestyles as it once is. Pants have replaced the dress for many occasions.

Since consumer’s attitude may reduce their purchase or increase it, consideration of determinants of decision-making process according to their body image, body cathexes and self concept in purchase goods would be justified.

Clothing is often referred as a “second skin” (Horn & Gurel, 1981). It is also a mode of communication through which people express their personal identity, relationship with others, and varying circumstances of life (Damhorst, Miller- Spillman, & Michelman, 2005). Adolescents place great importance on clothing (Littrell & Eicher, 1973). The use of clothing is an important factor in social interactions (Francis, 1992; Kness, 1983). It plays an important role in peer acceptance. Littrell and Eicher (1973) suggested that clothing is more than a factor which differentiates individuals in friendship groups of a person and thus becomes a source of identity and status related to group membership. Smucker and Creekmore (1972) commented that apparel use in the middle stage is marked by sameness in appearance due to the popularity of certain clothing items. Clothing and appearance play an important part in the physical, cognitive, emotional, and social aspect of human development (Damhorst, Miller-Spillman & Michelman, 2005). Since the use of dress is one of the ways to secure a place in a social group, clothing can help to ratify the self and improve self-esteem. Low self-concept is found to be related to high perceived clothing deprivation (Francis, 1992). Inversely, clothing deprivation or clothing dissatisfaction, related to issues of weight gain and body size, may further lower self-esteem and create an unstable body image. Clothing satisfaction is affected by self-esteem, social insecurity, age and socio-economic status (Kness, 1983). somatotype for college females Clothing helps individuals to be creative and expressive, meet perceptions of beauty and attractiveness and satisfy social and emotional needs (Sontag & Lee, 2004).
Complete satisfaction with an apparel purchase depends on the fulfillment of several aspects of consumers’ design preferences. These design preferences may be a direct result of an individual’s current figure or body shape, their ideal body shape, and their feelings towards their body (Chattaraman & Rudd, 2006; Feather, Ford, & Herr, 1996; Kwon & Parham, 1994; Yoo, 2003). Kwon and Parham (1994) found that consumers desire to camouflage their bodies as a direct result of negative feelings toward their body. Yoo (2003) found that consumers with body shapes similar to the diamond shape preferred a loosely fitting jacket silhouette and suggested that these individuals prefer to cover areas of their bodies that do not reflect the ideal proportions. Feather et al. (1996) discovered that female athletes preferred more coverage on their lower bodies, an area in which they indicated dissatisfaction. Body dissatisfaction, and particularly consumers’ feelings towards their bodies, has been linked to low self-esteem (Striegel-Moore & Franco, 2002). Clothing has been proposed as a tool for altering the perceptual body, therefore altering the level of body satisfaction that an individual experiences (Fiore & Kimle, 1997).

Apparel as the product of standard sizing is reflected in female evaluation of self and body, i.e., body cathexis. Researches indicated satisfaction with overall fit at lower body was less satisfying than at upper body and total body. Satisfaction with fit at specific sites below the waist (hip and thigh) was also generally less satisfying than at sites above the waist (neck and arm). Fashion at the time, close fit at lower body, reflected in blue jeans and slim skirts, no doubt influenced more stringent evaluation of fit at lower body. The body cathexis scores were slightly lower for lower body and lower body sites. Correlation for lower body fit satisfaction and lower body cathexis was statistically significant, confirming a relationship between the respondents’ satisfaction with fit and feelings towards personal body.

There was a gap in the literature about the interaction between body shape and garment shape preferences of female consumers. Existing research has mostly
addressed the influence of body cathexis on design preferences. The few studies in which body shape is addressed operationalize design preferences with respect to the garment

1.7 KEY CONCEPTS

The key concepts that will be used in this research are body image and body cathexis. To aid the reader in understanding the differences between these concepts as well as the relationship among these concepts, an overview of self-concept, body image, self-esteem and body cathexis is provided.

![Diagram showing the relationships among key concepts.](image)

**Fig 1.1 The relationships among key concepts.**
Self-concept is the global perception of who one is (Kaiser, 1997, p. 147). Kalish (1975) defined self-concept as the total image one has about oneself; it contains one’s actual experiences and the interpretations about those experiences. Within that total image, self concept is multidimensional and encompasses several facets of the self.

Body image and self-esteem are considered the most important aspects of self-concept (Kalish, 1975). Self-esteem is the way we feel toward the self we perceive, an appraisal resulting from self-concept. Self-esteem refers to the way one evaluates one’s self (Laurer & Handel, 1977).

Body image refers to “the mental picture one has of his or her body at any given moment in time” (Kaiser, 1997, p. 98). Fallon (1990) states that one’s body image includes his/her perceptions of the cultural standards, his/her perceptions of the extent to which he/she matches the standard, and the perception of the relative importance that members of society place on that match. Research has indicated that body image and self-esteem are related (Cash & Hicks, 1990; Matz et al., 2002); however, the focus of this research will be body cathexis. Body cathexis is closely related to body image, but is the “degree of satisfaction with the body, however, rather than the image per se” (Kaiser, 1997, p. 108). Body cathexis may be considered an integral part of body image and self-concept. It is the evaluative dimension of body image and is defined as positive and negative feelings toward one’s body (Jourard, 1958).

Women are socialized to pay more attention to appearance than men (Kaiser, 1997). Therefore, women are more aware of the manipulative potential of appearance than are men. Clothing can be used to create a favorable public image and influence the perceptions of others. By modifying the body through weight loss and changing one’s appearance through the use of clothing, an individual can change the perceptions of others so that they become more favorable which favorable evaluations by others can lead to an increased self-concept.
People have a drive to evaluate themselves. Social comparison occurs when individuals evaluate themselves in relation to others or to some standard, such as the thin image that is portrayed by the media. This comparison may result in increased or decrease feelings of self-esteem.

The extent to which individuals are satisfied with their bodies influences their feelings about themselves. This satisfaction, in turn, will affect interaction with others (Tatarka, 1995). The meanings that individuals use to define the self are shaped by interactions with others. Social comparison is a process by which individuals can distinguish themselves from others. Individuals compare themselves to others and to the ideal self, which is usually generated from cultural ideals.

Cultural categories and social comparison are integral aspects of social identity. Social identity claims that: (a) people attempt to achieve and maintain a positive self-image, and (b) self-image is made up of personal and social identity.

Social identity is thought to arise from group membership, and personal identity from personal achievements. It is thought that any improvement in personal or social identity will lead to an improvement in self-image (Rudd & Lennon, 1994). Women who are in a commercial weight loss program can attain an improvement in their self-image through their personal achievement.