

RECONCILE

A way back to peace in our
bodies

“What we think, hate, loathe and wonder about the acceptability of our bodies reaches much further and impacts far more than our appearance. The long reach of body shame can impact who and how we love, work, parent, communicate and build relationships.” Brene Brown

Accepting our bodies has the power to influence our sense of worth, our confidence, our marriages, our calling and our intuitive knowing how to mother or be a friend, solve a problem, heal, and create.

The woman's body is one of the most beautiful of all creations and yet has long been shamed, violated and condemned. There has been an assault

against women and their bodies, and although we can't change what culture hurls against us, we can take back our authority over ourselves. As we do, we pioneer a path for girls to grow up in a world where it is normal to embody their feminine worth. This is for us, and it's for them.

This booklet is a guide is to help reconcile our relationship with our *own* bodies. May this tool bless you to find the truest sense of Shalom- peace, unity, wholeness and completeness. May you become integrated and connected in your physical self. May you bravely step into this work because, "... the acceptability of our bodies reaches much further and impacts far more than our appearance." -Brene Brown.

Acknowledge

It is so easy to disconnect from our bodies because of judgement (ourselves or others), trauma, years of degrading or shame and a general dissatisfaction in the size, shape, color, or even physical pain.

Our most difficult work is this first step. It is easy to blame the culture or a specific influence in our lives for the shame we feel. But we are the heroines in our own story and taking back that power is what we are here to do. The reason why this first step is so hard is because it invites us to take a humble look at the places we have chosen to self critique, place judgement and agree with the false narratives around our worthiness and body image. (Disclaimer: Many women have experienced real trauma that requires

professional healing help, if that is you, please reach out and seek professional assistance. This resource does not replace professional council.)

This is for women who are ready to heal their relationship towards themselves. The steps in which we will do this are as follows:

1. Feel the weight of your own negative judgement/disconnection
2. Apologize
3. Choose to Forgive
4. Healing
5. Joy- even Delight- in your own body
6. Practice

Feel the weight of judgement

This is not about adding to our shame but becoming free from it. Close your eyes and imagine the times you've condemned your body- what has that done to your heart? Your soul? Your body?

1. Body Scan

This requires time and stillness. When you're ready, find a nurturing space where you can be comfortable and quiet. Take a few deep breaths and invite the Holy Spirit to illuminate the places you've caused sadness because of disconnect or disapproval. Be quiet, honest and willing to listen. What comes to mind first? What area of your body wants you to appreciate it? What area of your body have you most disapproved of?

2. Feel the depth of the pain

Use the wonderful tool of your imagination to picture what the years of cursing and judgement have done.

This is a simple review of moments, memories, things that were said over you, the things you've agreed with. Write them down or let it play out like a movie highlight reel in your head. Find those places in order to let them go. Search and allow your body to guide you. This is not about staying in those memories, but allowing God's love to touch them.

3. Apologize

This can look like a letter you journal to yourself. Or it can happen in a meditative posture as you do the body scan. You might find that actually touching or holding your palms to the area you are apologizing to might be helpful. Visualize reconnecting happening as you acknowledge and release. I chose to write a letter of apology here.

Reconcile

FORGIVENESS

I choose to forgive myself for believing _____ that was said over me.

I choose to forgive myself for agreeing with the lie that _____ was not enough.

I choose to forgive myself for _____

Make this part your own. Write it out, speak it out, silently pray it out.

Forgiveness is a free gift that releases us from the judgement and shame.

Forgiveness allows us to fully let go and surrender to God's bigger narrative which is that WE ARE LOVED, fully and completely right now.

Healing

Now you get to picture or imagine what healing and peace look like. Imagine you being reconnected to your own body- in all of her beauty and imperfections.

Peace is allowing all the displaced parts to come home. It's welcoming the unloveable places to find rest. It's finding that every part of you is wrapped in love. It's kindness and care, nurture and nourishment. Describe what healing and peace look like for you.

When we remove negative statements, we need to replace them with positive ones. Here are a few ideas, but you can write your own unique to your story:::

- ❖ I am lovely.
- ❖ I am radiant.
- ❖ It's fun to be me.
- ❖ My worthiness does not depend on my desirability.
- ❖ I get to steward my body with kindness.
- ❖ I am valuable.
- ❖ I am full of beauty.
- ❖ I am grateful.

Joy

GOD'S HELP

To return to this joy we need God's help in our commitments. This is about delight much more than it is duty. It is our joy to choose our own bodies knowing the gift they are to us.

(You have full freedom to make this your own, here is an example to start.)

Dear me,

I choose to welcome every part of my body and see her as the beauty that she is. I choose to befriend her, love her and nourish her, for better or worse, sickness and health. When she is hurting and in pain, I will listen. I will also

listen for hunger and sleep, movement and rest. I will treat her with grace. I will choose to see the beauty God put in her as unique and wonderfully made, a display of creative splendor. I choose to commit to this because I choose joy in ordinary places and gratitude in imperfection. I will learn to cherish and honor even the parts that feel unloveable I will welcome. I will choose to embody Shalom- peace, unity, wholeness.

Signed, _____ date: _____

PRACTICE

Now we get to practice nurturing and nourishing our bodies. What is a rhythm you can daily to check in, connect and listen?

Our bodies are constantly communicating to us, we get to practice listening.

The final step to this reconciliation process is to write a thank you note to your body for how she has served you. She has gotten you through many things that are worth acknowledging and celebrating!

Dear Beautiful Body of Mine,
Thank you for . . .

Imagine what you would look like if you filled yourself with blessing? Are there any habits that you could change to help become the healthiest versions of yourself?

Things I want to do today to take care of my body:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.