TI 088
Having Problems Loving Your Body?
Body Focus Theme Group

By
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Introduction

This manual has been created to assist individuals who struggle with body focus. Body focus in this context refers to time disproportionately spent thinking about the body, which leads to some degree of psychological distress that affects daily functioning. The following goals have been enumerated to assist potential leaders in determining whether this manual is appropriate for the needs of their clientele. In addition, these goals outline the overall objectives that ideally will be achieved by participating in this group. This manual also includes the theoretical Model for Treatment, general Group Format, suggested Population, and Session-by-Session instructions for the facilitator.

Goals

“Having Problems Loving Your Body?” is a thematic group that has the following specific goals:

- To reduce the stigma that surrounds individuals with body focus concerns
- To raise awareness as to the personal impact on body image issues of the media or input from social relationships
- To raise participants’ awareness of the specific origin of body focus concerns
- To reduce participants’ voluntary and involuntary comparisons between themselves and others
- To teach participants to discuss body focus issues using mindfulness terminology and to increase reliance on somatic messages (e.g. biofeedback)
- To assist participants in identifying triggers of negative thoughts and adjusting thought patterns
- To provide participants with positive role models
- To inform participants about proper nutrition
- To provide participants coping strategies
- To teach participants to accept their bodies and reduce esteem contingent on body image
Model for Treatment

We believe that the pursuit of change should be the focus of any group therapy treatment. In the case of this thematic group, a primary objective of this treatment will be to diminish the power and importance of body image in the belief system of our clients, thereby reducing the maladaptive behaviors that result from an over-identification with body focus. We conceptualize the change process in this group within the broad theoretical framework of Miller and Rollnick’s (2002) Motivational Interviewing. Operating within this framework, we believe that change occurs by way of stimulating the three following conditions: 1) creating a collaborative environment that honors clients’ unique perspectives and backgrounds, 2) eliciting or drawing from the person the reasons and motivation for changing, and 3) creating an environment in which the client feels autonomous to make their own decisions about how best to approach change.

Consistent with Miller and Rollnick’s approach, we believe the primary change mechanism within this thematic group will occur once the client develops an understanding of the discrepancy between her maladaptive behaviors and the impact these behaviors have on her ultimate goals and dreams for how she would prefer to live her life. We believe that attempting to illuminate this discrepancy will begin to break down clients’ fossilized beliefs that body image should play a key role in clients’ self-worth, and that by slowly unpacking this discrepancy, clients’ will begin to become unstuck from their body focus. We expect the change process in this thematic group to unfold in three distinct phases, all of which will have embedded within them the aforementioned principles espoused by Miller and Rollnick.

Phase 1: Raising Consciousness

The first phase of change involves raising awareness about the negative aspects of an over-developed body focus, with the intent of increasing clients’ readiness to change. We plan to elicit the negative impact of body focus from the clients’ own experience, rather than engaging in straight lecture. We believe the information that we want to convey will be more meaningful—and thus more effective in enhancing clients’ readiness to change— if the damaging effects of body focus are drawn from clients’ own lives and lived experience. We plan to engage in several activities (e.g. guided imagery) that will hopefully serve to decrease resistance and begin to facilitate clients’ thought process around the negative impact of body focus. We believe that clients that join this group likely lack key knowledge about these negative effects, including: the immediacy of the payoff provided by a body focus and the illusion of control that maladaptive body focus behaviors afford, the impact of their beliefs and behaviors on their relationships,
emotional well-being and sense of self, the delayed gratification aspect of adaptive coping, and the social justice implications of being socialized in a culture that places a disproportionate amount of emphasis on female body image. We believe that by eliciting these issues from the lived experiences of our clients, clients will begin to become more comfortable with the idea of change.

Phase 2: Motivational Enhancement

The second phase of change involves more actively generating clients’ motivation to change. Building from the awareness raising that occurred in the preceding phase, we will begin to ask clients to consider the overall question, “How did I get to where I view my body this way, and how do my views influence my behaviors and my world?” While sharing several components of the tasks accomplished in the raising consciousness phase, this phase will attempt to actively engage clients in change talk. Examples of generating deep thinking on this issue include asking clients to calculate the amount of time they spend on their body focus or discussing how interpersonal relationships are impacted by body image, either their own relationships or the relationships they see around them. The overall goal of this phase is to facilitate clients’ understanding of where the problem of body focus originated in their own lives and determining the consequences they experience in their life by maintaining the status quo.

Phase 3: Thought restructuring/skill building

Once the stage is set for clients to feel motivated and committed to changing their maladaptive beliefs and behaviors, the final phase engages in restructuring the fossilized beliefs that clients brought to group therapy and providing adaptive skills to replace their prior maladaptive approaches. In line with Miller and Rollnick’s approach to change, we plan to discuss the autonomy each client has to choose what they believe is the most appropriate path to change, understanding that each individual is the best judge as to what will be the most effective strategy for change in their own lives. Within that framework of autonomy, we plan to offer the concepts of mindfulness and self-compassion (Neff, 2003) as potential tools clients can use as they begin to navigate a new way of viewing themselves and experimenting with new behaviors. We believe the underlying concepts of non-judgmental acceptance present moment awareness and self-kindness that are components of mindfulness and self-compassion will aide clients as they begin the process of change. We hypothesize that rather than turning a self-critical eye toward their progress, clients will be better served by seeing what unfolds and maintaining self-kindness as they begin to change, thereby accepting the struggle inherent in change.
many ways, these tools may assist clients in maintaining their new behaviors and potentially avoiding the risk of relapse. We also believe that by taking a self-compassionate view toward themselves, clients can begin to develop an alternate approach to their own self-worth, by way of seeing themselves as worthy of turning self-kindness and non-judgmental awareness toward their own struggle to change.

**Group Format**

This thematic group will be conducted for 8 weeks, each meeting lasting an hour and a half. There will be one or two leaders and participation from all members and leaders is encouraged as it will lead to greater benefit for the members. While each phase will be somewhat present in each session, the first two sessions will center on awareness of the maladaptive thoughts and behaviors, the third through fifth sessions will focus on motivational enhancement, and the last three sessions will mainly be about developing thought restructuring skills. Group rules will be set by the participants in the first session, and the group-developed views on absences and tardiness will be stated within these rules. The rules are designed to be clear and to establish group norms of participation and attendance. Each member will read and sign their agreement to abide by those rules. Preparation for termination will be discussed in the last two sessions.

Although time approximations are provided throughout the manual, some groups may move through these activities at various speeds. Group leaders should get a feel for how “talkative” their group is during the first few sessions and feel free to remove or add activities as best fits their unique group. If a group seems to move through activities quickly, or if leaders wish to extend the number of sessions, additional group activities are given in the appendix. Keep in mind that thoughtful silence is also productive and time should be allocated for this type of reflection. Alternatively, if a group seems to benefit most by processing and talking, a session can be added at any point to allow for more unstructured time.

**Population**

This all-female thematic group is designed for young women who want to decrease negative body focused thoughts and behaviors, and increase their awareness of positive body appreciation. The focus is on body shape and size, and not other features of the physical appearance. This group is designed for the traditional undergraduate female student (ages 18-24) and for those who willingly joined the group. The group would not be appropriate for those at the precontemplation stage of change, those with DSM-IV criteria for eating disorders, or those who are ruminating and unable or unwilling to
change their thoughts and feelings about their body. Additional criteria for exclusion include any individuals who, for logistical, intellectual, psychological, or interpersonal reasons, will be unable to participate in the primary task of the group. Participants will be included if they are at the contemplation or early preparation stages of change and indicate that they want to join a group that discusses body-focus by responding to the message on the flyer. The leaders will accept up to 12 participants with the hopes that the group will maintain 8 to 10 participants throughout the eight weeks.

**Pre-group Interview**

Each potential participant will meet with one leader for a thirty minute screening interview. The goal of this interview is to determine if the person would be a good match for the group and if the group is well matched with their needs. In the case of the group being helpful to the person, but the person being potentially detrimental to the group, the leaders will put the group’s needs first and recommend other therapeutic forms to the individual.

The interview will begin with a brief description by the leader of what the group is designed for, as well as what it is not designed to do. A basic session is described by the leader and then the potential participants will be assessed for exclusion criteria and inclusion criteria by asking questions about previous diagnosis and the individual’s readiness for change with the following questions:

- What are some of the body-focus issues you have had in your life?
- What effect have these issues had on your life?
- Have you ever tried to change these thoughts/behaviors before?
- What made you decide to seek out this group?
- Have you sought help for these issues before or had any other therapy experience?
- Have you ever been diagnosed with an eating disorder or other DSM-IV diagnosis?
- Are there certain aspects of these issues you don’t feel ready to discuss with others?
- What do you hope to get out of the group?
- What are your fears about the group?

Also, by asking the above questions leaders will be intuitively assessing insight into the problem and interpersonal skills. Further, leaders will assess their willingness to accept new information, self disclose, and give and accept feedback.
Session 1 – Introduction

Session Objectives:

- Group members get to know one another, establish rapport, and set the stage for fertilizing common humanity.
- Participants begin to reflect on general impact of negative body perception on their lives.

Introduction of leader(s)

Activity #1: (20 minutes) Name Game Icebreaker

Participants will stand up in a circle. In this activity, the group leader will introduce and explain the activity and begin it by stating his or her name and then saying “and I like (to) ____________”. This will coincide with a physical motion. For example, if the leader stated: “My name is Marsha and I like to play baseball,” she might make a motion of swinging a baseball bat. Then, the rest of the participants will say “Marsha likes baseball” and make the same motion. The participant to the left of the leader will then say “Marsha likes baseball (and do the motion)” and “My name is ____________ and I like ________________” with a new motion. This will continue until eventually, the group leader will be in the position of stating everyone’s name.

Activity #2: (7 minutes) Name Tags

Participants will be provided with nametags as a means of connecting visually with the names they just learned. This will ideally help them learn one another’s’ names. Participants will also provide formal introductions (major/minor, residence hall) for one another.

Activity #3: (20 minutes) Group rules

Group rules will be established by participants by breaking into two groups and making a list. Then the groups will come back together and present their rules. Group leader(s) will provide suggestions if needed. A group leader will write the agreed-upon rules down on a whiteboard or large paper so rules are legible to everyone.
Activity #4: (7 minutes)  
Sentence completions:

Participants will be asked to take out their journals and respond to the following question: “How does body-image affect my favorite activity?” (Participants can do this using the hobby or interest they mentioned during the name game or something else that is important to them.) Then they will do another sentence completion: “One reason I sought out this group is….”

Process: (15 minutes)  
Small Groups: Participants will be divided into small groups consisting of no more than four to a group, in order to dialogue and reflect with one another about what they had written in their journals in the previous two activities.

Closing: (5 minutes)  
Participants will be given an open-ended opportunity to add any final thoughts or feelings they might want to share with the group regarding any first impressions they might be having about being in the group. Each group will be invited to share their responses to open ended questions such as: What were some common themes in your group?
Session 2 – Increased Conscious Awareness

Session Objectives:

- Group members develop new/increased understanding of where their negative internalized messages come from regarding their bodies.
- Group members also begin to consider other possibilities in terms of opening up to positive influences for their respective body images.
- Group members continue to increase empathy for one another as well as fostering common humanity experience.

Discuss previous session if necessary (10 minutes) – Reflections: Participants will be invited to share any reflections they may have had based on last week’s session. General open-ended questions will be posed to the group inquiring about any residual thoughts or feelings they might have noticed as a result of responding to sentence completions or process what it felt like to share some of these in small groups.

Activity #1: (15 minutes) Raising conscious awareness of internal and external messages related to body image

As a means of increasing awareness of the sources of messages they internalize about their bodies, members will participate in the “Dot Exercise.” Group leaders will have placed large signs all around the walls of the room with words such as “parents,” “romantic partners,” “friends,” “television,” “other,” etc. Participants will be provided with multicolored dot stickers. Each sticker color will represent different aspects of what these elements mean to them. For example one color will represent: sources of messages, another will represent messages that matter most, and another might represent who one is trying to impress or get attention from when worrying about one’s body. Participants will also be given a few minutes** to come up with additional areas which have influenced their body focus if not found on the signs around the room. The leaders will write these additional signs and hang them up. The participants will get up and mingle around, placing their dots on the signs as they see fit.

**Instead of being given a few minutes, participants will be encouraged to write in alternate sources of influence on the “Other” poster and then place the appropriate dot next to their contribution. This new category is then open for other’s dots.
Participants will process the “Dot Exercise” as a group. Participants will be asked questions such as: What surprised you if anything about where you placed or didn’t place your dots? If you could shift them around willingly right now, which ones would you move first?

Activity #2: (20 minutes)  
*Hero Exercise*

Group leader will ask participants to close their eyes and allow themselves to be in a relaxed physical, mental and emotional state. Participants will be led in a guided imagery, in which they will be asked to think about people they truly and deeply admire in their lives. They will be asked to center their focus upon one or two people they are most likely to think of as “personal heroes.” Once all participants have been provided with sufficient time to establish and envision their heroes, the group leader will invite them to consider the body type their hero(s) represent. Participants will be asked to consider their own personal body image in relation to its importance, especially as compared with how their heroes might think of their own bodies.

Participants will process the “Hero Guided Imagery” as a group. Group leaders will ask open-ended questions such as: How do you think your hero feels about his or her body? What has changed in terms of what is important to you, if anything? What have you learned from this exercise?
Session 3 – Developing Mindfulness

Session Objectives:

- Participants begin to recognize and open up to the possibility of accepting more positive and even accurate perceptions of their body shapes and sizes or proportions, etc.
- Participants will understand the concept of mindfulness at a fundamental level.
- Participants will begin to conceptualize some of the ways their negative bodily perceptions of have functioned for them in life

Discuss previous session if necessary: *(10 minutes)* Participants will be invited to share any “ah-ha” moments they may have had based on last week’s session. General open-ended questions will be posed to the group inquiring about any residual thoughts or feelings they might have noticed as a result of thinking about their heroes or doing the dot exercise, etc.

Activity #1: *(45 minutes)* – Accepting One’s Body Guided Imagery

*(Note: Leaders ensure that this imagery is delivered at a slow pace with sufficient pauses between sentences/concepts.)*

Clients are asked to imagine that they wake up the next morning feeling good about their bodies. They are no longer obsessed with their bodies or critical of body parts. They are asked to visualize going through a normal day aware of what it’s like to live with a positive body image. They are instructed to notice what they eat, how they dress, how they move, how they interact with others and what they do with their free time. Specifically, how do they hold themselves while interacting with others? Ask them to notice how they are standing and the placement of their arms, hands, feet, etc. At the end of the imagined day, they are asked to think about everything they have gained from being free of body hatred. Ask them to imagine now that they are free from disliking their body, to think back over all the ways their life is different.

*(Leaders: Feel free to pause at this point, bring participants out of the guided imagery, and ask them to write on 3x5 cards a few of the thoughts and feelings they had during this section of the imagery. Then take them back into the guided imagery.)*
Then they are asked to imagine what they have lost as a result of getting over their body obsession. Are any relationships threatened? Have they lost an excuse or a distraction from other difficult issues? Must they grieve for lost illusions? Finally, they are asked to choose whatever seems to be the most difficult loss and to grieve for it. Slowly bring participants back to the present moment, orienting them to the space they are in.

(Leaders: Again have participants write on 3x5 cards a few of the thoughts and feelings they had during this section of the imagery.)

Ask clients to circle on their 3x5 card or fix in their mind what the predominant emotion they experienced at the beginning of the imagery (free from body hatred). Process these emotions and discuss what it would look like to conjure this image at a future date. Then ask clients to circle on their 3x5 cards or fix in their mind what they chose as the most difficult thing to lose, and perhaps share with the group. Process the emotions that were aroused by the guided imagery and discuss what it would take to let go of the thing that they are so frightened to lose. What would grieving for that loss look like? How would they know they had worked through their grief and accepted their new self? The concept of mindfulness will be introduced as they are in the midst of thinking about these feelings, and holding on to with non-judgmental acceptance the feelings they were aware of while doing the guided imagery.

The above guided imagery exercises were adapted from Kearney-Cooke, 1989.

Activity #2: (15 minutes) – Journaling

(Note: this is an optional activity if time permits)

Participants will be asked to write for approximately ten minutes about how their beliefs influence behaviors, relationships, and objectives; what is scary about letting go.

Processing: (10 minutes) - Participants will be given the option to share something they wrote in their journal. They will be asked open-ended questions such as: What, if anything, surprised you about what you thought or wrote. What was something maybe difficult to think about?
Session 4 – Positive Body Function

Session Objectives:

• Engage in discussions about lack of confidence
• Identify coping strategies which build confidence within the group and individually
• Identify triggers of negative thoughts
• Identify and own positive images of body functioning
• Begin to focus more on these positive images rather than negative images

Discuss last session if necessary

The group leader should ask the participants if they had any thoughts about the last discussion and how it impacted their week. For example, did they notice anything different about themselves or others? Did any of their behaviors or thoughts change this past week because of their guided imagery experience?

Activity #1- (40 minutes) Sentence completion: “I’m least confident about…”

Introduce the activity by telling them the sentence completion prompt and passing out slips of paper with “I’m least confident about…” written out. Tell the participants that they will complete the sentence anonymously and present someone else’s sentence anonymously to the group.

Each participant should complete the sentence on a slip of paper and place it into a bowl. Once everyone has completed their sentence, pass the bowl around allowing each participant to pick one slip of paper (other than their own) and read it silently to herself.

The group leader will prompt the students to think about one reason the person might be least confident about that area/aspect/etc as well as one way to build confidence in that area. Building confidence can be on the individual, group, or larger societal levels. The group leader should encourage the group to share stories or ideas, reminding them to consider the attributes of mindfulness and self-compassion. To support the common humanity vs. isolation concept, the group leader may need to highlight common themes.
During this activity, it is important to address the session-specific objectives. If the discussion is not being generated by the group, the facilitator may need to step in and aid the process.

Activity #2: (40 minutes)  
Sentence completion: “One thing that my body does for me that is great is….”

Again, the group should complete the sentence provided. This time, the sentence should be completed in their journals. When each person is done, the group will share their own sentence completion without discussion so as to avoid social comparisons and allow the individual to own their personal experience with their body. This activity should encourage individuals to identify positive attributes about their physical selves as well as hear why others value their bodies.

Closing Discussion/Journaling (10 minutes)

The participants should take time to journal about the thoughts and feelings generated by these discussions. Some possible journal questions are: What emotions came up when the group discussed their Least Confident Area? Was the group’s contribution helpful? Why or why not? Did they relate to any of the advice or stories? The participants are also encouraged to continue journaling about their positive body image as well.
Session 5 – Identifying Triggers

Session Objectives:

- Discuss thoughts and feelings about the group so far
- Discuss their accomplishments as well as things they still want to work on
- Identify ways in which their work in group has noticeably affected their life
- Promote mindfulness and openness in discussing sensitive topics

Discuss last session if necessary

The group leader should ask the participants if they had any thoughts about the last discussion and how it impacted their week. For example, did they notice anything different about themselves or others? Did any of their behaviors or thoughts change this past week as a result of the sentence completions? Specifically, did they use any of the confidence building strategies?

Activity #1: (80 minutes) — Processing

This activity has been designed to be an opportunity to process their thoughts and feelings about their group experience so far. The facilitator should develop questions/talking points that are specific to previous group conversations. Depending on the nature of the group, the leader might want to remind the participants about the importance of productive silence and allow them to share any potential discomfort before starting the processing discussion.

Sample questions/talking points:

- Take a few minutes and look back through your journal. What has changed since the first session?
- What changes have you seen in yourself since the first session?
- What changes might others notice about you since the first session?
- When was the last time you didn’t focus on your body?
- When did you first notice that you weren’t comfortable with your body?
- What has been most/least helpful for you so far? Explain.

- Is there anything that you want to be sure and discuss in the second half of group? (If this question is used, the facilitator should be prepared to incorporate the suggestion into the remaining sessions.)

- Was there anything that has stuck out to you during our sessions? Anything that has especially impacted a moment outside of group?

Closing Discussion/Journaling: (10 minutes)

The last few minutes of this session should be spent journaling about today’s discussion. The group leader should suggest that the individuals write about any thoughts or feelings that they were not able or comfortable with sharing today and why.
Session 6 – Positive Qualities

Session Objectives:

• Identify strengths across areas of life
• Replace hyper body focus with a focus on identified strengths
• Continue to build group cohesion by identifying strengths and commonalities among group members

Discuss last session if necessary

The group leader should ask the participants if they had any thoughts about the last discussion and how it impacted their week. For example, did they notice anything different about themselves or others? Did any of their behaviors or thoughts change this past week as a result of the processing discussion?

Activity #1: (80 minutes) M&M exercise

The goal of this group is to reduce negative body focus, therefore there has to be an increased focus on another aspect of their life. The M&M activity allows the members to identify their positive attributes. The facilitator will pass out 5 M&Ms to each member and instructs them not to eat them yet. Each color represents a different area of an individual’s life. On a poster board, the facilitator will have written out the color code (i.e. Red=Family, Orange=Activities, Blue=Social/Friends/Relationships, Yellow=Education, Green= Health, Brown=Other)

The facilitator will model the process by picking an M&M and sharing one strong point they have in that area. Then they eat that M&M. The next person proceeds by choosing one of their M&Ms and so on. It can be helpful to only go three rounds before allowing them to pick whichever category they would like. This allows them to talk about what they see as strengths without feeling limited by the colors they have in their hand. The facilitator should provide alternate candy options for individuals who do not prefer M&Ms and replace color coding appropriately.

In order to process, the facilitator will ask the members how it felt to talk about their positive attributes. Since this is a group based on body focus, it will be important to also discuss how it felt to eat the M&Ms and symbolically internalize those positive attributes.
Closing Discussion/Journaling: *(10 minutes)*

The participants are encouraged to discuss any last thoughts about this activity or their reactions to it. They are then asked to journal about the thoughts and feelings that they shared as well as those that they did not feel comfortable sharing.
Session 7 – Plan of Action

Session Objectives:

- Focus on the positive
- Develop a plan of action
- Prepare for termination

Discuss last session if necessary: (20 minutes)

Leaders ask: “What changed in the last 7 days because of group?” and “Did you look at things differently after identifying them as strength in our exercise last week? If so, what and how?” Discuss by asking follow up questions and letting the conversation be mostly guided by their answers. Leaders may pull out common themes to help everyone feel connected.

Activity #1: (50 minutes) Prep for Termination and Develop a Plan of Action

Leaders recognize this is the second to last session. Ask “what are you feeling right now about the group ending?” Based on the answers given (probably feelings of worry, relief, sadness) the leaders will build a discussion about turning their every day lives into a beneficial experience by using what we’ve done in group as developed by the plan of action.

We can be proud of how far we’ve come and optimistic about the future, while still having a plan for what to do when we regress. Leaders will ask each member to suggest one thing they can do when they start to have negative body focus. Leaders will write these on the board, and then ask them all to come up with another way to help themselves when feeling badly. Leaders will also add to the list if they see missing pieces (such as setting aside time for mindfulness, making and posting lists of positive body functions, and using others as support). Then leaders will ask each member to spend 15 minutes journaling and making their action plan out of the ideas up on the board.

Closing and Processing Over the Next Week: (10 minutes)

Over the next week, participants will be asked to pay attention to any negative thoughts and to look back on their action plans and consider what works and what doesn’t. Also, to continue thinking of ways to adapt the action plan to make it better.
Session 8 – Termination

Session Objectives:

- Enhance the action plan
- Appreciate how far they have come
- Remember important moments and messages
- Acknowledge termination feelings
- Evaluate the group

Discuss last session if necessary: *(10 minutes)*

Group leaders ask: when did they have feelings of negative body focus this week? Did they think of their action plan? Did anything work? What could have helped? How can we improve it?

Activity #1: *(20 minutes)*  Improve Action Plan

Leaders write on the board their responses to ways they can improve their action plans. Each member is asked to say where they will keep the plan, preferably out where they can see it each day. Leaders recommend moving it to different places in your room every week so it continues to be recognized as something to look at. Tips will be given from other members and leaders about taking time to think about the day, their action plan, and their development.

Activity #2: *(30 minutes)*  Final Guided Imagery

Next leaders will ask have the participants do a short guided imagery where they take members back to the first day of group. They will be asked to remember their feelings, worries, hopes, impressions and fears. Then they will be asked to keep their eyes closed, but think about how they are feeling right now. They will think about what has changed about their feelings and what has stayed the same.

This experience will be processed and discussed, by leaders asking what did participants feel and think? Asking them to share their thoughts and letting them basically guide the discussion to the things that are salient for them right now. Special attention
will be paid to the positive feeling and thoughts experienced by the group members, and the positive behaviors that have stemmed from these changes.

Activity #3: (10 minutes)  

*Sentence Completions*

Each member completes the following sentences in their journal: “The greatest take-away message I received from this group is…”,”One thing I know about myself now that I didn’t know before this group is…”, and “I will always remember when…”

Participants will be asked to share their answers. If the responses relate to others in the group, those people will be asked how they feel about being mentioned. Hopefully they will all feel open and honest at this point and enjoy, in a way, thanking each other.

Activity #4: (15 minutes)  

*Leaving Feelings*

Leaders will ask members to express any other termination thoughts and worries.

Closing: (5 minutes)

Finally, leaders thank the group, express appreciation for their hard work and encourage continual improvement. Group evaluations will be handed out and the participants will fill them out, and leave the room as they are done.
Appendix A – Additional Activities

**Art Activity:** Have participants create a visual image of what is most important to them beyond their bodies using symbolic representations, colors, etc.

**Creative Visualization:** Have participants consider the negative impact of their poor body perception and using metaphorical language, guide them toward releasing this — similar to creative visualization meditations.

**Affirmations:** This could accompany the Creative Visualization exercise described above or could also function solo – have participants say affirming things out loud about their dedication to feeling better and improving and reshaping their self-perceptions.

**Affirmations 2:** Another way to provide affirmation to fellow group members is for each participant to take a sheet of paper and to write his or her name at the top. Next, participants tape the paper to their own back. The group will be given about 10 minutes to walk around and write positive messages on each other’s sheets of paper. These could include their favorite thing about the person, a way in which the person has helped them during the groups, etc. Since there is contact with each other and the possibility of using information from previous sessions, this should be done toward the end of the group process.

**Thank you letter:** Have participants address a thank-you letter to their bodies, expressing gratitude for all of the wonderful things it does for them: vessel for their soul, takes them where they need to go, or whatever.

**Compliment Web:** Have participants use a ball of yarn to extend a sincere and heartfelt compliment NOT related to physical appearance to someone else in the group, and while holding part of the string, tossing the ball of yarn to that person next, until at the end, there is a web of support.
References

