

Low Grade Body Bashing



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With Your Host

Natalie Bacon

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Welcome to the *Design Your Dream Life Podcast* where it's all about designing your life on your terms and now your host, Natalie Bacon.

Hey friends. Welcome to the podcast. I would so love it if you left me a review. This podcast has evolved so much as I've grown. Lately I have this strong desire to get this work out to thousands of new moms and moms-to-be who really, really need it. You can help be a part of this mission by leaving a good review. I read them and will read yours too. So thank you so much in advance.

Today what we're going to be talking about is low grade body bashing. What a fun title that I came up with here. It's a title that I came up with based on this phenomenon that I am seeing and labeling low grade body bashing. I am bringing it to you here today as we start off September. September in Grow You I am teaching a class called Love Your Body. All month we are going to be bringing more awareness to our bodies and deciding more intentionally how we want to connect with our bodies, change our bodies, and be more mindful of the bodies that we have and how we treat our bodies overall.

The first part of that is recognizing any sort of low grade body bashing that you're doing. So I'm defining this as low grade meaning subtle, not blatant, sort of discrete. Body bashing as negatively thinking or talking about your body.

So here are some examples. Saying that you really need to get your wrinkles under control. Every time you look in the mirror, you're looking for something that you want to fix. It's connecting with your friends about changing your body from this place of not liking where your body's at currently.

It's sharing an image with friends in a group chat and the images of someone who is thin and muscular and considered very beautiful by societal standards. Then you all chime in and say, "Oh yeah. My body looks like that too." Sort of implying that hers is much better than yours. I

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was actually in a group that this happened in recently. So that was fresh on my mind.

I think what's happening here is that I'm noticing that it's normal to talk about your body in a negative way with your peer group. It's not normal to speak highly about your body. I'm specifically talking about in the United States and western culture. So it might be different if you're listening outside of the U.S. Here it's not the norm to feel good about your body as is. I would say the exception is if you are on a specific weight loss journey and you are actually achieving that goal. Then it's the norm to maybe talk about it or even brag about it.

Outside of that, if you just are living your normal life and aging and your hormones are changing and your body is changing, it is not the norm to love your body, to talk about loving your body, to feel good about your body, to brag about your body. In fact, I think the norm is the opposite. I think the norm is to have this low grade body bashing be a part of our culture. Really my hope in this episode is for you to have some awareness of it so that you can be part of the solution and have awareness for yourself, so you feel better about your own body. Then also not participate when you notice it happening in society or in your peer group.

What I think is particularly interesting is how it is so widely accepted to want to change or tweak or modify your body from a place of lack. But it's not widely accepted or normal to want to change your body from a place of love and acceptance. So if you talk about wanting to eat healthier or lose weight or get a better skincare routine or dress your body better or use better products for your skin or your body, it's almost always done from this place of, "The current products that I use, my current weight, the current clothes, the current fill in the blank." Whatever it is about your body isn't good enough. It's lacking. It's bad, right. It's not good enough.

That's that low grade body bashing. So what we're doing is we're saying yeah, how I treat my body now or my body in and of itself right now isn't good enough and I want to change it. That's a scarcity thought pattern that

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I think we've normalized, and we've made it a way to connect with others. So the norm is something is wrong with my body, and I don't like it. So I want to change it. Then we talk about it.

It's different at each stage of life I think the norms are. So the stage of life I'm in right now it's the norm to talk about wanting to change your body back to pre-kids. So I think that's really fascinating because 10 years ago the norm was, "Oh, I want my body to look like it did when I was 18." Or maybe five years ago it was, "Oh I've got to start this skincare routine because otherwise my wrinkles or my face is not going to be looking so good." It's subtle. So it's not from this place of hate. I think it's just from this low grade disappointment body bashing where we don't accept ourselves, and we want to change our bodies from this place of not liking them.

The opposite is what I want to offer to you. So the opposite is not let's just never change our bodies. I'm all for a good body goal, a weight loss goal, a weight gain goal. It's been really fun to be pregnant and see how I'm weighing myself. Hoping that I've gained weight. I've just been thinking about the differences in my thoughts around the scale, being pregnant versus not being pregnant, and how the scale is the same, but my thoughts are so different. It's just been really fun. So regardless of what the change is that you want to make, I think the opposite of changing from lack is changing from love.

So it's I love my body. I accept my body. And I want to change it. I love my skin. I'm so grateful for my skin, and I want to take care of it. I love the body that I have. I love that it's been with me since day one. It's gotten me here, and I want to see what's possible for building strength in my muscles in the future. Versus oh I'm so weak. I'm not strong enough, and I want to change.

The difference is how you feel when you're thinking and speaking the thoughts. You might have to slow it down because I think we're so used to this low grade body bashing because we don't even notice that it could feel bad. It's just the norm. It won't feel good. That's another way of saying it

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feels bad. So when you're saying, "My back muscles aren't strong enough, so my posture is sort of slouched forward. I'm going to start working out. I've got to start going to the trainer to change that."

You're not feeling shame. It's not one of those emotions, but it's also not love and acceptance and gratitude and appreciation. It's just, "Yeah, my body's fine. Let's change it." That's where I go anyway.

So what I want you to do is notice how you talk about your body with other people. Notice if you're connecting with others over the negative parts of your body. That could be anything from appearance to how it's functioning to the health to how you address it to your skin. Any part that relates to your body. Just notice how you talk about it; notice how you connect with others about it. Typically it's from the place of negativity, this low grade body bashing.

My tendency before doing this work is to sort of go to this place of yeah, my body is fine. Nothing seriously wrong. I sort of have this subtle thought like there's probably something really wrong and I just don't know it yet.

It's funny. I was talking to my brother. This was quite a while ago, but he said it's always the patients in their 30s who come in and think that there's something really wrong. They just want to investigate it and find out. Usually it's nothing. He just thought it was interesting that there really was never an instance where someone in their 60s was doing that.

I think that's just fascinating to think about how the norms sort of change definitely based on your gender identity, based on your age, based on the culture that you're brought up in. So I'm specifically talking about being a female in very westernized American culture. I am in my 30s. So I'm fitting in with the majority here.

I think thought work can be a great tool for you to use to sort of tool for you to use to sort of change that. My body is amazing. It is growing a human right now. I sort of think like why am I not bragging about that every day?

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It's truly a miracle. For you, think about what's your tendency to think about your body? Is it just fine? Do you not really notice it? I think that's a big one too. Unless you are on a weight loss journey or some sort of other specific wellness or health journey.

What I see a lot of times is let's just sort of ignore our bodies and think that it's fine. Then when we are connecting with peer groups about our bodies, we might have the low grade body bashing. Otherwise we almost sort of ignore our bodies. So this is a really good opportunity for you to just check in with yourself. What do I think about my body? Notice if you have a tendency to want to go back in time.

So this month in Grow You I'm teaching the Love Your Body course. One of the new tools I created for this course is called the body continuum. I'm sharing how to create your body from your future instead of your past. So what we typically do is we always want to go back in time to some previous place in our past.

Like I mentioned earlier, for me in my season of life right now it's pre-kids. I was just coaching another woman in Grow You, and she is pregnant with her third. They're going to be done having kids after this. She was talking about wanting to go back to her body pre-kids.

This is something that I coached her on seeing that that is not a useful thought. Because with the body continuum, you are always changing and always moving forward. It's easier for your brain to pull from the past because it has evidence of you and your body in the past. It doesn't have evidence of you and your body in the future. So what I helped her do was create this vision of possibilities for her body post-kids.

My sister-in-law Jacqueline is such a good example of this. She has two little ones, and she is in some of the best shape of her life. It's really not about weight, although I think she did lose some weight if I recall correctly. It's really more about this wholeness in herself. She's meditating. She is taking care of her body from within, and it's manifesting externally. It's not

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from this place of, “Oh I want to go back in time pre-kids.” It’s from a place of, “Let’s see what’s possible with my body now going into this next season of life.”

So you're always going forward with your body. If you can train your brain to know that whatever changes you want to make can be from this very open grateful place instead of from this low grade body bashing place of my body’s not good enough how it is now. I want to change it to back when I was 18, right? We want to clean that up.

So we’re changing from this place of accepting our body, noticing our body, caring for our body, loving our body, and then deciding yeah. This is what I want to change about it. It might be weight. It might be connecting with your body. It might be the food that you eat. It might be becoming a conscious drinker.

So for you, just notice if you have a tendency to want something in the past and really what a waste of your creative brain that that is. Because you can create a better body that you may not have even considered yet that’s whole and connected and moves and feels good to you in your future as a possibility. So I want to invite you to start thinking about that and how that’s possible for you. Definitely come to Grow You this month and do the work.

So what I want to leave you with is a set of questions that I think you can get started on this work with by asking yourself. So question one, what conversations do you have with other people about your body? Number two, are you besties with your body? This is one of my favorites. I like to say that I'm besties with my body. I'm BFFs with my body. So I have my body’s back.

Number three, do you want to change your relationship and have a more connected relationship with your body? Why or why not? Number four, how do you want to connect with your body? How do you want to connect with others about your body?

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So the first question is what are you currently doing talking with others about your body. The fourth question is what do you want to be doing to talk with others about your body? How do you want to be speaking about your body? How do you want to be thinking about your body? How do you want to feel about your body without needing to do more to feel better? Because remember. Your actions don't create your feelings. Your thoughts do. The fifth question, what can you do to be a part of the solution to stop the low grade body bashing for yourself and for your peer group in society.

So if you want help on this, come join me in Grow You this month. I will help you with the body continuum, connecting with your body, and loving your body so that you can really create the body of your dreams in your future. All right my friends. I will talk with you next week. Take care.

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