**3 Mistakes**

**even University Educated Women make**

**that keep them**

**Locked into Low Sex Drive.**

**#3 Body Bashing**

Body Bashing is having recurrent negative, critical or abusive thoughts or feelings about your own physical appearance and sexual attractiveness. To bash your body is to hurl harsh verbal abuse at it.

Body Bashing is also known as Negative Body Image or Critical Self-Image.

If you sometimes or often think:

 “I hate my thighs/belly/boobs/bum”

“My bum/belly is fat and ugly”

“My thighs are like tree trunks”

“My boobs are saggy/ tiny”

“My skin looks shit!”

“I’m an ugly pig”

“My body looks repulsive in tight clothes”

“I’m too disgusting to be seen naked”

That is body bashing! If your partner said any of those things to you just once, let alone on a daily basis, you would think they were unforgivably rude or even controlling and abusive.

Just think how good it would feel if instead you were thinking:

“My body is sooooo beautiful”

“Wow! Look at that amazing body in the mirror!”

“My tits are gorgeous”

 “Look at my beautiful belly!”

“I love my curves”

“I’m so fantastically womanly”.

“My flesh is scrummylicious”

“My body looks so strong and graceful”

Regular body bashing harms your enjoyment of your natural sensual sexuality as a woman and your ability to have intimate connection. Body bashing:

• Reinforces negative neural pathways making them habitual

• Lowers self-confidence

• Makes you try to conceal parts of your body from your partner

• Means that during sex you can’t relax into the physical sensations and deep intimacy because much of your awareness is taken up with “body-monitoring”

• Pushes potential sexual intimacy away because: you haven’t shaved/ your belly’s too bloated/you haven’t got a tan/you don’t feel worthy

• Can cause you to avoid intimate relationships altogether

• Can mean you always have to be drunk to have sex

**Some Scary Science about Body Bashing\***

When you think a body bashing thought such as “I’m fat and ugly” all sorts of physical responses happen in your body:

 Levels of health-giving nitric oxide plummet and stress hormones cortisol and epinephrine rise, increasing cellular inflammation. Over time this increases the risks of degenerative diseases.

 Higher levels of cortisol adversely affect blood sugar and insulin, leading to fatigue and weight gain.

 The subconscious picks up on your negativity and broadcasts signals to the rest of the body that encourage sluggishness and a lack of flow in all systems. Things start to break down, including immunity.

 Your eyes look dull and your steps are heavy. People tend to look right past you; you are literally not “attracting” their attention because you believe that you are “unattractive”.

On the other hand here’s what happens in your body if you say to yourself “I am an incredibly sexy and attractive woman, and people find me desirable” and believe it:

 Neuro-transmitter nitric oxide is released in the lining of blood vessels, widening them to improve circulation and deliver life-giving oxygen to every cell in your body faster

 Circulation throughout your body is improved, including blood flow to your breasts and genitals, heightening your sexual experiences

 Levels of feel-good chemicals, such as serotonin and beta-endorphin, increase

 The subconscious part of your brain gets the signal that all is well, so it sends that message throughout your body, making you feel happier and more relaxed as well as optimising your bodily functions, such as heart rhythm and tissue repair

 Because you feel more attractive and desirable, you walk tall and talk in positive ways that make you more attractive and more desirable

 You attract experiences validating that you are indeed attractive, sexy and desirable to the universe. People notice you and smile. They sense that you are vibrant and alive, and want to be around you.

**How to go from ‘Body Bashing Lowering Libido’ to ‘Body Loving Boosting Sex Drive’**

Not convinced you can stop body bashing? A study of young women with good body image discovered that 80 percent of them had struggled with negative body thoughts earlier in their life. The researcher concludes that “The fact that they were able to boost themselves up is proof that it’s possible for all women to adopt a better outlook on their body.” Here’s how…

**Top Six Tips to Beat Body Bashing**

**Tip #1: Positive Affirmations**

Each time you catch yourself body bashing flip the script and say something positive and body affirming instead. My belly’s disgusting and huge turns into my belly is curvylicious and beautiful. It’s absolutely possible to create neural pathways that favour affirming thoughts!

**Tip #2: Rid that Voice**

When you catch a body bashing thought ask yourself who is saying this? Whose voice is it? Is this my mum’s voice, my sisters voice, my ex-boyfriend’s voice, society’s voice, the beauty magazine’s, or is it actually my own voice? If it is not your voice and you identify whose voice it is you can choose whether you want their voice in your head. If you don’t, you can firmly tell them: “Thanks for your opinion, but No Thanks!” Say it with force, the way you would defend someone daring to hurl abuse at a friend or loved one in public. By definition this body bashing voice is hurling verbal abuse at you – you can afford to be strong or even indignant and angry in your response. A forceful, well-aimed “Fuck Off!” can be incredibly effective in ridding you of an unwanted body bashing voice that is not even your own.

**Tip #3: Say “Stop!” to Body Fascism – Embrace Body Diversity**

If it is your own voice body bashing you just ask yourself “To what ideal or perfect standard am I unconsciously comparing myself?” Are you expecting your body to look like someone else’s to be beautiful: someone taller/ shorter, someone with more curves/ thinner, a starved catwalk model, an airbrushed magazine model? Even worse is there a voice in your head saying “I should look like that to be acceptable/gorgeous/desirable? (even if that would be physically impossible). Once you discover which perfect ideal of beauty you are comparing yourself negatively against just ask yourself these questions: “Is it true that only women who look like that are beautiful/sexy/attractive? Who says that is the only way to be beautiful? Do I agree? Is it true that I should look like that? Can I think of any beautiful, sexy, attractive women who have a totally opposite body type to this ideal? Is it possible that any woman of any shape, colour, size, height, weight can be beautiful when she feels at ease in her body, confident in her sexuality, and sensually enjoying life’s pleasures? Could this mean that I might be beautiful no matter what body shape life has given me? After exploring the answers to these questions, perhaps next time you catch yourself body bashing you can mentally say “Stop! I don’t agree with Body Fascism! I embrace beautiful, bountiful body diversity. My body is uniquely mine and I love it!”

**Tip #4: Enjoy your Body**

Find fun things that make you enjoy being in your body and have fun moving it. For you this could be belly dancing, any dancing, table tennis, Frisbee with friends on the beach, splashing about in a pool with kids, walking in gorgeous countryside… Don’t make exercise a chore to beat yourself up with, chose physical activity that you love doing, that you look forward to, that is fun and social and that you know will make you feel better during and after. Physical activity boosts your mind-set as well as your health helping you to combat your negative body-bashing tendencies.

**Tip #5: Eat what you Love**

Allow food to be a pleasurable sensuous experience rather than a stick to beat yourself with. Be mindfully sensual when you eat and love your body rather than fretting over every mouthful counting calories. Eat what you love and love what you eat. Ask yourself am I self-nurturing or self-indulging? Self-nurture, including allowing yourself to love your relationship with food, is so much better than hating your relationship with food and then self-indulging – probably the same amount of calories but one is a much happier body-loving experience while one is unhappy body bashing!

Tip #6: Appreciate your body for what it does, rather than how it looks.

Rather than berating your big belly thank it for the womb inside that makes you a woman and may give you babies. Instead of telling your tits off for being saggy thank them for the sexual fun they’ve brought you and others, or for the babies they may feed. Next time you’re cursing your thick thighs pause and think of their purpose—is it to make you feel bad? Or to be strong and let you power about the place living life?

Holly McNish poem Wow!

For support in going from body bashing to body loving:

Book your Healing with Susie here

\*Ref: Dr Christiane Northrup *Secret Pleasures of Menopause* page 47