



feature

beautifully CONFIDENT

THE RIGHT ATTITUDE TO BEAUTY AND UNDERSTANDING IT OBJECTIVELY CAN HELP YOU LIVE EACH DAY CONFIDENTLY AND POSITIVELY. **JESSICA RULE** REPORTS.

Hollywood glamour girl Jessica Simpson travelled the world to explore the meaning of true beauty in different cultures for a reality show she was putting together.

As a woman who has been closely scrutinised by the media for many aspects of her appearance – her bust size, hairstyle, weight, clothing choice and even intelligence – she said she gained some perspective and learned the value of inner confidence from her experience.

The concept of beauty is undefined as it can be a product of culture and society. However, the way that a person carries themselves will ultimately affect how others perceive them.

As the well-known saying goes, if you look good, you feel good. But the reverse is also true as confidence and inner beauty do show on the outside. Confidence is thought to be one of the most attractive qualities and can be even more intoxicating than physical beauty alone. Together, it's a tough combination to beat.

Many people have found someone physically attractive, even though they were not conventionally 'good looking'. Somehow their personality, charm, confidence, goodness, wit or energy seem to shine through.

It may take inner beauty longer to make an impact than first impressions, but it is what goes the distance and can be present at any age.

CONFIDENTLY

Confidence is about self-respect and self-understanding. How you perceive yourself will ultimately affect how others perceive you.

Consider the ubiquitous 'Best Celebrity Body' surveys. Although the Hollywood ideal seems to be stick thin, names such as Scarlett Johansson, Kate Winslet and Beyoncé, seem to regularly make the list. These celebrities are admired by many women for their voluptuous curves, but a large part of their appeal is due to their confidence in their bodies and how they carry themselves.

Recognising the power of the positive, an increasing number of people are turning to cosmetic procedures to enhance appearance and boost confidence – whether this be a minor tweak or a major procedure. Advances in technology have revolutionised the field of cosmetic surgery and made it part of mainstream medicine. It's no longer reserved for the rich and famous but is now available to anyone who wishes to utilise it.

Additionally, in the past 20 years or so, advancements in the cosmetic and aesthetics industry have created a highly popular, less permanent breed of cosmetic enhancement for those who aren't ready to go 'under the knife'. Non-surgical alternatives to facial rejuvenation are being requested more and more, so much so they are becoming regular treatments for many women and men, alongside facials and other mainstream beauty treatments.

A study at Queensland's Griffith University examined the emotional impact of cosmetic surgery on patients and their families. It found the emotional experience of cosmetic surgery was largely a beneficial one, after which many patients indicated they would undergo the same procedure again if necessary. They said they enjoyed significant positive psychological outcomes, including growth of self-esteem and confidence.

MOTIVATIONAL

Understanding the 'why' behind your decision to undergo cosmetic enhancement is a critical step towards receiving the results you are looking for. Melbourne body image researcher and clinician Roberta Honigman says talking to someone about your motivations will help both pinpoint your reasons for seeking cosmetic enhancement and manage your expectations of the results.

'You're actually helping yourself by understanding what it is you are seeking and why, as that's the key to happiness in this field,' Honigman says.

'It's important to be honest with yourself in terms of what you hope to achieve. "If I go through this, I expect to look

GET HAPPY

Professor Timothy Sharp of The Happiness Institute tells us how harnessing positivity and happiness can help us lose weight.

It's a new year and, along with millions of other people, you're determined to drop a few kilos or a couple of dress sizes. But if, like many, you've tried traditional diets with minimal or no success, you might be interested in a new approach based on the science of positive psychology.

Whereas most diets propose that if you lose weight then you'll be happy, The Happiness Diet proposes that if you get happy first then you'll lose weight. It's all about putting positivity first; creating the motivation and energy to do what you need to do and achieve your goals.

So how do you get happier for a brighter, slimmer, less stressed life? Here are Professor Tim Sharps' top 10 tips to harness the power of positivity for inspiration and change.

1. Imagine a positive vision of the future – one in which you're living a great, fulfilling, active and flourishing life.
2. Imagine you at your best living this great life.
3. Start living this life now by planning positive and inspiring activities right now.
4. Also plan activities that require a degree of effort and mastery.
5. Be mindful about what you say to yourself – try to develop a more optimistic thinking style.
6. Build confidence by trying new activities.
7. Focus more on strengths and stop trying to fix weaknesses.
8. Find ways to think positively about healthy eating and activity.
9. Build positive and supportive relationships by enlisting the support of family and friends.
10. Build positivity by practising appreciation and gratitude every day.

So there it is – a positive approach to losing weight. Check out www.thehappinesdiet.com.au for more information on feeling great and losing weight.

feature

HOW YOUR BRAIN CAN MAKE YOU SEXIER

Adjunct Professor Paul Taylor, founder of Acumotum Body-Brain Fitness and Vitality Centre in Melbourne, says your brain is a powerful tool – it can even make you look better naked.

Staying in shape is just as much about focusing on the brain as it is about exercising and eating well. The brain controls everything the body does, but is reliant on the health of the body's optimal function. The brain plays several roles when it comes to staying in shape:

Motivation This is completely controlled by the brain and is dependent on the chemical dopamine. The biggest mistake people make when trying to get into shape is that they rely on motivation, which waxes and wanes. The real key is to create a new habit, rather than relying on motivation. The key to this, as far as the brain is concerned, is to develop rituals. When we repeat something enough, it becomes a habit. The reason it does so is that the neural wiring for this activity moves to a part of the brain called the basal ganglia, which is where our habits are stored.

Hence, one of the keys to long-term change is to develop rituals that are sacrosanct. This means you do them repeatedly, on a regular basis. Recent research has shown that if we repeat something at the same time every day then it is much easier to form a habit. Simply put, the brain loves routine.

Willpower There has been a lot of recent research on the subject of willpower, and all say this is utterly reliant on glucose. Using MRI scanning, researchers have shown that when your blood glucose level is low, your ability to control your impulses is greatly diminished. This is one of the primary reasons why dieting fails. Carbohydrates are the nutrient that is mostly restricted these days and, paradoxically, this contributes to low blood glucose levels, which reduces people's ability to stay on track.

Bottom line If you want to have a sexier figure, enlist the help of your brain, develop rituals you can stick to and eat a diet that has moderate amounts of unprocessed carbohydrates.

To find out more visit www.acumotum.com

like somebody who is going to find a new relationship", or "my looks are going to help me get a new job", or "my looks are going to allow me to reconnect with an aspect of my life that I've let go of", she explains. 'That is the key to a treatment's success.'

One of the most disconcerting experiences of ageing is the disconnect that occurs between feeling young and vibrant on the inside and the physical effects of getting older on the outside. As a result, one of the most common motives for undergoing facial rejuvenation is the desire to bridge this divide by minimising the signs of ageing.

In line with this attitude is the tendency for some young people to express their perfectionism through cosmetic enhancement procedures, particularly through non-surgical enhancements. Honigman cautions that this kind of motive can cause both young and old people to lose sight of their inner self, and can cause them to define themselves according to their appearance.

'People have to be prepared to take responsibility for their own bodies and their own lives. That's why they must understand the motivation driving them to seek a change before they do anything,' Honigman says. 'Starting out with realistic expectations of what is possible is the key to being happy with the result.'

HAPPY SNAPS

There has been press of late on how beauty alone is no guarantee of happiness. Leslie Zebrowith, professor of Psychology at the Brandies University, conducted a personality test on a number of men and women and found that beautiful people with ugly personality traits looked less and less attractive with the passage of time.

Through her research, she concluded that women who were gregarious and vivacious in their teens looked more beautiful to men even in their 50s – more than their aloof, unfriendly but more beautiful peers.

What the study encapsulates is the notion that being attractive might make you happy, but being happy means you make yourself more attractive.

The physical beauty of a woman is only a little portion of her overall beauty, and this portion wanes. Internal beauty includes manners, behaviour, intelligence, sense of humour, compassion and family or personal values, which are intrinsic and lasting personality traits.

So in a nutshell, beauty may be a fascinating or illusive gift for a bearer but it may not make he or she happy. Having the self-esteem and confidence to be happy in your own skin may just be the guarantee for beauty. **acsm**