

BUILDING BETTER BODY IMAGE

Becoming an EMBRACE
Fitness Professional

THE EMBRACE COLLECTIVE.
Building better body image



INTRODUCTIONS

A message from Taryn and Zali



Welcome to Building Better Body Image: Becoming an EMBRACE Fitness Professional! We are so glad you are here.

This course is designed for forward-thinking fitness professionals who are committed to creating inclusive, empowering, and body confident spaces for their clients.

By completing this program, you will gain the tools to support clients in a weight-neutral way, build body confidence and challenge outdated and harmful fitness industry norms.

Whether you're a personal trainer, group fitness instructor, coach or wellness professional, your leadership in this space matters. Together, we are redefining fitness as a space where all bodies are celebrated, health is accessible and confidence is built from within.

We're so excited to see what you can do with this!

The Embrace Collective Co-Executive Directors,

Taryn Brumfitt and Dr Zali Yager

How to use this workbook:

- Use this workbook to navigate to the course content videos using the links
- Complete the activities in the workbook as prompted in the videos and after each module
- You can complete the activities in this editable PDF, print out the workbook or use another journal or exercise book for your notes
- Reflect deeply and honestly. You will be the only person who accesses this information, so use this opportunity for growth in your personal wellbeing and professional practice

INTRODUCTIONS

About The Embrace Collective

The Embrace Collective is a health promotion charity with a vision for a world where people are free from feelings of pressure, judgement and shame about their bodies. Building better body image from the beginning has the power to minimise lifetime risk of issues like eating disorders, depression and anxiety - and to help people achieve optimal health and wellbeing.

Led by 2023 Australian of the Year Taryn Brumfitt and international body image expert Dr Zali Yager, The Embrace Collective brings together a global network of researchers, experts, advocates and lived experience advisors to inform programs, advocacy and campaigns that will change the way the world thinks and feels about bodies, weight and health. Through our suite of age-appropriate Embrace Kids programs and resources, we get in early to teach the message of body appreciation to young people and support the adults around them to create a culture of kindness and body inclusion in all the places where young people live, learn and play, to build better body image now and for generations to come.

Find our resources at theembracehub.com

Join our community at bodyimageresources.com

Meet your instructor

Dr Zali Yager

Dr Zali Yager is an internationally-recognised expert focused on figuring out 'what works' to build better body image. Zali has a Health and Physical Education background, spent 20+ years in research and teacher education, and is an Adjunct Associate Professor in the Institute for Health and Sport at Victoria University in Australia. A Leverhulme postdoctoral fellow, Creswick travelling fellow to Harvard University, and Westpac Social Change Fellow with over 60 published papers, Zali has presented her work all over the world.

Now focused on research translation for health promotion, Zali is the architect of strategic innovation and advocacy as Co-Executive Director of The Embrace Collective alongside 2023 Australian of the Year, Taryn Brumfitt. Together, this dynamic duo have taken their mission to Prime Ministers, Professors and Presidents from Parliament House in Australia to the White House in the USA.



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MODULE 1 REFLECTIONS ON BODY IMAGE

 [WATCH THE VIDEO FOR THIS MODULE HERE](#)

Module overview

1/5	Reflections on body image
2/5	Supporting a new approach to fitness and health
3/5	Building better body image in fitness environments
4/5	Connection between body image and disordered eating and exercise behaviours
5/5	Implementation and action planning



MODULE 1

REFLECTIONS ON BODY IMAGE

Learning objectives

1

Describe and define key body image terminology

2

Elaborate on the relationship between BD/BA and physical/mental health outcomes

3

Understand inherent appearance pressure on fitness professionals

4

Reflect on your own body image and its impact on your work as a fitness professional

Module content

- Definitions and terminology
- Relationship between body image and health
- The fitness industry and body image
- Looking like a 'fitness professional'
- **Module activities**
- **Homework**

1

Describe and define
key body image
terminology

BODY IMAGE TERMINOLOGY



**Body
image**



**Body
appreciation**



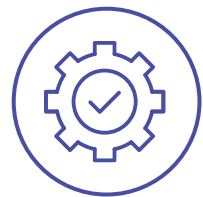
**Body
dissatisfaction**



**Body
positivity**



**Positive body
image**

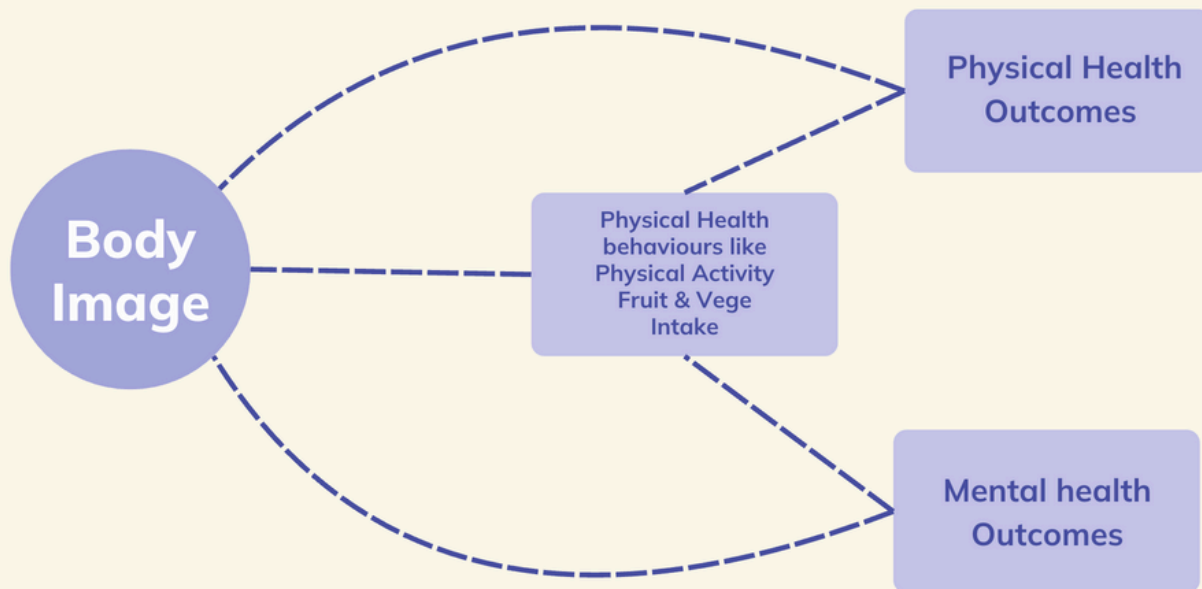


**Body
neutrality**

2

The relationship between BD/BA and physical/mental health outcomes

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BODY IMAGE AND HEALTH



How does this model explain the importance of being aware about body image in your practice?

3+4

Understand inherent appearance pressure on fitness professionals

Reflect on your own body image and its impact on your work as a fitness professional

WRITING ACTIVITY



Spend at least 5-10 minutes journaling about your body image in response to the prompts below.

Do you think you have negative, neutral or positive body image?

Has the way you feel about your body ever stopped you from doing anything?
Explain what, how and why.

How does your body image affect your work as a fitness professional?

REFRAMING COMMON BELIEFS

As you completed this module, some of the more traditional beliefs about bodies, weight and health might have popped into your head. What are some of the common beliefs about bodies that you were taught growing up or in your fitness training? Complete the table by reframing these thoughts and beliefs in a neutral or positive way.

Traditional thought	Reframed thought
Individuals are to blame for their weight - it's not healthy.	There are many factors that influence weight and you can't tell how healthy someone is by looking at them.

JOURNALING

After completing this module, take a moment to journal on the following prompt:

“How do I want my clients to feel about their bodies when working with me?”

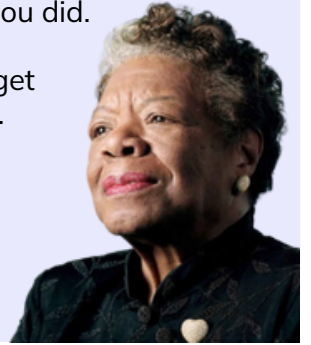
“

People will forget what you said.

People will forget what you did.

But people will never forget
how you made them feel.

– MAYA ANGELOU

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal dashed lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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MODULE 2

BODY IMAGE, FITNESS & HEALTH

 [WATCH THE VIDEO FOR THIS MODULE HERE](#)

Module overview

1/5	Thank you body
2/5	Body functionality writing task
3/5	How to: self compassion traffic light
4/5	How to: fix your feed
5/5	Journaling



MODULE 2

BODY IMAGE, FITNESS & HEALTH

Learning objectives

1

Describe activities and strategies to build better body image at the individual level

2

Recognise the barriers to adopting a body confident approach in fitness

3

Describe the impact of weight stigma and shame on body image and health behaviours

4

Practice strategies to communicate body confidence with clients, other fitness professionals and health professionals

Module content

- The fitness industry and body image
- What works to build better body image for clients
- Why positive body image has a place in fitness
- Strategies for discussing body image with others
- **Module activities**
- **Homework**



1

Describe activities and strategies to build better body image at the individual level.

HOW TO: FOCUS ON FUNCTIONALITY



THANK YOU BODY

Take a moment to brainstorm what you appreciate about what your body does for you by filling out the sections in the table below.

Category	What you appreciate and why this is important to you
Your senses	
What your body can do physically	
Ways your body can be creative and expressive	
Ways your body allows you to interact with others	
Your internal functions	

BODY FUNCTIONALITY

WRITING TASK

Set a 10 minute timer. Write a letter to your body, expressing gratitude for the things that your body does for you, and why those things are important to you. Utilise the five categories: Your senses, physical activity, creative expression, connecting with others, and internal body functions. Write constantly for the full ten minutes.

“I appreciate the way that my body allows me to show my love to my children through hugs and affection.”



Handwriting practice lines consisting of multiple sets of three horizontal dashed lines for writing.

HOW TO: **SELF COMPASSION**

traffic light

Stop and feel your feelings. This is a hard moment, how do you feel?

Remember that no one is perfect, and you are not alone. Many people struggle with this or have been in this situation.

Say some kind words to yourself - whatever you need to hear right now. Utilise soothing touch and do something positive that will help you feel good again.



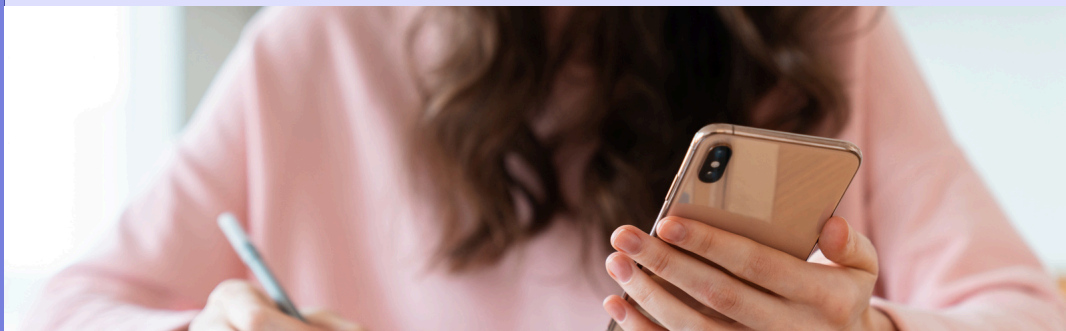
Think about a time you found that your inner voice was being critical of you. Take a moment to turn up the volume on your inner compassionate voice and step through the three phases of the traffic light below.



1

Describe activities and strategies to build better body image at the individual level.

HOW TO: FIX YOUR FEED



What are some of the accounts or types of content that you notice make you feel bad about yourself?

How do they make you feel?

Why do you think that is?

Could you unfollow or mute this content?

What sort of accounts and content inspires you? How can you get more of this?

Describe activities and strategies to build better body image at the individual level

"Which of the activities to build better body image were most powerful for me? What impact did they have? How could I incorporate these into my work with my clients?"

This image shows a full page of a handwriting practice worksheet. It consists of multiple sets of three horizontal dashed lines, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The lines are evenly spaced across the entire page, which is otherwise blank.

Recognise the barriers to adopting a body confident approach in fitness

But after explaining the changes you want to make to a co-worker, they respond with “but are you sure we want to be glorifying ‘obesity’ like that?”

What stops your colleagues from wanting to do this?

[illegible]

Practice strategies to communicate body confidence with clients, other fitness professionals and health professionals

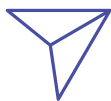
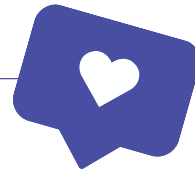
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WRITING ACTIVITY

Reflecting on what you have just learnt in the first part of this module...

- Draft an Instagram caption explaining what a body neutral approach to fitness means to you and the potential benefits to your clients
- Share this on your instagram (if you'd like)!

[illegible]

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MODULE 3 BUILDING BETTER BODY IMAGE IN FITNESS ENVIRONMENTS

 [WATCH THE VIDEO FOR THIS MODULE HERE](#)

Module overview

1/6	Refining language
2/6	Adjusting practice
3/6	Goal setting and measuring progress
4/6	Physical and social environments
5/6	Marketing and social media
6/6	Wrapping up this course



MODULE 3

BUILDING BETTER BODY IMAGE IN FITNESS ENVIRONMENTS

Learning objectives

1

Understand the importance of the use of language in developing a weight-neutral fitness environment

2

Develop strategies for weight-neutral measurement and goal setting in fitness settings and understand why this is important

3

Learn strategies to create a physical environment that promotes inclusivity and body confidence

4

Recognise the harm of some forms of fitness marketing and how to engage in more positive marketing strategies

Module content

- Understanding the importance of language and practices used with clients
- Physical and social environments

- **Module activities**
- **Homework**

1

Understand the importance of the use of language in developing a weight-neutral fitness environment

POSITIVE LANGUAGE



What is the one thing you can do that will make a difference for your own and other people's body image?

What are some words and language to move away from or avoid?

What words and language might you use instead?

CLIENT SAYS

(Negative/weight-focused)

REFRAME TO

(Weight-neutral affirmation)

"I just want to get rid of this belly."

"Let's focus on moving our body in ways that are fun and feel good and build core strength so you feel more stable and powerful in your movements."

"I feel so fat today."

"It sounds like you're having a tough body image day. Let's remind ourselves of what your body can do. It showed up today and I'm proud of you, you should be proud of you too!"

"I need to burn off what I ate last night."

"Exercise is a way to celebrate and care for your body, not punish it. Let's focus on how good it feels to move."

"I just want to be skinny."

"It's great to have goals, but let's anchor them in strength, energy and feeling good in your body."



“My thighs are huge.”

“Those legs are strong and carry you through every squat, step and sprint. Let’s train them to feel even stronger.”

“I hate how I look in the mirror.”

“Let’s focus on how movement makes you feel, not how you look. Progress isn’t always visible, but it’s real.”

“Ugh, I gained weight again.”

“Your weight changes over time and it’s not the full story of your health. Let’s look at the amazing progress you’ve made in endurance and strength.”

“I’m so out of shape, it’s embarrassing.”

“Everyone starts somewhere. The fact that you’re here shows commitment and courage. Let’s build from there.”

“I wish I had a body like [insert other person].”

“Your body is unique and valuable just as it is. Let’s work toward your own personal best, not someone else’s standard.”

“I’ll be happy when I lose X amount of weight”

“Let’s just find ways to feel strong, proud and empowered in your body right now.”

1

Understand the importance of the use of language in developing a weight-neutral fitness environment

BODY CONFIDENT LANGUAGE



Reflect on a recent experience with a client where they were talking negatively about their own body.

What are some common phrases that clients say, and how could you respond to guide them in reframing from how their body looks to what their body does for them?

Things clients say	Reframing to focus on functionality

2

Develop strategies for weight-neutral measurement and goal setting in fitness settings and understand why this is important.

WEIGHT NEUTRAL PRACTICE

WHAT ELSE CAN WE MEASURE?

Complete the table to work through other options for measuring and tracking fitness progress.

What we could measure	How would this work in practice?	Pros	Cons
Health markers			
Fitness and performance			
Quality of life			
Psychological wellbeing			
Adherence			
Enjoyment			

Circle the things that you think you could measure to track progress other than weight, that you might want to integrate into your practice.

2

GOAL SETTING

Develop strategies for weight-neutral measurement and goal setting in fitness settings and understand why this is important.



Summarise the reasons why intrinsic goals are more effective.

List some intrinsic goals that might work with your typical clients instead of using weight loss as a goal.

How might you need to adjust your client intake form to update to focus on intrinsic goals?

3

Learn strategies to create a physical environment that promotes inclusivity and body confidence

UPDATING PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENTS



Complete the table to list some of the common features of fitness environments that are harmful for body image, explain why they are harmful and describe how these could be changed.

Features	Why these are harmful	What could be done to create a more welcoming physical environment

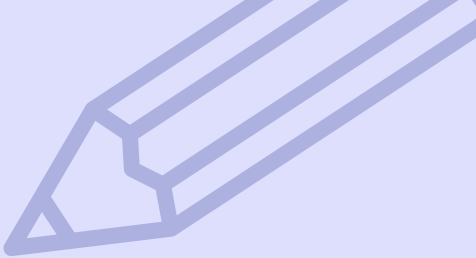
Learn strategies to create a physical environment that promotes inclusivity and body confidence

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3

Learn strategies to create a physical environment that promotes inclusivity and body confidence

JOURNALING ACTIVITY



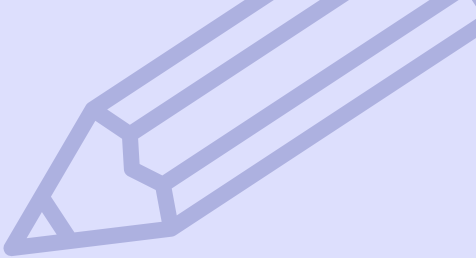
Spend 10-20 minutes journaling on the way the physical and social environment of your workplace makes you feel and how you think it might make your clients feel.

Journaling area with horizontal dashed lines for writing.

3

Learn strategies to create a physical environment that promotes inclusivity and body confidence

JOURNALING ACTIVITY



Create 3 action items

What are some changes you could implement to improve the physical environment?
What are some changes you could implement to improve the social environment?

Physical environment	Social environment

4

Rececognise the harm of some forms of fitness marketing and how to engage in more positive marketing strategies
ognise some of the harm

SOCIAL MEDIA



What are some of the common forms of social media content that could be unhelpful for the people who see it?

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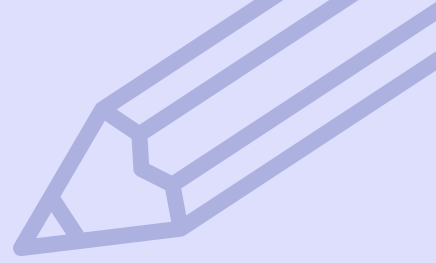
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Brainstorm 5 ideas for body confident content on your social media channels

●
●
●
●
●

WRAPPING UP: REFLECTION



Has your own personal body image shifted or evolved since you started to complete this course?
If yes, what has changed?
If no, why do you think that is?

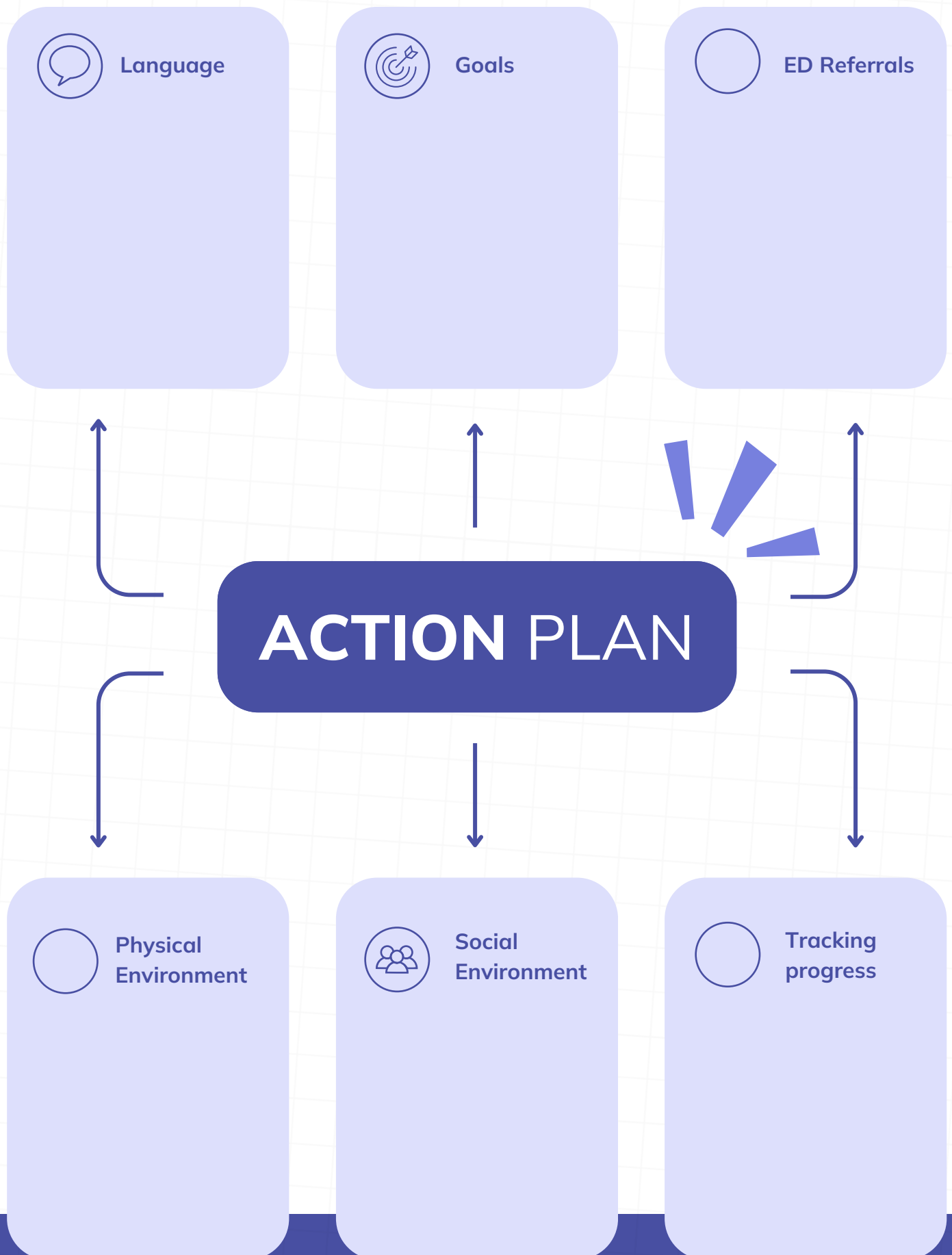
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What do you need to start doing in order to continue your own personal journey towards accepting and appreciating your body?

And what do you need to stop doing?

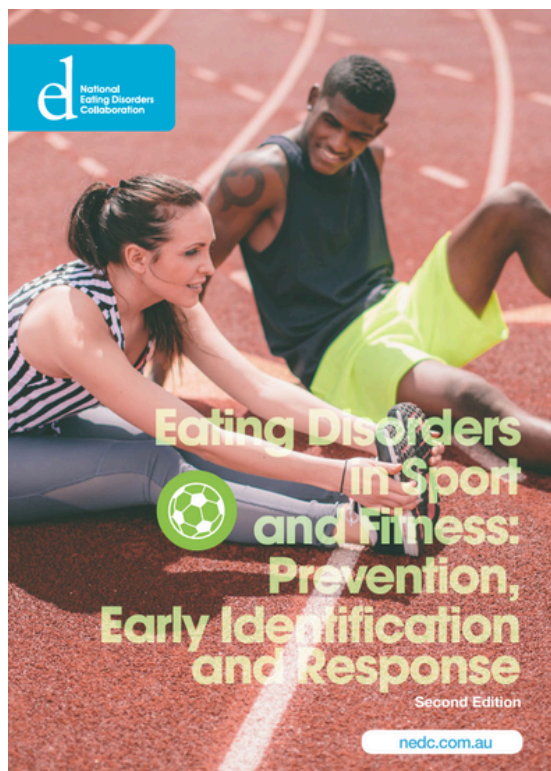
A large, empty, light blue rounded rectangular box for reflection.

Fill in the boxes to articulate the changes that you plan to make that are specific to your practice as a fitness professional. Who will you need to work with on this?



Put an asterisk next to the first three changes you will make

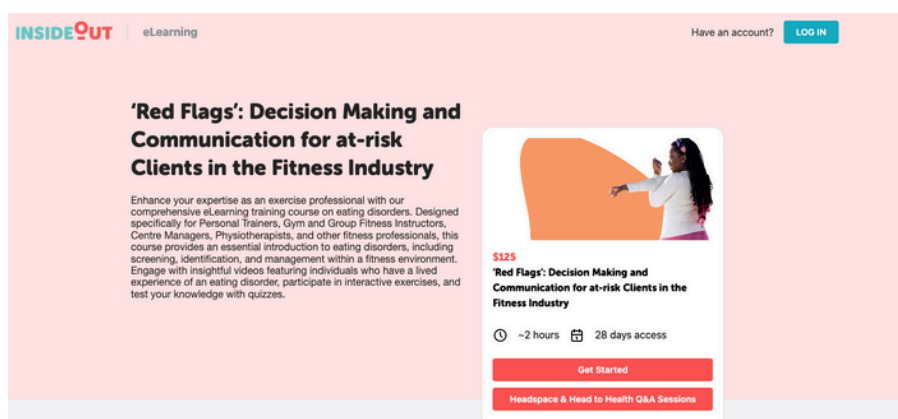
OTHER RESOURCES



Eating Disorders in Sport and Fitness: Prevention, Early Identification and Response **By the National Eating Disorders Collaboration**



Disordered eating in high performance sport **By the Australian Australian Institute of Sport**



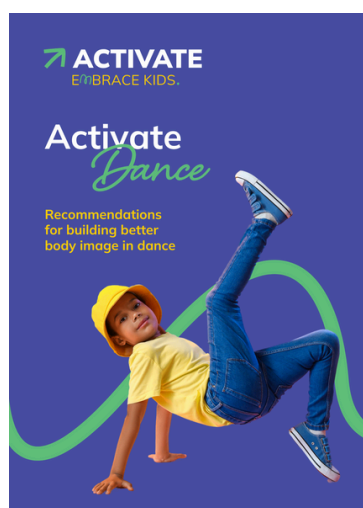
Red Flags: Decision Making and Communication for at-risk Clients in the Fitness Industry **By InsideOut**

MORE FROM THE EMBRACE COLLECTIVE



Activate by Embrace Kids

The Activate Playbook and Masterclass provide practical guidance for players, parents, coaches and administrators to create sporting environments that are more supportive, welcoming and inclusive for young people, meaning they are more likely to keep playing the sport they love for longer. [Learn more.](#)



Activate Dance

Activate Dance provides practical recommendations for dance teachers, choreographers and parents, to create dance spaces that feel welcoming for every body. [Learn more.](#)



The Embrace magazine

The Embrace magazine supports parents to build better body image for themselves and their kids, with expert advice for parenting dilemmas, celebrity interviews, no-fuss dinner-time tips and more. [Learn more.](#)

MORE FROM THE EMBRACE COLLECTIVE



Embrace Film

The Embrace film follows body image activist Taryn Brumfitt's crusade as she explores the global issue of body loathing, inspiring us to change the way we feel about ourselves and think about our bodies. [Learn more.](#)



EMBRACE KIDS Film

EMBRACE KIDS is an uplifting film directed by Taryn Brumfitt that brings together a vibrant collection of stories from young people and famous friends alike, who share their experiences about body image, bullying, gender identity, advocacy, representation and more. [Learn more.](#)

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Certificate of Completion

Building Better Body Image
Becoming an EMBRACE
Fitness Professional





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theembracehub.com



[The Embrace Collective](https://www.linkedin.com/company/the-embrace-collective)



[@_theembracecollective](https://www.instagram.com/_theembracecollective)

**Please tell your colleagues about this program
and tag us if you share it on socials!**