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Feature: All About the Body

10 LOCAL WOMEN SHARE THEIR SECRETS FOR LOVING THE SKIN YOU'RE IN.

by *claire charlton and stephanie fenton*

Body: Confidence

Let your qualities shine

Brazilian-born Christina Kammuller, 52



Former principal dancer of the Brazilian Guaira Ballet Theatre and owner of Christina's Adult Ballet in Keego Harbor, shares her perspective about body confidence.



How does one achieve a sense of body confidence? "My perception of beautiful body image is quite different than other [people's]. It's more about what we can do with our bodies than how they look after a certain age. I use my body as an instrument to [communicate](#) ___my feelings and emotions; therefore I do love my body."

Are there certain steps toward gaining this confidence? "There is no recipe for confidence. You just have to find a reason to be proud of yourself and celebrate your shape."

How can we carry ourselves like a dancer? "Shoulders back, chin up, eyes forward. I also think that internally, you have to look for your very own qualities – we all have them and let them show in the way you walk, talk and present yourself."

Tending the Barre Under Kammuller's tutelage, women learn classical ballet, and dance away with confidence. Here's what four students say about their bodies in motion. For more information, call 248.977.8699.

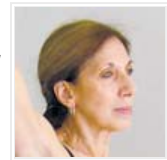
"No longer do I base body image or how I might celebrate my body on the cultural norms that often skew the younger crowd." **Terrye Mock, 51, a mental health counselor from West Bloomfield (Standing, above right).**

"I always felt self conscious in my body, uncomfortable walking into a room. After taking dance classes, I grew to appreciate my body and felt grateful for the awareness that dance brings to one who constantly looks in the mirror!" **Pleasant Ridge resident Rebecca Meisner, 59, a Realtor with Weir Manuel in Birmingham**



"I think to make the most of the body you are given is your obligation as a human being.... I feel I am still improving in many aspects. Maybe not in high jumps, but in expression and elegance." **Izumi Suzuki-Myers, 56, a Japanese language conference interpreter from Novi**

"What I am able to celebrate is what ballet allows my body to accomplish. I appreciate the control I maintain over my body, the flexibility, the strength, the stamina." **Susan Brown, 60, a mother and grandmother from Bloomfield Hills**



Body: Eating Disorders

Rethink sizes

photo by *bruce boyajian*

Kirsten Haglund of Farmington Hills



Kirsten Haglund was crowned Miss America this year. Her platform? Eating disorders. Haglund



year. Her platform? Eating disorders. Haglund, 19, says six years spent battling anorexia have changed her life outlook and shaped her national platform of raising awareness of eating disorders.

Lessons she's learned

Your identity is separate from your body

Haglund had been dancing ballet since age 3, but when ballet's body-image demands became overwhelming, she knew her dream came at too high a price.

"[Anorexia has] completely made me redefine who I am and what makes me who I am," she says. "Before, I was 'thin, ballerina Kirsten' – that was the only thing I identified with, and that was what made me successful. But having to come through recovery, I had to stop doing ballet, and

so that couldn't be me anymore. I had to refigure out who I was."

Controlling negative influences "Instead of going on a food diet, go on a media diet. When I don't pick up People magazine and flip through it, and I don't stare at the TV screen and watch entertainment news, I feel so much better about myself. When you stop flooding your mind with those images and stop receiving those messages, you start to feel so much better about yourself."

Size really doesn't matter "Some of the healthiest, most beautiful people I have ever met have not looked like a celebrity. Your health – your spiritual health, your mental health, your emotional health – is not defined by the size of your waistline."

Haglund credits healthful goals as having benefited her and offers the same for others. "Know that you're not defined by a number on a scale," she says. "You have to be strong for yourself."

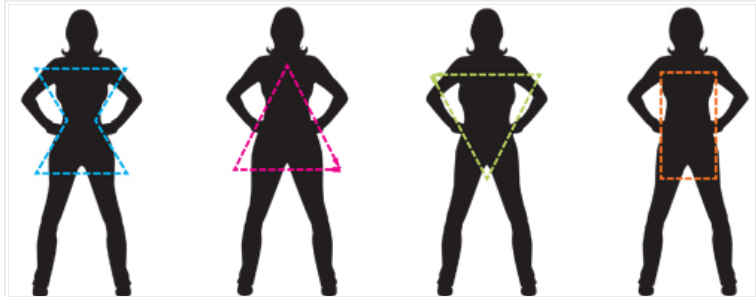
It's your service, not your appearance that matters "I do a job where I am never in a swimsuit as Miss America. It's a 365-day job, and the night of the pageant is just one night. Our program is about service, and it's about young women working hard to get money for school. It's about a dedication for the year."

Body: Shapes

Flaunt your curves with body-fitting clothes

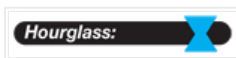


"There's no body that can't be dressed beautifully," says Indigo Zuri, owner of P2Styles personal and professional image consulting in Ferndale. She suggests practicing geometry to find the best look for your body type.



Tips for matching clothing to your body type:

Start in front of the mirror unclothed, and have your tape measure handy. Then follow these guidelines to determine your body type:



Shoulder and hip width are within 5% in size, waist is at least 25% smaller than shoulder, hip and bust measurement.

Celebrate your shape: An hourglass needs to remember to balance top and bottom, and wear a belt.



Hips are more than 5% larger than shoulder or bust.

Celebrate your shape: A triangle shape should look for tops that have broader lines or voluminous sleeves to give the illusion of fullness.



Hips are 5% smaller than shoulder or bust.

Celebrate your shape: An inverted triangle might need jeans with wider back pockets with detail on them, or palazzo pants, steering clear of accented shoulders or puffed sleeves.



Hips, shoulders and waist are within 5% of each other.

Celebrate your shape: A rectangle shape should work to

_____ create a waist with a belted jacket, a princess-seamed dress, or a top that is drawn in at the waist.

Picture Perfect: Is it for real?

photo by linda radin

Sarah Morgan, founder and executive director of Think Girl, a Rochester-based women's advocacy and education group that runs seminars for young girls on body image and media literacy. She talks frankly about the media's affect on our self-image.



What is media literacy, and how is it connected to body image? "When you are media literate, you have a strong awareness of the images television, film and print media are producing – and you can look at them with a critical eye. The first thing to know is that images are digitally altered, sometimes drastically. If the model is too skinny, they add meat and muscle; if she's too big, they slim her down ... and it's all based on what look is trendy at the moment.

How can women look at media more critically to makeover their own sense of body image and confidence? "It's about exposure. Seek out images of women that represent reality. Find magazines with ads that show all ages and races, wrinkles and body shapes.

"Or look for health magazines that are truly about health, rather than dieting or making drastic changes. These magazines exist; they just aren't the most popular. They tend to be independent magazines found online." For more info, check thinkgirl.net.

What can parents do to help children look at media more critically? "Point out that these images aren't real – this is not the way people actually look."

Body: Wellness

Above all else live well



Jennifer Ozeir, M.D., Mother of five, medical director and OB/GYN with Women's Health of Dearborn, prescribes some wisdom for good living.

1. Live with intention. When you reduce your environmental footprint, you save money and feel good about positively impacting the future. Eat lower on the food chain. Buy local foods and products. Bike to work!

2. Don't tolerate pain, heavy or unpredictable periods, difficulty holding urine, or lack of sexual satisfaction. Life is too short to live with discomforts that we have tools to fix!

3. Drink water and green tea throughout the day. Ditch coffee, cola and energy drinks.

4. Cultivate a mentor relationship. When you mentor a young person, you rediscover your own energy and enthusiasm.

5. Cut yourself some slack. Identify what you can reasonably do in your daily living, and leave the rest.

6. Quit smoking! 'Nuff said.

For more information, call 313.584.0500.

1. Do something active, regularly. Do mind/body exercises, play on the floor with your children, walk with your teens or adult children.

2. Do something creative, regularly. Keep a journal, learn ceramics, play a musical instrument.

3. Nurture relationships, regularly. Get together monthly with friends or weekly with your life partner.

Body: Sensuality

Finding Va va Voom

A life without sensuality is a life half lived. **Danielle Green** owns Vixen Fitness, offering classes in exotic dancing (think pole and lap dancing) for fun and fitness in Detroit, Ypsilanti and Jackson. Her thoughts about the S-word:



Why is sensuality important? "A healthy sense of sensuality helps you feel better about yourself, and that improves your relationships with others, be it your coworkers, your family, your lover or your spouse. We need to include sensuality in our lives to reduce inhibitions and remove stress. It really makes you a better person overall."

I'm convinced. Now how do I get it? 1. Dance. "Get to know yourself with the help of music." **2. Makeover.** "Get that haircut you've been looking at, buy something nice for yourself, find a workout routine that you love and will do."

3. Relationships. "Learn the art of sensual touch or massage. Get your sexy back by buying something that you have to purchase in private, wrap in brown paper, and giggle about."

4. Sexy photo shoot. "I did this for my hubby last Valentine's Day, and it actually turned out to be more of a gift to myself than for him. When I saw the pics, I could not believe it was me."

For more information, call 866.900.9797 or visit www.vixenfitness.com

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Celebrating my big beautiful self



Many kudos to the staff and contributing writers to the Body Issue of Strut. I have been a big girl for years. But I have always loved every inch of my being and I am always promoting a healthy self esteem, not only for myself but for my daughters.

I especially admired how this issue of Strut has incorporated my personal signature into one of it's title headlines, "...sway your hips and celebrate your curves." This has

been my personal mantra and signature for my email for the last 10 years. 

Not every woman is a size 2 nor should she want to be.

Thanks to the staff of Strut for celebrating ALL women no matter the shape or size.

Lisa Klobucar

I will put on my heels and swing my hips and celebrate my curves

Submitted by [gypsywoman35](#) on Mon, 07/14/2008 - 4:29pm.

