



The 40-Day Body Image Workbook

Group Discussion Guide

Ready to go through the 40-Day Body Image Workbook with a group? Here's how to make it work!

HELPFUL TIPS BEFORE YOU GET STARTED:

Use this schedule and plan to have your group get together for 10 sessions. These can be in-person or online group sessions. Meet for between one hour to an hour and a half to allow time to get through the content and to facilitate friendship.

Consider starting with prayer and then a warm-up of some sort (a question to get everyone laughing and/or comfortable) and then dig into the content.

Encourage group members to be supportive listeners and not “helpers.” The goal of processing this content is not to “fix” each other, but to allow a safe space to process and heal together. When someone shares, responses such as, “Wow. Thank you for sharing that.” Or, “I appreciate your vulnerability or authenticity” are supportive and encouraging. Responses such as, “When I had that issue... this is what I did to fix it...” shut down open conversation.

Please note. You MAY have women in your group who have an eating disorder. Please encourage anyone whom you suspect is having a difficult time with food or eating regularly to seek further help. Heather has a list of resources available on her site. www.improvebodyimage.com/eating-disorder-resources

Week 1: Introductions, Faith, and What You've Believed

Reading assignment: Introduction through Day 7

Questions to guide your discussion:

- 1) Does being free of body image issues feel like it would be a foreign land? What did you think of the comparison to Abraham, his journey, and his and Sarah's (from chapter 2) faith?
- 2) What have you already tried to fix your body image?

- 3) Do you believe that a better understanding of God's design, how intentionally we were created, and some of these concepts explored in these chapters can help build a foundation on which to have a better body image?
- 4) How did the concept of economics strike you? Have you thought about your body or beauty as a type of currency or, perhaps, have you believed that the way you look is something that is valuable or not very valuable about you?
- 5) Look at the chart on page 43. Have you heard of body positivity before? What did you think of the comparison between body positivity and the Bible?
- 6) What did you think of this statement from Day 7: "Your body is not nothing. Nor is it everything?" Is it difficult for you to believe your body was intentionally chosen and designed by God?
- 7) Read 1 Kings 6, 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 6:19 together. If God is that intentional about the way his temple would be built, do you believe it was that intentional about the way he made your body? Why or why not?
- 8) What stuck out to you most from these chapters?

Week 2: Image Management

Reading assignment: Days 8-12

Questions to guide your discussion of image management:

- 1) On Day 8, Heather talks about believing that the right look could keep her safe from rejection? Have you ever (consciously or subconsciously) believed this?
- 2) On page 59: How did you describe the image you want to portray? What words jumped out to you most?
- 3) Do you ever struggle to like your image? What do you think when you see yourself in pictures?
- 4) Read Matthew 7:24-27. In what ways have you tried to put your hope or find security in your image or body?
- 5) What did you think about the ideal image chapter? Do you have an ideal image? Do you ever feel frustrated in trying to reach it? What do you believe looking more like your ideal image would do for your life (taken from the first question under ACT) on page 66
- 5) What voices have you identified as having the biggest impact on your body image struggles?
- 6) Have you ever tried to be an image wearer instead of an image bearer?

7) What stuck out to you most from these chapters?

Week 3: Image Idols

Reading assignment: Day 13-14

Questions to guide your discussion of idolatry and the idol inventory:

- 1) Read Exodus 20 together. Is the concept of modern-day idolatry new to you?
- 2) What did you think about the history of the image idol? Does it surprise you to think it's been around that long?
- 3) In what ways do you observe our culture worshipping these idols?
- 4) What do you think about the concept of objectification from Day 14?
- 5) What did the identifying idols exercise reveal for you?
- 6) Read Galatians 4:8-9. What do false gods do for us?
- 7) What stuck out to you most from these chapters?

Week 4: Intro to Diet Culture

Reading assignment: Days 15-17

Questions to guide your discussion of uncovering diet culture:

- 1) What did you know about “diet culture” before reading this book? In what ways have you been a part of diet culture?
- 2) In what ways have you felt or believed you were “irreparably broken” if you did not fix your body?
- 3) How did you answer the second question on page 90, “What do you think about the language of diet culture saving us?”
- 4) Look at the chart on page 95. Spend some time looking up these verses and comparing what God's word says to what diet culture teaches.
- 5) Read Romans 14:17. Why would Paul say that God's kingdom isn't about eating and drinking? Contextually, Paul is trying to get the Romans to stop judging each other based on secondary practices around religious holy days and food. Can that apply to the differences we have around food, what we consider “healthy” and what we choose to eat today?
- 6) What stuck out to you most from these chapters?

****Consider having a time of confession this week. You can watch the video linked on page 96 for more information on how and why this is important. Invite group members to confess anything God has brought up for them in the arena of idolatry. After committing to making this a safe space (nothing said in the group leaves the group), gently encourage members to share an idol the Lord is convicting them of. Then pray for the group, encouraging them with the truth of 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”**

Week 5: A New View of Food

Reading assignment: Days 18-21

Questions to guide your discussion of food:

- 1) As you read a bit about the history of diets, what thoughts come to your mind?
- 2) Respond to this quote from page 99, “Yet a body that looks more runway-ready can’t promise you love, approval, or peace. All diets can offer is some sort of physical change.”
- 3) What stuck out to you most from the verses you looked up on page 100?
- 4) How are you with food rules? Is this something that has characterized your relationship with food? What has that looked like in your life?
- 5) Let’s talk about the Pharisees. They longed for others to see them as righteous. In what ways do our modern-day rituals or rules around food have this same objective? Have you ever felt more “righteous” or “less righteous” for food choices?
- 6) What concepts in the chapter on nourishment resonated with you most or challenged you the most?
- 7) Do you believe God made food to be satisfying? Why or why not?
- 8) What stuck out to you most from these chapters?

Week 6: Transform your Thought Life

Reading assignment: Days 22-24

Questions to guide your discussion of condemnation, conviction, and our thought lives:

- 1) As you think about the negative thoughts you battle around your body image, do you believe they are condemnation or conviction? (Reference the chart on page 128)
- 2) As you think about lies from your lies list, share one thing you believe Jesus would say in response to

one of your lies.

3) What stuck out to you most from the chapter on gluttony?

4) What statements did you circle on page 137? Share just one of the fears that you wrestle with the most. How do you think having our greatest hope placed in Jesus can soothe that fear?

5) Have you ever believed or felt like your body was the enemy?

6) What stuck out to you most from these chapters?

Week 7: Fasting, Shame, and Healthy Habits

Reading assignment: Days 25-28

Questions to guide your discussion of fasting and shame:

1) Have you ever fasted? Was it a strictly spiritual practice for you or did it creep into the category of “weight loss help” too?

2) What stuck out to you from the discussion of Daniel’s fast on pages 143-145?

3) Are you a black-and-white thinker? How does this impact your relationship with food and your body?

4) Look at the chart on page 150. How can living in the grace help with black-and-white thinking?

5) Have everyone in the group recite Philippians 4:8 from memory, or read it together.

6) What did you think about this statement on page 153, “Though shame and pride seem like opposites, both keep us focused on our- selves above all else. Both wield tremendous power over our emotional lives.”?

7) Share with the group one of the statements you wrote for yourself in chapter 28.

Week 8: Grief, Ideals, and Self Love

Reading assignment: Days 29-31

Questions to guide your discussion of grief and self love:

1) What do you think of the concept of grieving your ideal body? How have you experienced any of these stages of grief in your journey to improve your body image?

2) Do you keep clothes that no longer fit? Do you think this is helpful or harmful to a positive body image?

- 3) Do you do any type of “body checking?” What stuck out to you most from this section?
- 4) What do you believe it means to live a more “embodied” life? In what ways can you try to live or be more “embodied?”
- 5) Have you ever believed that more self love would help your body image issues? What do you think about this concept as you read about it today?
- 6) Read John 15:13 together. What sticks out to you most?
- 7) Which “ACT” step on page 180 would you like to put into practice this week?
- 8) What other concepts or lines stuck out to you from these chapters?

Week 9: Approval, Your Thoughts, and Gratitude

Reading assignment: Days 32-35

Questions on approval, thoughts, and gratitude

- 1) Do you long for the approval of others? What’s one area of your life you know you’ve been seeking approval in?
- 2) Read Galatians 1:10 together. What does this speak to our people-pleasing tendencies?
- 3) How did you do on the People Pleaser quiz on page 185? Share any results that surprised or stuck out to you.
- 4) “You don’t have to believe everything you think.” Is this a new or surprising concept for you?
- 5) Read Isaiah 55:8-9. Are God’s thoughts about you more important than your thoughts about yourself?
- 6) Do the ruler exercise from page 189 (watch the video for instruction). Bring your ruler to the group and share what you discovered about how you compare yourself to others.
- 7) Read Ephesians 2:10 and 1 Peter 3:3-4 together. What do you think about the concept of being God’s masterpiece? How does this connect with scripture’s definition of beauty?

Week 10: The FULL Life

Reading assignment: Days 36-40

Questions for discussion about living a FULL life:

- 1) Is it easy or difficult for you to thank God for your body?
 - 2) Read Psalm 16:6. How can this speak to your body image and help you feel grateful for the body God has given you?
 - 3) What are some ways you can practically stay focused above, even when you're frustrated with what you see in the mirror?
 - 4) Look up these verses about God's love for us: John 3:16; 1 John 4:9-11; 1 John 4:16; Romans 8:37-39; Romans 5:8. Is it easy or hard for you to believe you are unconditionally loved, regardless of what your body looks like?
 - 5) Read Psalm 119:37. How can watching what you watch (or see) help you preserve a healthier body image? Is this a struggle for you?
 - 6) What stuck out to you from the discussion on pages 214-215 of these issues being the "oldest struggle in the book?"
 - 7) Read Isaiah 42:10. Did you write a new "song" for yourself? Share with the group if you're comfortable.
 - 8) Consider signing the certificate of commitment with your group. Talk about ways that you can keep each other encouraged and growing on this journey to body image freedom. Can you make a group chat a safe place to share struggles and encourage each other? Could you make plans to continue a quarterly or monthly meeting to continue discussing these issues?
- **If this book touched you and the members of your group, please consider leaving a review on Amazon, Christianbook.com or wherever you purchased your book. These reviews are vital to helping others find this resource. Thank you!**