

NEUTRAL OBSERVATION - BODY POSITIVITY

step-by-step guide

Neutral Observation (sometimes called Non-Judgmental Describing) is a DBT tool developed to help support individuals develop a more neutral outlook towards one's own body. This skill helps guide the brain to view one's body from a more logical perspective rather than an emotional one. By stripping away emotional perspectives, one can quiet the nervous system's alarm response to your own reflection.

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Step 1: The Grounded Setup - First the individual starts by standing in front of a mirror wearing comfortable clothing. Before looking directly towards the places on one's body that triggers one's distress, the individual will take three deep, diaphragmatic breaths to physically calm one's nervous system and lower one's heart rate.

Step 2: The Fact-Check - Next the individual will look at one's reflection. Begin describing oneself out loud using only objective, measurable facts. Make sure to completely eliminate opinion-based adjectives (words like "ugly," "bad," "too big," or "weird"). Instead describe oneself as if you were a scientist recording data.

- Example: Instead of saying, "My stomach looks terrible," one says, "I am wearing a grey shirt. I have two arms. My skin is warm. I have brown hair."

Step 3: Shifting The Focus - Next shift the focus on what the body part looks like to what it biologically does. This is the practice of Body Neutrality.

- Example: "My legs have the strong muscle capacity to carry me up the stairs." "My lungs are breathing in oxygen to keep my body functioning."

Step 4: The Biblical Interjection - After stating three objective facts and one functional fact, recite Psalm 139:14 out loud: "I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made." to welcome God into this difficult obstacle. By doing this one is actively pairing the reality of your biological survival with the biblical truth of one's intentional design.

If an individual has a verse they prefer to utilize for this exercise that is perfectly fine. The goal is to find a positive biblical connection to one's view towards their body and its function.