

# Exploring my *Body Image*

## and 3 Ws (Wellness, Wellbeing, and Wholeness)

**1. When you look in the mirror or when you walk past a shop window and catch a glimpse of your body, what do you notice first? Explain your answer.**



I'm always reminded that I've gotten fat. My face, belly, arms, and even my legs have gotten bigger. I used to be a lot more fit at 70+kg so I always get conscious when I see myself in the mirror.

**2. What three (3) words can best describe your body? Why do you consider each your best?**

Three words that can describe my body are determined, transitional, and capable. Determined because even if I'm still not at the level where I want to be, my body reflects the effort I'm putting in, both for my health and for my own progress. Transitional because my body is still in-between. My past version was very good and I worked hard for it, and now I'm going to become even better. Capable because even if I'm not my best self, I can still move and keep improving.

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### 3. List down your (3) physical traits or body parts that you like BEST or/and would like to flaunt. Why do you like them best?

My best physical traits/ body parts are my eyes, ears, and calves. Eyes because they have an aggressive and sharp shape which has a balance between round and sharp. Ears because they're unique in the sense that they're a little big and detached at the bottom which my friends find amusing and they often play with them. Calves because they're surprisingly well-developed for someone who didn't start going to the gym until about two years ago. I carried my own weight for 18 or 19 years which probably helped in building them naturally.

### 4. What (3) body parts or physical traits that you like the least or don't like at all or you think need enhancement? Why?

My least liked body parts/physical traits are my hair, belly and skin. Hair because mine have started to recede which I'm not happy about. But I'm glad that it's not as severe as others. Belly because it's gotten bigger now that I've gained weight and it reminds me that I'm not where I want to be physically. Skin because I deal with a few issues like urticaria, which can be irritating and uncomfortable. I've learned to manage it but I also hope it improves overtime.

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### 5. Are others' opinion about your appearance important for you? Why?

Yes, but only a little because I want to present myself properly and look decent around others. I think it's important to be clean, presentable, and respectful in how I carry myself. In terms of judgement, I don't let those things get to me because I exercise and take care of myself for my own growth and goals.



### Which for you affects, influences or inspires you greatly about your body image and wellness?

Girlfriend, health news, and myself

### 6. Is your look important in the way you experience happiness? Why and how?



My appearance is not the main source of my happiness because I've already found peace with who I am and the joy in the people around me who make life more meaningful and fun. Even if I'm not at my best yet physically, I still feel good about where I am. But, if I were to reach my ideal physical form, I know I would be even happier because it would mean I've achieved a personal goal that I've worked hard for.

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### 7. Does your appearance affect your relationship and communication with others? Why and how?

When it comes to the people close to me, my appearance doesn't really affect our relationship or communication, and I'm very lucky. They love and accept me for who I am and not for how I look. However, I do believe that appearance plays a role when interacting with strangers, that's why I make an effort to always be clean and presentable. I think people hesitate or judge if someone seems like they don't take care of themselves, so definitely appearance can influence first impressions and how open others might be towards you.



### 8. What and who for you is a person who has wellness? wellbeing? and wholeness?

For me, a person who has wellness is someone who actively maintains healthy habits like exercising regularly, good eating habits, and gets good sleep and doesn't stress much. It is someone who is actively committed in their health. Someone with well-being is one who feels content and emotionally balanced with their life. Even if they don't go to the gym daily, they have a fun life with good relationships. Lastly, someone with wholeness is someone who accepts themselves wholeheartedly. It is someone who embraces their flaws, strengths, and lives an authentic life. It is mostly about being at peace with who and what you are.



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### 9. What for you are the top 3 issues or concerns that the adolescent millennials experience or encounter concerning one's body image and the 3 Ws (Wellness, Wellbeing and Wholeness)?

One major concern is social media pressure because they are exposed to images that contain what is thought to be ideal and feel the constant need for online validation, which negatively impacts self-esteem. Another is dissatisfaction with their bodies leading to dieting which can lead to overexercising and bad eating habits. Lastly, people nowadays just struggle to accept themselves and be aware of their emotions. It makes it difficult to accept their true selves and to have a sense of wholeness.

### 10. What self-care actions can you do now to enhance your Physical/Biological Self and your 3Ws? What hinders you from actualizing your best self?

I've been exercising more lately and have been trying to stay disciplined in regularly working out and making healthier eating choices. I also practice affirming myself and reminding myself that I'm good as I am, but I do all of this for my own growth. I make sure to get enough rest so my body can recover. I also remind myself that I don't need to be perfect but just need to keep showing up and be consistent, so I don't burn out or get discouraged. I also try to connect with people who uplift and encourage me to strengthen my well-being and wholeness. Some hindrances from actualizing my best self are sometimes lack of time and self-doubt. I'm in college so time is very limited, and self-doubt sometimes affects my motivation and confidence. But despite that, I'm very committed in improving and becoming my best self.

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### II. Complete the following statements:

I love my body because it lets me ... keep pushing and keep going forward even when I don't feel at my best.

I dislike my body when ... I'm reminded of how far I've strayed from where I used to be

I feel good when others tell me that ... I've improved and have come closer to achieving my goals.

I feel physically weak when ... I don't get to exercise, I fall off my routine, and when laziness tells me to not exercise.

I feel whole and well when ... I'm consistent with my workouts, when I'm eating good and healthy food, and when I remember I'm doing all of this for myself.

Others tell me that I look good because or when ... I stay clean, presentable, and carry myself with that quiet confidence.

I am beautiful/handsome because ... I am constantly working on myself physically, emotionally, mentally, and that shows just how much effort I put in.

**Write below your Encouragement Quote for yourself and your classmates about your Body Image and your 3 Ws (Wellness, Wellbeing and Wholeness)**

You don't always have to be at your best to be proud of where you are. Take your time, care for your body, and trust that you'll slowly but surely get to where you want to be.



# Reflection

One of the questions I found difficult to answer was about identifying the part of my body liked most. I never really looked at my body much with appreciation before, so I had to sit and think for a while. Usually, I tend to focus on the aspects I need to fix. This part was challenging especially because I'm currently struggling with my weight. I went on a weight loss journey in 2022 from over 110kg to 76kg. It was a huge achievement for me. Now I've gained the weight back and am around 100kg again. It's been tough to face, and I know I'm not where I want to be right now, but I also believe in my ability to get back on track. The second half of the worksheet also took me a while to answer because it made me think of how my insecurities get in the way of how I interact with others, and how I see myself in some situations.

An important thing I realized is that I don't really place much weight on how others see me. I'm very lucky to have wonderful people in my life that accept me and love me for who I am, regardless of how I look. However, my number one critic has always been myself. I've gone through a successful weight loss journey before, and I've seen a glimpse of who I can be. I know how confident, attractive, and capable I felt when I was at my fittest. And because of that, I've set a high standard for myself. To me it's not about meeting society's ideal or chasing a specific body type. I've never been someone who chases conventional beauty standards anyway. I've been overweight most of my life, and I've definitely had insecurities growing up. But even so, I've come to accept myself for who I am. This reflection made me realize that I can accept myself and still strive to improve. I can do that out of love and belief in my potential, and not out of hate.



# Reflection

To cope with body image issues, I've started working out again and slowly rebuilding the habits that helped me before. I actually had very bad diet habits before because I wanted to lose weight quickly. Now, I do things more slowly and build habits that I can sustain. I run on the treadmill three times a week and follow progressive overload so I can gradually return to the shape I once had. To me it's not just about losing weight, but about showing up for myself consistently. Outside of fitness, I also give myself mental breaks by playing video games and watching YouTube videos. They let me enjoy my own world and disconnect from the pressure and expectations of society. I also spend time with my girlfriend and it helps a lot. She's very supportive but also honest and direct. I appreciate how she gives me an outside perspective I can trust. Most importantly, I always try to speak to myself with kindness and strength. I remind myself that I'm enough as I am, but I'm also capable of so much more. This mindset helps me to stay grounded and improve, and also helps me with accepting who I really am.

I also realized that the 3Ws are all connected in my life. My wellness is in the way I take care of my physical body through my workouts and healthier eating habits. My well-being is nurtured through emotional support, enjoying my hobbies like gaming, and spending time with the people that I love and trust. These help me manage my thoughts and help me to not be consumed by the constant pressure from society. Lastly, wholeness is not about reaching the perfect or ideal body, but accepting where I am, being proud of how far I've come, and believing in the version of myself that I'm working toward. I can love myself while growing, and it is what makes me whole.



# Reflection

Lastly, watching the videos and reading the articles enlightened me on the effect of society in shaping our body images, especially through unrealistic standards and harsh expectations. From the WellCast video, I learned to stop chasing perfection and recognize the traits that makes me, me. It reminded me to calm down and to take a step back and accept that genetics plays a big role in what's realistic for our bodies. We don't have to look like celebrities, rather set small goals and stay true to ourselves. After watching the video by William Lewis, I also realized how much pressure the media constantly gives with images of an ideal body. It makes us feel dissatisfied with what we have and sets unrealistic expectations on our body. It's like we're chasing something that doesn't exist, like chasing ghosts. The CandyMag article also talks about a common thing in Filipino culture, body shaming. I realized how harmful and outdated these norms are and how important it is to resist them. From cosmopolitan, I also came to the conclusion that even celebrities have their own insecurities, they are just good at hiding them. We shouldn't idolize them or feel like we need to be like them in order to have worth. Lastly, the Good Housekeeping stories about women who overcame deep personal struggles showed me that confidence doesn't come from perfection, but from self-acceptance. It's not about looking perfect, but being at peace with you I am and embracing everything I am.

