

Stop Losing Sleep Over the Size of Your Butt

*5 simple truths to help you fall madly in
love with yourself*

MISTY TRIPOLI

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Certain names and identifying characteristics mentioned in this book have been changed.

ISBN: 978-0-5789-6064-0

Introduction

“There’s no prerequisites to worthiness. You’re born worthy, and I think that’s a message a lot of women need to hear.”

- Viola Davis

Without a doubt this was the lowest point of my life. Years of abusing my body with bulimia had culminated in me waking up on my bathroom floor covered in vomit and blood. Yes, it really was as disgusting as it sounds. And yes, I knew what I was doing to myself was killing me. But knowing this wasn’t enough for me to stop. Being tired of hating myself, lying to people I loved, being a fraud to my clients... none of it was enough to stop. I knew I had to change but I had no idea how. I felt totally hopeless and wondered if things would ever get better. Or, was this as good as it gets?

The question, “Is this as good as it gets?” resonated over and over in my mind. The very thought of being back on this floor one year, five years or ten

years from now gave me such a feeling of despair that I could hardly bear it. I was just so tired of abusing my body and treating myself with such disdain. If I couldn't figure out a way to get better, I simply didn't want to go on.

Perhaps coming to such a dire realization was the catalyst for what happened next. While lying on this floor, embarrassed, confused, desperate and afraid, I had a profound awakening that would eventually lead to my healing. A voice inside of my head, that got progressively louder, repeated the words... You are Enough! You are Enough! YOU ARE ENOUGH!

The louder this voice grew, the more the anger and frustration that I'd been experiencing about not having a "perfect, flawless" body began to disappear. It was replaced with an assurance that I no longer needed to worry about what I looked like, or what others thought about me. That I didn't have to doubt my self-worth. That I really was enough!

Now, while this might not seem like an incredible, earth-shattering revelation to anyone else, for me it was huge. In this moment of clarity my mind was literally transformed and for the first time that I could remember, I felt at peace with who I was and what I looked like. Plus, I could see a path whereby I was going to be able to appreciate my body for all of the unique and amazing capabilities that I had been blessed with.

A path where I wouldn't have to constantly compare myself with others, to hate myself, or abuse my body.

Armed with this new hope, I began a quest to become truly healthy. Both on the inside and out. While it took some time, and a lot of trial and error, I'm happy to say that the path I discovered has allowed me to completely change my thoughts around food, my expectations about my body, my perspective on exercise, the manner in which I talk to myself, how I interact with others, my relationships, as well as virtually everything else in my life. This has led to an almost unlimited amount of confidence, fulfillment, satisfaction and happiness. Plus, I no longer suffer from bulimia.

Now that I've discovered this path for myself, I've made it my life's mission to share what I've learned with others so that they can discover their own path to vibrant health and happiness, too.

Hi, my name is Misty Tripoli and I've been in the fitness industry for over 30 years. During this time, I've seen it all - and taught it too. The hundreds of different workout routines and programs, the endless array of fad diets and gimmicky products, the rise of the mega-gyms. There's always some new and shiny product when it comes to "helping" people lose weight. However, even though the programs and products continue to change,

one thing that hasn't changed is the fitness industry's obsession with a person's outward appearance, and how they correlate this with being healthy. Sadly, this emphasis on appearance isn't allowing people to actually get healthy, and more often than not it leaves them feeling like they're not enough. It certainly did for me.

The truth is, the notion that being skinny or thin means being healthy is just nonsense. When I was suffering from bulimia, I may have looked okay on the outside, but I was anything but healthy on the inside. That's because thin doesn't mean healthy!

After finally coming to this realization for myself I knew there needed to be a fundamental shift in the way I approached health and wellness. It was this desire that led me to develop something totally different than anything out there.

Something that focused just as much attention on getting healthy on the inside, as getting healthy on the outside...

Something that allows you to move your body in a pain-free, gentle manner, yet that still challenges you physically and creatively...

Something that would teach you how to truly love yourself and accept your body. Not at some point in the future, but right now...

Something that would help you cultivate

practices and habits that would allow you to experience the true, vibrant health that you deserve.

I am proud to announce that this journey has culminated in the creation of my health and wellness program - Body Groove. However, it's probably not appropriate to even call Body Groove a program. It's actually more of a philosophy of how to best treat your body to maximize your health and happiness.

While Body Groove incorporates all the normal things that you'd expect in a wellness type "program" - like exercise and healthy eating - it's built on the foundational principle that you are a unique individual with unique, individual needs. So, what works for one person won't necessarily work for you. Your body is different and you should move it in a way that's best for you, not some "cookie-cutter" approach to the masses.

While this might sound obvious, it's remarkable how the fitness industry ignores this. For them, it's all about "follow-the-leader" and do exactly what they do. But this is rarely what is best for your body.

For me, when I stopped following the "experts" and started trusting my own intuition and doing things my own way, that's when everything changed.

That's when bulimia left me...

That's when I effortlessly dropped the extra weight that my body had been carrying for decades...

That's when, for the first time in my life, I started to love who I was and love my body...

That's when I began to experience the real happiness that I had always hoped for and knew that I deserved...

That's when I was able to appreciate the fact that I was enough!

I want you to experience this too. To avoid having to struggle like I did! To avoid feeling like a failure because you couldn't stick with someone else's plan. To love and respect yourself for all of your unique characteristics and abilities. To discover your own, personalized path to vibrant health and happiness!

The only thing I ask is that you begin this journey with an open mind, and with the desire to think and do things a little differently.

So, if that's you, and you're looking for a pathway to true, vibrant health... then I'd love for you to join me. I can promise you that it will change your life. Just like it has for me and for so many thousands of people all around the world.

Join me!

Chapter 1

The Beginning of Bulimia

*"I said to my body, softly: 'I want to be your friend'.
It took a long breath, and replied: I have been
waiting my whole life for this."*

Nayyirah Waheed

I grew up with women everywhere in my life. Six sisters, my mom, my grandmother, tons of aunts. Just women everywhere. What I didn't realize at the time, but realize now, is that none one of these women - who I love dearly - actually liked their bodies. As a young girl, this had a very profound effect on me.

You see, every time one of these women complained about how they hated their thighs, or they had to lose weight, or compared themselves negatively

to someone else, it reinforced a notion that in order to be beautiful I had to be thin. Or, in order to love and appreciate my body, I had to look a certain way.

Without knowing it, the actions of the women in my life were causing me to obsess about my size and to find fault with my body. It's no wonder that growing up I hated the way I looked. I was merely copying the example of everyone I knew and admired.

What about you? How many women do you know who really love their body? My guess is not many. Sadly, this is the case for most women.

Now, here's an even scarier question. How many of you, through your actions and words about your body, are negatively impacting the women and girls you interact with? Perhaps your daughters, your nieces, your friends? Is your example teaching them that the only way they can be happy about their body is if they're thin?

Even if you're doing a good job for those around you, your example is only a fraction of what your loved ones are exposed to. They are bombarded with hundreds and thousands of images every single day on television, in magazines, and on social media that associate beauty, wealth, fame, popularity, and even intelligence, with how you look. It's almost impossible to find anyone or anything that isn't reinforcing the idea that to succeed in life you have to be thin.

For me, this barrage of outside negative influence started when I was about 14. Like many young girls, as I hit puberty my thighs and hips started to grow and this was really upsetting to me. To complicate things, being a teenager in the '80s I was exposed to the likes of MTV and fashion magazines, and I remember looking at these women on TV and in these magazines and recognizing that my body was very different to theirs. This really bothered me.

In fact, I was so angry with my appearance that I used to grab my thighs in total disgust and verbally reprimand myself for being what I considered to be disgusting and fat.

Truth is, I wasn't either!

Like most young girls, and most women, I constantly compared myself to others and the images I was being exposed to all the time. It didn't matter what I actually looked like because in my mind I wasn't good enough. As women that's part of our dysfunction. We're never satisfied! We never think we're enough.

“It's almost impossible to find anyone or anything that isn't reinforcing the idea that to succeed in life you have to be thin.”

Here's where my story took a tragic turn. At this delicate age of fourteen years old, I watched a movie about a girl who suffered from bulimia. At the end of the movie this girl actually died. However, as much as I believe the producers of this movie were trying to expose the dangers of eating disorders, that is not what I took from watching it. Instead, I found myself saying, "Oh! That's the secret. I can eat whatever I want because I can just throw it up afterward."

So, at around fourteen years of age I started making myself throw up and thus began my sixteen-year battle with bulimia.

Now, I couldn't actually make myself throw up. Instead of sticking my fingers down my throat I would drink this stuff called Syrup of Ipecac. It's what you give babies to make them throw up if they have been poisoned. I was just so determined to get thin that I was willing to do anything.

My Life as a Fitness Trainer

A couple of years into my battle with bulimia, I developed another obsession. Working out.

At around 16 years old I walked into a gym and watched people teaching a dance type aerobic class and knew that I could do that too. So, I got a job teaching step aerobics. I then ended up going on to teach everything else too. Every kind of fitness class

you can imagine. Boxing, kickboxing, step, Pilates, hip hop, dance, yoga. You name it, I taught it. I completely immersed myself in everything fitness and it felt like the perfect fit.

Here's the not so perfect part...

Between my classes I would secretly go from drug store to drug store and buy up supplies of Syrup of Ipecac. Then I would stop at McDonald's, Taco Bell, any kind of fast food and gorge myself. After that I'd make another stop and put down some ice cream or whatever else I could get. I would literally consume thousands of calories in a single sitting. Then, I would drink a bottle of Syrup of Ipecac and that would cause me to violently throw up. I would throw up to the point of literally vomiting blood. I wanted it that way because that's when I figured that all the food in my system was gone and those "evil" calories couldn't make me fat.

In my late twenties I was doing this three to four times a day and this was my daily routine for years. Yet everyone thought I had it all figured out. That I was the epitome of health. No one knew about my dirty little secret that between my classes I would binge on fast food, and then purge. Then I'd go back and teach another class and cheer people on and say, "Let's get skinny together!" It was such a lie!

The truth was that I was abusing my body on

multiple levels. From what I was eating - and then throwing up - to how I was abusing myself through too much exercise. And perhaps the worst form of abuse was how I talked to myself and beat myself up inside my head.

As I look back, I recognize that I'd never been given the tools on how to manage my inner world. My thoughts, emotions, desires, fears. No one ever teaches you how to deal with that kind of stuff. Yet your inner world contributes more to your overall health, and can bring out a level of hatred and insecurity perhaps more than anything else.

For me, my inner-dialogue was so negative and so destructive that I had completely convinced myself that I was worthless. I was living and working in Los Angeles – the capital of dysfunction - and I was constantly comparing myself to everyone else. Telling myself how inferior I was. This self-loathing and desperation to look a certain way even led me to get liposuction... because in my mind I was just disgusting and I couldn't handle the way I looked.

To put it mildly, my life was a total mess. I was working seventy hours a week, throwing up several times a day, teaching twenty classes a week and abusing myself on all levels – and yet nobody knew it. That's because I knew how to mask what was really going on.

Most of us can do that, right?

We put on masks to convince the world that we're fine when in reality, we're hurting.

“Between classes I would binge on fast food, and then purge. Then I'd teach another class and cheer people on and say, ‘Let's get skinny together!’ It was such a lie!”

While you may not suffer from the extremes of bulimia and negative self-loathing like I did, I'll bet you've struggled with dieting, exercising and body image at some point in your life. In fact, for most of the women I talk to around the world, this is a daily struggle.

We haven't figured out an effective way to be healthy. We continue to punish our bodies through excessive exercise, crazy dieting and negative self-talk. Or, we just give up and we stop moving our bodies entirely. Then, we overeat or eat things that don't make us feel our best. We allow negative thoughts to dominate our internal conversations. We forget how special and unique we are. We put our needs on the back burner to everyone else's. We lose hope.

That was my life for longer than I'd like to think about – but then I had my awakening and things very quickly took an amazing turn.

Dancing is only part of why I love Body Groove. It is the inspirational messages that come along with it. Misty has helped me understand that I am a unique person and that I am okay. I don't fit into anybody's mold. I am learning to love who I am and that I am an okay person.

Grooving has taught me it is okay to take care of myself and do something positive and healthy for myself. It is okay to put me as number one.

I am learning that my way is the right way. Most of all I am setting myself free of all the negative talk in my brain.

Roiann B.

Chapter 2

Fitness Industry Lies

*“Work out because you love your body,
not because you hate it.”*

Unknown Author

When I was battling with bulimia, I literally traded my health for my looks, and it almost killed me. However, at the time, I didn't care about that. I just wanted to be thin and didn't think about the long-term consequences of how I was abusing my body. Isn't that how we think and act sometimes when we want to lose weight? Ironically, we're willing to sacrifice our health to “look healthy.”

In this quest to look good at all costs we often treat health like it's a destination with a fixed end. It's almost as if we believe that one day we'll simply

be deemed “healthy” and that’s the end of the whole ordeal. That we can adopt certain practices temporarily to help us lose weight or look better, and then simply abandon these practices once we reach our goal.

This is a huge mistake! It encourages things like dangerous diets and diet supplements, as well as super intense fitness programs that aren’t appropriate for most people. Plus, it contributes to a whole host of issues concerning negative body image that leave you feeling like you’re not enough.

While it’s never good to carry too much excess weight, and there’s certainly nothing wrong with having weight loss goals, the fact is, true health encompasses so much more than just your dress size. It’s about doing things every day to create a lifestyle that allows you to experience vitality and vibrance. And while this includes things you would normally associate with being healthy, like eating whole foods and exercising, it’s also about adopting practices that will allow you to be healthy on the inside.

Think about it like this, I’m sure you’ve been on a diet at some point in your life. At first this diet probably helped you lose a little weight. But did this diet really make you healthy? Did it set you up for long-term success? More important, did it address any of your inner struggles that contributed to you wanting to lose weight in the first place? Probably not.

For me, part of the reason I made myself throw up after I ate was because I thought it would make me look better. However, there was so much more to my bulimia than just wanting to look good. The truth is, I fooled myself into thinking that if I could look a certain way that everything else in my life would magically be better. Things like my poor body image, my negative inner-dialogue, my low self-esteem. That it would all disappear.

However, rather than my bulimia helping with these things, it just made them worse. It wasn't until I focused on changing my internal thoughts, emotions and habits, and doing what was necessary to get healthy on the inside, that I was able to get healthy on the outside.

But that's not what's being taught in the fitness industry or portrayed in society. Instead, it's about what you look like on the outside, and how quickly you can lose enough weight to rock a bikini. Or, it's the latest "breakthrough" diet that will help you eat whatever you want and still lose incredible amounts of weight. But what about the side effects of these "get-thin-quick" programs? No one ever seems to talk about that. The conversation should be focused on the choices that you can make to ensure lasting health and wellness for the rest of your life, not just for a short period of time.

“The fitness industry operates under the assumption that everyone moves the same way. What works for one person will work for another.”

My Dilemma

I was facing a real dilemma. I was a fitness instructor with a crisis of conscious. I had come to the conclusion that the “look-good-at-all-costs” approach to fitness was the worst way to do things. It had not only been detrimental to my health and well-being, but also countless others. I needed to find a more effective way to help myself and my students get healthy. But I was now going to have to fight against an industry that spends billions of dollars convincing people that they are broken and needed fixing. That they’re not enough.

As I saw it, there were two major problems with the fitness industry that were preventing people from achieving real long-lasting results.

First, the fitness industry generally doesn’t value your individuality. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the structure that it tends to apply to its classes. If you go to gyms and fitness centers all around the world you would see the same kind of classes, taught

by the same kind of people, with the same kind of expectations and instructions. These classes emphasize copying a leader rather than moving in a way that makes sense for each individual student. They operate under the assumption that everyone moves the same way and that what works for one person will work for another.

However, when you move your body you should always ask yourself how the movement makes you feel? Is it something that will work for you? Is it right for your body?

These types of questions are typically absent from most exercise classes because the fitness industry doesn't tend to concern itself with something as "trivial" as an individual person's feelings and abilities. And sadly, many fitness instructors are too arrogant to believe that their clients might actually know more about the best way to move their bodies than they do.

Let me assure you, when it comes to your body, no one knows more than you. You are the expert!

My Revelation

Like most every other fitness instructor, my students looked at me and copied what I did. We'd line up in a very regimented fashion and they'd follow everything I told them. Or, at least they would try. Quite often, as soon as many of these students figured out one of the

moves I was teaching, I was already onto the next one. It was a constant game of catch-up. My guess is that if you've ever done a fitness class, you can probably relate.

I remember one class in particular where I was really paying attention to my students and trying to figure out how to best help them. What I realized was shocking!

As I looked at my students, I noticed the pain on their faces as they tried to keep up. So many of them were struggling to follow what I was doing. As I watched this more and more I remember thinking how these people really shouldn't be copying me. Their bodies were different than mine and they should move them in a way that was best for them.

However, more than this, I recognized the desperation these people felt to be thin. Their longing to be loved and to feel better about themselves. It was so clear to me. I knew exactly what they were thinking and feeling because I was thinking and feeling the same thing. It didn't matter that I was the teacher and they were the students. Just like me, they were insecure, unsure and vulnerable.

As I was processing this, a surge of empathy came over me and from that moment everything shifted. I realized that the "follow the leader" style of teaching, combined with the mentality that you're

broken and need fixing, wasn't going to cut it anymore. Now, I had to figure out something that would. I had to approach teaching differently and I was determined to figure out a better way. A more personal way.

“True beauty is an essence. An understanding of your true worth and value. A liberating state of mind that allows you to be exactly who you are without worrying about what others think, or how they might judge you.”

True Health Begins on the Inside

The second major problem with the fitness industry is that in addition to not allowing for creativity or individuality, it focuses almost entirely on a person's outward appearance. Yet, as I've mentioned about my own experience with bulimia, this is the totally wrong way to look at being healthy or beautiful.

When I was throwing up 3-4 times a day I may have looked healthy, or thin on the outside, but I wasn't remotely healthy on the inside. The truth is, I wasn't healthy on the outside either. The constant

throwing up depleted my body of much needed nutrients and caused all kinds of problems. I had huge boils on my skin, my hair was falling out and my teeth were decaying. I couldn't go to the bathroom for days at a time. I was a complete mess. I assure you there is so much more to being healthy than just trying to look good.

To be truly healthy you need to begin on the inside, and work your way out. Meaning, you have to cultivate practices in your life that allow your body to function at its best. For me, that meant being more present with the things I was doing. Whether that was how I was exercising, how I was eating, how I was talking to myself, and even how I was interacting with others.

For example, when I was struggling with bulimia, I used to shovel food into my mouth so quickly that I wouldn't even taste it. However, when I decided to be more present with my food, I slowed down and savored every bite. I started asking myself how the food I was eating would make me feel. Was it something that was good for my body? Was it something that I needed?

This practice really changed my perspective on food. It allowed me to stop looking at food as some kind of enemy but as my friend. Now, I no longer feel the urge to binge or mindlessly stuff food into my

mouth. I am able to make food choices based on what will make me feel better.

This paradigm shift in how I eat has had a huge impact on me and has transformed my relationship with food. For perhaps the first time in my life, I've stopped dieting and worrying about restricting my calories. Instead, I focus on giving my body what it needs to feel good. Don't get me wrong, I still love cookies. However, if I feel like a cookie, I only eat one or two, rather than the whole batch.

In other areas of my life, I take time for myself each day to think about who I want to be, and the happiness I want to experience. These quiet moments of meditation are extremely powerful as they allow me to recognize my own true worth and beauty, and to reinforce the truth that I am enough. That I can love myself.

You can experience this too.

When you cultivate a healthy inner world, your outer world will almost magically take care of itself. And even though this often means your body will naturally drop unhealthy weight, like it did for me, it's not about achieving a specific size or shape. Instead, it's about an essence. An understanding of your true worth and value. A liberating state of mind that allows you to be exactly who you are without worrying about what others think, or how they might judge you. An

intuitiveness about who you are and what your body needs to be truly healthy.

When you stop worrying about what others think so much and give yourself permission to think, move, and act in a way that your body is telling you to, that's when magic can happen. It happened for me and I know can happen for you too.

I have gone from a girl who has hated every workout I have ever tried, to the girl who gets excited to workout when I get home. Knowing that I "can't get it wrong" and hearing "if it doesn't feel good, don't do it" makes all the difference. The music is awesome, the dancing is fun, and most importantly, it's good for the soul. The workshop is amazing as well, helping me to find more of myself. Added bonus, I have lost 30 pounds so far, making myself healthier, not only in weight, but in my entire body. Thank you for creating such an amazing movement.

Misty H.