



## *The 10 Principles of Joyful Movement* #2: Embrace Embodiment

The  
*joyful*  
Movement  
Show



Episode 4

[00:00:00] **Kim:** Hello, friends and welcome back this week is all about embodiment, embracing and learning to be in and with our body and choosing movement that nourishes the whole self. Embracing embodiment is the second principle of joyful movement. I often say that we are more than our bodies. Did you know though that we actually have four bodies? Our physical body, our mental body, our emotional body and our spiritual body.

[00:00:30] Maybe you haven't thought of it in this way. I mean, we all know we have a soul and feelings and thoughts, but have you ever considered these parts of you as pieces of your whole parts of you that when we're seeking health, ie. Engaging with food and exercise, need just as much attention as the physical body itself. Now, if your brain is reacting to this first sentence and thinking that this all sounds a little, woo, woo. I'm going to suggest that having that thought is a clear sign that you need to listen to this podcast, because you're about to realize why you've struggled or given up on all the fitness programs you've tried in the past.

[00:01:09] We're gonna dive deep into how diet culture's. And with changing the appearance of our physical body actually violates the rest of us and keeps us stuck on the start stop cycle or avoiding exercise altogether. I'm gonna teach you how to reconnect to all the parts of you through mindfulness and how to engage with exercise in a way that actually empowers you and leaves you feeling content accomplished and wanting more sound good.

[00:01:39] Cool. Let's get into it. Okay. So let's backtrack a little last week, we talked a lot about diet culture, and if you missed that episode, you really need to go back and listen to it because it's kind of pivotal to everything I talk about. We really exposed to how diet culture influences our behavior when it comes to how we choose to exercise and eat food.

[00:02:02] Often we see exercise as a transaction, a way to earn or burn calories. We feel we need to pay off our food choices or exercise in order to justify a treat or we exercise only to lose or maintain weight. Either way, our focus is only on our physical body and when this is our focus, we engage in activities or programs that are really hard, punitive even, that we don't necessarily like, or even sometimes cause us pain- because that's what we're taught we need to do in order to achieve the ideal picture of health. ie. Thinness.

[00:02:38] And we talked about why we then struggle with motivation and need to rely on willpower, external rewards or accountability to get us to stick with it because engaging in activities that you don't like, that don't feel good. The point of which is only to change the appearance of our physical body.

[00:02:55] That's super diet-y. I'm gonna take that a step further and say that the reason it is so demotivating is because punishing yourself with exercise or restrictive eating is a violation to your mental, spiritual, and emotional bodies. The reason you give up on or avoid exercise is because those other three bodies are screaming for some love and attention. Diet culture has us believing that there's only one way we should all look and fitting in or feeling like you belong means doing everything you can to achieve this ideal.

[00:03:33] By default, we begin to believe that our physical body is the only part of us that matters; that our value and worth is tied up in how we look. That's why we keep coming back to this cycle of restriction and punishment, even though we know it doesn't work long term because we're consumed by the utter shame, we feel about our bodies, not conforming to the ideal and shame is such a powerful emotion ladies.

[00:04:01] Shame is something that we feel inside whenever our belonging or our acceptance or our value is threatened. Shame works to get us to comply with the norm and because of its intense power shame gets us into action to try to get us to fit in. Belonging is an innate need that we all have. and because of the shame and dare I say hatred, we feel for our bodies, we in effect cut ourselves off from our other three bodies.

[00:04:34] We unconsciously decide that our mental, spiritual, and emotional needs do not matter. All that matters is what can be seen from the outside: physical health, in the form of thinness. The vast majority of women, actually, people in general are dissociated from their bodies, from our whole body, like all four bodies.

[00:04:57] And this dissociation is a normal reaction. We talked in previous episodes about how 91% of women are not satisfied with their body. The majority of women hate their body and desperately want to change. Living in a body you hate is kind of like living with a partner that you literally despise. Like you can't stand them, but you're forced to live together, work together and you can never, ever get away from them.

[00:05:26] It's just like that with our body, we can't escape from it. We are forced to live in it, but we hate it. So we cope with that by dissociating from it and cutting ourselves off from our spirit and our emotions. And we become head people. We focus only on actions that we can take in order to reach a place of self-acceptance in the form of body conformity and completely ignore the other parts of us that make us whole, but here's the kicker.

[00:05:57] You can't create a body you love through hateful action. Even if you've been successful, losing weight in this way before I can pretty much guarantee that it didn't result in you loving your body. If it did, you'd have maintained it. Just like you can't create a loving relationship with your partner by nagging and controlling them, you can't create a body you approve of through restriction and punishment. And also just like you can't flip a switch and decide to love someone you despise you can't just decide to love your body either.

[00:06:35] Body love is kind of a trite term that I think is thrown out a little too "willy-nilly" these days, body positivity is all the rage. And while I support the movement, and I think it's really great for us to normalize all bodies and start celebrating bodies of all sizes, shapes, colors, and abilities. It kind of sets the bar a little too high for the rest of us. Like it is just not possible for the majority of women who've spent their life hating their body, to suddenly start loving it. The gap is too large.

[00:07:09] In my program, Right Body for Me, we work through the steps to bridging that gap through our thoughts. It's too much to get into today, but the goal feeling between body hatred and body love is body neutrality. In other words, we want to neutralize how we feel about our physical body instead of seeing it as an object that needs to look a certain way in order to be acceptable.

[00:07:34] Rather, the goal is to see our body as a vehicle, through which we get to experience life, the purpose of our physical body isn't to look good or to conform to a norm. Its purpose is to allow us to do the things we wanna do. And maintaining our body by caring for all parts of it means we get to experience more of the things we enjoy for longer.

[00:07:56] So rather than focusing on what we love or hate about our body, a more neutral approach is to think about what you appreciate about it. Expressing gratitude for what your body can do is a great way to bridge the gap into body acceptance. And that brings me full circle back to the concept of embodiment.

[00:08:17] Embodiment, or being in your body, is the ticket to body acceptance. And it's the key to getting yourself off this roller coaster relationship that you have with exercise and dieting, reconnecting to all the parts of your body and choosing to eat and move in such a way that nourishes all of you and makes you feel connected, empowered, nourished, and whole. That's what's gonna motivate you to keep coming back for more.

[00:08:47] Remember back in episode two, we talked about the three things that are proven to motivate people when it comes to exercise. Do you remember what they are? Number one was feeling successful. Number two was feeling like we have choices and number three was feeling like we belong; we're a part of a community.

[00:09:07] Can you see now that these three things that are scientifically proven to motivate us actually have to do with honoring our spiritual, mental, and emotional needs, feeling successful or accomplished, empowered, and capable that fills our emotional tank, having choices. That's our mental body, knowing what we like and what we don't, and being able to choose whether we participate honors this part of ourself.

[00:09:35] And when we feel like we belong, we're part of a community that fills our spiritual need. Every human has an innate need to belong, and we wanna feel accepted for who we are as a person, not for how we look, finding your people who accept you as you are, without any expectation that you'll change feeds a deep need within our.

[00:09:57] And when it comes to our physical body, we learned in episode two, that the only factor there that motivates us is seeing an improvement in our actual health. Like actually seeing your activities of daily living become easier or seeing your blood work, improve weight loss. And those kinds of physical changes are not motivating.

[00:10:17] Therefore, honoring your physical body means focusing on how your body feels, not how it looks. So, how do we begin this process of embodiment? Well, the first step is awareness. Just acknowledging that you have four bodies and that they are important to you is a great place to start. Number two, start practicing body neutrality.

[00:10:43] When you hear yourself hating on your body, try and catch it and replace the mean thought with appreciation or gratitude. Number three start thinking of your body as your friend, consider ways that you can nurture your relationship with yourself. Choose to treat your body with respect when you're exercising or you're eating.

[00:11:06] Think about what you enjoy doing. What fills your cup, where do you most feel like you belong and what makes you feel strong and empowered say yes to things that nourish you and no to anything that feels like punish. and number four, most importantly, we wanna practice being in our body more. This is the big one.

[00:11:28] So being in tune with all the parts of your four bodies requires spending time connecting to your body and noticing how we feel moment to moment so that we can make the most respectful choice for our.

[00:11:42] When I'm teaching my fitness classes, I always start with a body scan and some breathwork as we begin to move through some gentle mobility to help us connect with our body, before we start to exercise. It's a great way to check in and notice how we're really feeling and to set an intention for ourselves in our workout.

[00:12:00] So I'm actually gonna run you through this mindfulness exercise called the body scan. Right. . So if you're home and sitting somewhere where you can close your eyes for a couple of minutes, you can follow along with me as I guide you through this body scan. But if you're driving or walking, just stay safe and you can come back to do this later.

[00:12:21] So I want you to get comfortable where you're feel yourself grounded in your chair. And I just want you to sit tall and close your eyes. And start taking some slow, deep breaths in and out through your nose

[00:12:44] and with every exhale, just allow yourself to land deeper into your chair.

[00:12:56] Feel more and more present in this moment. Right here. Right now.

[00:13:08] And continue to breathe in and out through the nose while we move our awareness to the different parts of our body.

[00:13:21] So starting at the top of our head, bring your awareness to the crown of your head, your temples, your forehead, your jaw. Just notice any sensations as you continue to breathe, you don't have to change those sensations. You don't have to judge them. You can just notice them. If it's easy to let tension go, then go ahead.

[00:13:51] But the goal here is just to notice sensations. So bring your awareness further down into your neck. Shoulders, chest and upper back

[00:14:09] noticing any sensations or tension that you might be holding there, releasing it.

[00:14:15] If it's easy and then move your awareness down, your arms, your wrists, your hands, your fingers. And just notice as you're sitting here are your hands in a comfortable position. Maybe you shift a little bit, continue to bring your awareness down, your torso, your chest, abdomen, and your pelvis

[00:14:54] noticing any sensations in your back. Notice how you're feeling here, grounded in your chair,

[00:15:06] taking an exhale and releasing any tension that you can. And next, moving your awareness down through your thighs, buttocks, and knees, your CALS. Down to your ankles and right to your feet.

[00:15:33] Again, just noticing any sensations that you feel, allowing any unnecessary tension to leave your body and just feel the sensation of your feet connected to the ground and your buttocks connected to the chair. And allow yourself to feel present, supported, and grounded right here in this present moment.

[00:16:05] And now from this place of presence and groundedness, take a couple more deep breaths and through the nose and.

[00:16:20] Just inhaling, all the good feelings, all the support from the earth underneath you, allowing that to flow through your body and exhaling any sensations or feelings that don't serve you here in this moment.

[00:16:47] And when you feel ready, you can blink your eyes back open and come back into the present moment and just take a couple of seconds to reintegrate to your surroundings

[00:17:05] in a deep breath.

[00:17:09] So if you're new to embodiment, Then I recommend you practice a body scan such as that every day with intention. And as you become more practiced at it, it will become more automatic and you'll be able to do it really quickly and effortlessly moment to moment in your daily life. And it will become your default way to make decisions that honor your body.

[00:17:37] Okay. Friends. So we covered a lot here today. Perhaps you'll wanna listen to this one again and let some of these concepts sink in. On next week's show, we are going to talk about principle number three of joyful movement, which is saying no to painful exercise. We're gonna take the no pain, no gain mentality, and flip it right on its head.

[00:18:00] In the meantime, if you're looking for more on this topic, you can find me on Instagram and Facebook at radiant vitality wellness. And you can learn more about how to work with me on my website, [radiantvitality.ca](http://radiantvitality.ca). Thank you so much for being part of this community. I appreciate each and every one of you. Be well, my friends and here's to radiant vitality.