

Are you tired of worrying about your weight?

Are you ready to give up dieting forever?

Are you open to creating a healthy relationship with your body?

Then this book is for you!

After conquering her own decade-long compulsive relationship with food and learning how to love and appreciate her own body wholeheartedly, Elizabeth "Lily" Hills now wants to share her insights with you! In **The Body Love Manual** she offers you the keys to achieving your natural and healthiest weight without dieting or denying yourself any of your favorite foods! The answer lies in connecting with the most intelligent instrument on the planet...your body.

In this book, you will discover:

- ♥ Why diets don't work and how they can create an unnatural obsession with food
- ♥ The Ten Keys you need to achieve your natural and ideal weight without dieting
- ♥ What is driving you to eat when you are not really hungry
- ♥ Tools and techniques for handling day-to-day life challenges without turning to food
- ♥ How to love your body as you tap into its incredible wisdom and allow it to guide you to your natural weight

Bonus:

Includes a 30-day partnership program to give you a powerful kick-start to your new relationship with your body!

ELIZABETH "LILY" HILLS

is a Life Coach, author, self-empowerment workshop leader, and the co-host of "The Goddess to Goddess Empower Hour: Inspirational Information for Women and the Divine Dudes Who Love Them." One of her passions is supporting women in recognizing their innate beauty, power and unlimited potential. She lives (gratefully) in Carmel, California.



"By gently leading you beyond gain and loss to an awareness of your loving essence, this book, *The Body Love Manual*, can change your life. I highly recommend it."

– Leonard Laskow, M.D.
Author of *Healing With Love*

www.TheBodyLoveManual.com

ISBN: 978-0-9819388-0-6



9 780981 938806

The Body Love Manual
How to Love the Body You Have as You Create the Body You Want
by Elizabeth "Lily" Hills



Peaceful Planet Publishing, Inc.
Post Office Box 4886
Carmel, CA 93921-4886, U.S.A.
www.PeacefulPlanetPublishing.com

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the author, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

Unattributed quotations are by Elizabeth Hills

Edition ISBNs
Paperback 978-0-9819388-0-6

Library of Congress Control Number – 2009900091

Design and layout by Scott Hudson – Hudson Design Company
Printed in the United States of America

Books are available at quantity discounts for non-profit groups.
For more information please contact
Peaceful Planet Publishing, Inc. P.O. Box 4886, Carmel, CA 93921-4886.
Or call toll free –1-877-PEACE-21
www.TheBodyLoveManual.com

This book is printed on recycled (50% Post Consumer) acid free paper

First edition copyright © 2009 Elizabeth Hills

CONTENTS

Introduction:	Our Story	1
	What Happens When We Don't Love Our Bodies	
Chapter 1.	The Diet Deception	9
	Why Diets Do Not Work	
Chapter 2.	Loving Yourself	25
	The Fast Track to Achieving Your Ideal Weight	
Chapter 3.	Love Your Body	57
	How Loving Your Body Can Help You Achieve Your Ideal Weight	
Chapter 4.	The Power of Your Beliefs	79
	How Your Beliefs Impact Your Emotional Appetites	
Chapter 5.	Eating in Alliance with Your Body	133
	The Ten Keys to Achieving Your Ideal Weight Without Dieting	
Chapter 6.	Exercise and You	161
	The Natural High	
Chapter 7.	Co-Coaching	171
	The Partnership Approach to Achieving Your Natural and Ideal Weight	
Chapter 8.	Self-Empowerment Tools	183
	Nurturing Alternatives to Eating	
Chapter 9.	Final Offerings	195
Endnotes:		202
Appendix A:	Treatment resources for compulsive overeating, anorexia and bulimia	204
Appendix B:	Recommended reading list	205
Appendix C:	Author biography	206

“THE SINGLE GREATEST CONTRIBUTION YOU CAN MAKE TO THIS
WORLD IS TO KNOW, APPRECIATE, RESPECT AND LOVE
YOURSELF, EXACTLY AS YOU ARE TODAY.”

—ANONYMOUS



OUR STORY

What Happens When We Don't Love Our Body

Do you ever feel like you can't stop eating, even when you *really* want to? Do you find yourself eating large portions of food that you're really not hungry for and then beating yourself up for your lack of willpower? Have you been trying to lose weight for so many years you've lost count? Is a huge amount of your self-esteem connected to what you weigh? Do you find yourself ashamed of your body, even sometimes resentful of it? Have you been so desperate to conquer your food and body image issues that, short of walking down a crowded street completely naked, you would do just about *anything* else to be rid of the obsession?

I can relate *intimately*. For well over a decade of my life, I had a compulsive relationship with food that dominated my thoughts virtually every waking moment. I was utterly addicted, plagued beyond comprehension by overwhelmingly powerful urges to eat far more than I was truly hungry for. I could hardly go a few moments without thinking food-related thoughts, such as:

“I ate too much.”

“When can I eat again?”

“Is this bread allowed on my diet?”

“I'll start my diet tomorrow, and I'll have that pizza now.”

Anyone who has experienced it knows that thinking obsessively about food gets old...fast. It is incredibly tiring, stressful and depressing. Additionally, my mind was all too often fixated on a never-ending loop of thoughts that were highly toxic

“I look terrible.”

“I’ll never lose weight.”

“I have no self-control.”

“I hate myself.”

“I wish I had a body like that girl.”

This obnoxious tape of debilitating thoughts played over and over in my mind, and I felt totally powerless to stop it. My unrelenting focus on the same obsessive, disempowering thoughts took a big chunk of the joy out of every day. While still a happy and fulfilled person in many other ways, I knew my compulsion with food was a giant barrier to my true potential for happiness.

I ate for a *huge* variety of reasons, very few of which were related to being truly physically hungry. My binges were misguided and futile attempts to make myself feel better, to feed emotional hungers for greater levels of love, appreciation, fulfillment, affection, excitement, peace, connection and happiness. I also ate because I was avoiding my uncomfortable feelings, especially worry, frustration, confusion, fear, boredom and insecurity. Food was my sole stress management tool. My compulsive eating was an attempt to shut out the negative and sometimes downright mean “voice” in my head, the one that was making me feel bad by picking on me:

“You didn’t get enough done today.”

“Your thighs are too big.”

“You are not good enough.”

Or getting me to worry about something that might or might not happen in the future:

“You’re not going to make it on time.”

“You’ll never get it all done.”

“Something might go wrong.”

I tried to escape the discomfort created by this negative internal dialogue not just by eating, but also by zoning out in front of the television,

or shopping, or cleaning or overworking. When I was alone and I *really* allowed myself to take a good hard look at how I was living my life, without any of my usual distractions, I would get deeply depressed. As I didn't like feeling sad and dejected, I'd quickly return to my default distractions so I could numb myself to my inner turmoil once again.

Having anesthetized myself through food for so long, I became increasingly unwilling to face and feel some of my intense feelings of worry and insecurity. Just as with avoiding paying bills, the longer I delayed dealing with my emotions, the larger the "fees" I paid. At the time, it was much easier for me to sneak an extra snack, or five, to quiet the uneasy feelings that were making me want to escape my body than it was to dig in and deal with them directly. I didn't even know where a lot of these uncomfortable feelings originated. What I did know is that if I denied myself food when I wanted to eat, I felt high anxiety, which is why I didn't often resist eating for long. Like a friend, food provided solace when I was stressed or fearful, entertainment when I was bored, and a welcome distraction when I was overwhelmed or confused.

In addition to my extensive laundry list of excuses to binge, I also ate because I was depressed over having gained so much excess weight. Although admittedly eating did give me a *temporary* break from my uncomfortable feelings, the distressingly tight clothing that was a consequence of all those binges gave me another reason to feel bad about myself—and another reason to eat. So I ate more and more, until I couldn't take another bite, until my stomach protruded painfully, and I'd swear to myself for the umpteenth time that this was my *very last binge*. It was the classic, ugly vicious cycle.

My weight fluctuated erratically for twelve years. I felt ashamed of my body because it looked so disproportionate to me, so different than I wanted it to look, so unlike the cultural ideal of slenderness I saw in magazines, movies and virtually every other media channel. As the number I saw on my bathroom scale went up, my sense of self-worth plummeted. During this period of my life, it was rare for me to appreciate and value any of my other qualities—my sense of humor, my loving heart, my intelligence or my creative talent. All of these qualities became secondary in comparison to my weight. I believed the voice in my head that often told me that *who* I was wasn't nearly as important as what I weighed. I had no idea I could

ignore that voice if I wanted to, or even silence it altogether.

On top of being angry with myself for what I perceived as my lack of self-control, I was also incredibly angry with my body. I believed it was my body's fault that I had gained so much weight. I felt it had betrayed me by "making" me eat, and so it became the chief target of my hostility. It never occurred to me that my body was the victim of the emotional appetites I was attempting to feed with food. I didn't know that my body was a physical expression of the turmoil I carried deep inside. Each time I looked in the mirror and saw evidence of what I believed were my physical flaws, I blamed my body for it, relentlessly picking out all the ways it didn't live up to my expectations. The remorse and dislike for what I saw when I looked in the bathroom mirror only further eroded my self-esteem.

In my desperation to "get my old body back," the healthy and athletic one I'd taken for granted when I was a teenager, I tried every weight-reduction method imaginable. I gained and lost hundreds of pounds over the years, trying so many diets and diet products that I could officially be listed in The Dieter's Hall of Fame. Sticking to a restricted diet of any kind was incredibly difficult for me. When I did manage to stay on one, I'd end up losing a few pounds, but none of the weight ever stayed off for long. Rather it came back at warp speed, along with a few extra bonus pounds.

After umpteen unsuccessful efforts to lose weight through dieting, I had to begrudgingly admit to myself that diets were not working for me. In fact, I finally realized that they seemed to be working *against* me. The question that then plagued me was, "Well, if diets *don't* work, what the \$#%@&* does?"

Out of sheer anguish, I embarked upon a personal experiential research project in which I was the guinea pig, to discover, once and for all, the healthiest, most effective and most enjoyable way to lose excess weight...and keep it off. I threw myself into the research unreservedly, reading anything I could get my hands on that I thought might help me to meet my goal of "losing" extra weight. (I now refer to it almost exclusively as "releasing" excess weight because "losing" anything doesn't sound as empowered or appealing.) I surfed the net for information, sought the help of a therapist, attended dozens of seminars, joined support groups and started working with a personal coach. I was relentless, voracious and passionate in my quest. I even went so far as to approach people in passing

who were in great shape to find out their secret to looking so fit.

After all the data was in, I was surprised to find out that it was my body, the one I had been judging so harshly for so many years, that would provide the key to releasing all of the weight I had gained through overeating! It was an epiphany that served me powerfully. Ironically, my *lack* of awareness of its extraordinary value had prevented me from understanding that my body could offer me far more wisdom than I'd ever find in any diet book. I realized I'd been drowning out the one qualified voice that could lead me directly to my natural, ideal weight. So I began to listen.

As I reviewed my own history in terms of my relationship with my body, it became obvious to me that my progressive judgments toward my body paralleled the intensity of my compulsion with food. I was far more likely to want to eat a candy bar (or twenty) after looking in the mirror and judging my appearance harshly. When I was *mentally* down, I was far more likely to *chow* down. In other words, the more I judged my body *and* myself for overeating, the more I ate and the more weight I gained. Judging myself in order to get motivated to lose weight was like shooting myself in the foot before the finals of a dance competition. It was supremely foolish, destructive and self-sabotaging.

The realization that “Body Judgment = Compulsive Eating” didn't come as a complete surprise, but somehow breaking it down to this simple equation deepened my understanding of what I needed to do to break the cycle. If I wanted to achieve my natural weight, the weight at which I would experience optimum health and energy, the *first* thing I had to do was stop judging my body, and myself, so unfairly and unkindly.

It took me a long time to stop judging my body and even longer to start loving it. I didn't have a “body love manual” to follow, and my long-standing belief that I was most attractive when I was super-lean was deeply imbedded. But I stayed committed to treating my body in a more loving way (exercising, choosing predominantly healthy foods, taking vitamins, getting enough rest and limiting my negative thoughts about it), and consequently my emotional appetites diminished and excess weight began to disappear.

With each passing year, I have reached deeper levels of friendship with my body. It no longer feels like a huge burden, but rather an extraordinarily generous gift from the Universe. Instead of repeatedly experiencing daily food hangovers that leave me feeling sick and exhausted, my body now feels healthy,

excited, energetic and alive. And that, my friend, is what is in store for you!

I have maintained my natural weight for over ten years now, with only minor fluctuations. This feels phenomenal. What feels even *better*, however, is the fact that I live free from my intense compulsion around food. On a scale of 1 to 10, I would say that my compulsion was once at a 10 plus, and it is now a mere .05. I wake up in the morning without immediately thinking of eating, or of the boring foods I am restricted to on the latest diet I am trying, or how self-conscious I am about my how my body looks. I no longer have the urge to binge eat, having finally learned how to nurture myself and breathe through difficult feelings. I thoroughly enjoy eating without feeling guilty or worried that I'm going to return to my old compulsive eating patterns. I couldn't eat at that old level of compulsion even if I wanted to. Now *that's* the ultimate freedom!

Understandably, after my long and painful struggle with compulsive eating and body shame, the connected, accepting and appreciative relationship I have with my body today is a deeply treasured gift. The time I have devoted to loving my body has provided me with benefits far above and beyond reaching my natural weight. Perhaps most importantly, I have learned to value myself independent of how I look, and I am experiencing peace and happiness on levels I didn't know were available to me.

The Body Love Manual will support you as you begin to shift from being critical of your body *and* yourself, to being deeply appreciative. So that you too can know joy every day, I'm going to share with you *everything* I have learned on my road to recovery. Every perspective, practice and habit that helped me to overcome body rejection and compulsive overeating is now yours.

I recommend taking your time as you read *The Body Love Manual*, putting it down periodically and giving yourself time to digest the material offered. It is a book to be revisited again and again, and each time you do so, new insights will come to you.

As we take this journey together, you will learn, as I did, that your body has a language all its own and it communicates to you through your physical *feelings*. You will, with practice, start to decipher your own body's unique language, the specific ways it conveys its limits, needs and preferences to you. As you learn to recognize its specific signals for "hungry" and "satisfied" and to honor those signals consistently, you will naturally release your

excess weight without dieting, obsessive exercise, counting calories, taking appetite suppressants or denying yourself *any* of your favorite foods.

I call eating in synchronicity with your physical hunger “*Eating in Alliance*” with your body. There are ten practices in the *Eating in Alliance* program. Following these practices allowed me to overcome my compulsive relationship with food and achieve my natural weight, without dieting or denying myself any of the foods that I love (yeah)! If you follow the guidelines offered in this book, it won’t be a question of *if* you are going to achieve your ideal weight; rather it will be a question of *when*.

There will be recommendations for healthy ways to reconnect with your body throughout the book. Experiment with all of them, choose the ones that feel right for you and leave the others behind, for now. You are a unique individual, and ultimately you will add your own stamp of originality to your journey to body love by defining, through experimentation, the specific combination of practices that will allow you to experience peace with food, your body and yourself.

I also offer a thirty-day program in which you can partner with another person who is struggling with their relationship with food so that you can team up and expedite your own healing process. It is not required that you have a partner to work the program. Although it is undeniably easier, it is not a mandatory component. Rather it is an additional asset that will support your intention to reconnect with your body and achieve your natural weight.

Learning to love my own body, and in equal measure, myself, has supported me in creating not only a healthy, beautiful body but also a life that has exceeded my greatest dreams. Through my life experience, I have come to know that love, in its many forms, is the strongest force on earth. If you focus that powerful force on your body, you will break through the confines of food compulsions and body shame and free yourself to experience all the joy life offers. You deserve it. We all do. My intention is to support you in embracing and loving your body, as well as yourself, so that you can live your life in *tremendous* joy with a much greater realization of the sacred and loveable being you are. Welcome to the first page of the rest of your life.

I feel privileged to be a part of your journey. – *Lily*