

*The body image story
of graphic designer
Annie Chang*

Mind over Matter

Body image issues are something I have never thought too much about. I did not consider myself to be someone with body image issues. The issues portrayed in the media often times deals with weight or looks, neither of which I ever had issues with. However, looking back on my past, I have struggled with body image issues in other ways.

Growing up, I never considered myself to be too different from other people. As a child, one is naïve and does not really have an opinion as to how people are different. Being a minority at school was something I became more aware of from K-12. Being different than other people, being treated differently, or bullied just because I was Asian, resulted in the first time I experienced body image issues. As a result of this, during middle school, I started to dislike how I looked. Not looks in terms of beauty or attraction, but my ethnicity and how I was Asian. I tried so hard to change how I look to make myself more “white” by wearing blue contacts and dyeing my hair. I thought by looking more like the majority, I could fit in more and change how people treated me.

Slowly as I moved on to high school and college, I have grown to love myself for who I am, became more confident, and am now proud of my ethnicity and background. Even though I was happy with how I looked, the issues did not stop there. Something that has always bothered me about the media and the body issues that they portrayed were always things that could be “fixed.” If you are not happy with your weight you could



Photo credit: Shelby Young

second time in fact. Something that my mom has thought (and maybe other Asian parents too?) is that, since some Asians do not naturally have double eyelids, having them gives an overall more energetic appearance. Naturally, I had one monolid, and one double lid, it was not something I really cared about fixing, but at the same time, I did not mind either. The experience of the procedure itself was not pleasant in the slightest, given that I had to be awake for the whole thing. More traumatizing I would say (getting numbing shots in your eyelids hurts a lot). Other than having double eyelid surgery, I have also had my eyebrows tattooed a bit, for the same reasons of fixing imperfections. Even though on both occasions, I did not eagerly want to

have these procedures done, I did not mind fixing these aspects about myself either, and am satisfied with the result. Other than that, I would not get any other cosmetic procedures of any sort, because I am happy with how I look.

Regardless of what body image issues you may have, and your decision to change them or not, at the end of the day what I think is the most important is being confident in yourself, and happy with your own body. Having a great personality or confidence often shows more character and is something people will notice more so than anything about how you look. While expressing yourself is something that can be fun, just remember to do it for yourself, and not for anyone else.

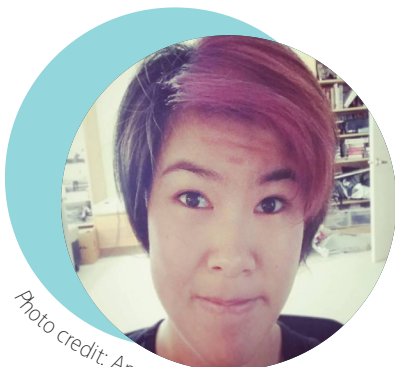


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