

SOAR Educational & Mental Health Therapy

Understanding the Body Image Trap Loop

Why This Feels So Real

Sometimes your brain sends strong messages about your body that feel completely true. This is not because something is wrong with your body—it is because your brain has learned a pattern.

The Body Image Trap Loop

1. Trigger: Looking in mirror, getting dressed, being around others.
2. Thought: 'I'm too skinny', 'I look wrong', 'People will notice'.
3. Feeling: Anxiety, discomfort, self-consciousness.
4. Behavior: Wearing oversized clothing, hiding body.
5. Relief: Anxiety decreases temporarily.
6. Learning: 'I'm only okay if I hide.' The cycle repeats.

Key Insight

The behavior helps in the moment—but trains your brain to stay stuck.

Where to Interrupt the Loop

Start small: slightly less oversized clothing, testing safe environments, delaying the urge to cover up.

Reflection

Where do you notice yourself in this loop? What do you predict would happen if you changed one behavior? What actually happens?

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