

Millions of people around the world suffer from low self-esteem, which often results in serious eating disorders such as anorexia. Why does this happen? Unfortunately, they are obsessed with their weight or other physical “flaws”. According to psychologist Caroline Hannes, these people are stuck in a vicious circle. “The more they focus on their body, the worse they tend to feel about their looks,” she says.

To have a positive body image requires the understanding that people come in many shapes and sizes, and that physical appearance does not reflect personality or value as a person. “It sounds so incredibly simple and logical,” says Ms. Hannes. But, unfortunately, it isn’t. A recent survey, conducted by the media company AOL (America Online), shows that 60 percent of American women suffer from issues related to body image. And as the age goes down, the numbers go up. Research findings by the children’s advocacy group Common Sense Media show that a staggering 80 percent of 10-year-old girls have been on a diet at some time and feel anxious about their appearance.