

Is 2019 the Year to Form a Radical New Relationship with Your Body?

Ex-wrestler & Body Mentor Confronts Idealistic and Unrealistic Body Images Plaguing Men

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Dr. Andrew Gardella

Beef up? Slim down? Ditch the Dad-bod? What are your body goals for 2019? Chiropractor and body mentor, Dr. Andrew Gardella insists that the new year is the perfect time for men to create a radically new relationship with their bodies – one that has less to do with ‘being buff,’ and more to do with ‘being you.’

“It’s not acknowledged that men can have an unhealthy relationship with their bodies. Many men have accepted the point of view that they’re supposed to punish their bodies; work them hard; dominate them. I want men to understand that there’s a healthier way to relate to your physical form and that it’s okay to care for your body, too.”

Gardella is a former NCAA All-American wrestler, chiropractor and facilitator of the *Being You* mentoring program. He was in college when he first realized that men were not ‘seeing’ themselves in a realistic light and were victim to idealistic – and unhealthy – social pressures.

“Studies show that a massive 95% of young men are unhappy with their bodies, and this is something I observed first-hand. I was working out five days a week and still regarded my body as something ‘less than’,” Gardella admits. “There’s certainly a physicality involved. It’s almost like men are unconsciously communicating ‘See how strong I am. Look at how I can endure this torture’,” he adds.

As the new year approaches, Gardella is encouraging men of all ages, sizes and physiques to reject the pattern of ‘pain and punishment’ and experiment with other ways of being in their body.

“There are some words that are totally absent in the male approach to physicality – such as *nurturing*, *appreciation* and *enjoyment*. Most men will have a strong reaction to those words... and that just shows how deeply we have become entrenched in unhealthy social norms,” Gardella cautions.

For men willing to explore a healthier relationship with their physique, Gardella suggests that the first step is to become less logical, and more intuitive, about their body’s needs.

“Firstly, figure out what works for you and give up trying to be like others to meet external expectations. Then, it’s as simple as *asking* your body what it wants – your body has its own intelligence and by asking questions you can tap into it,” Gardella explains.

Effective questions include:

1. *What is it you would like to look like?*

“Your natural form knows how to be at its best. It might prefer to be slim, rather than muscular. Assume your body *wants* to be more attractive, healthier and more vibrant ... and that it knows how to get there.”

2. *What do want to do/wear/eat today?*

“We’d never wear the same clothes each day, but we assume our bodies are enjoying eating the same food and doing the same activities.”

3. *What movement do you want today?*

“Instead of following a schedule – ‘Tuesday is arms day’ – I’ve found you get greater results from asking your body what it requires on any particular day.”

4. *Is this actually going to work for me/my body?* “The latest fads in diet and exercise can be attractive but asking this question allows you to determine if it’s going to work for you ... or work *now*. Alternatively, you may become aware that *some* parts of the regime will work.”

“We have fallen into the habit of deciding at a mental level what our body needs; we decide what it should look like and what it desires. But everything in nature changes. What if your body wants something different today than yesterday?” he says.

“Let everything change as it needs to – your diet, your exercise regime, your recreational activities – and allow yourself to do things just because they feel like *fun*.”