At Be Nourished, we believe YOU get to define the terms for how you live your life, and we believe in healing your relationship with your body and with food. This workbook is an invitation to explore our Body Trust approach to healing. We hope it opens up a path for you to move forward and find lasting freedom.
HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

- Print the workbook and gather your favorite pens.

- Plan a date with yourself for this process. Make adequate space for it so you can work through all of it. 45 minutes will do; an hour or more would really give you time to think and reflect.

- Find a safe and comfortable space. Settle in. When you are there, ask yourself, "How can I make myself just a little bit more comfortable?"

- Let go of judgment. Notice thoughts that might say "I know this already."

- Listen to the answers that come from your mind and your body.

- Watch for when you feel the truth emerging.

- Trust yourself and your intuition.

- Most importantly, enjoy this time with yourself.

- Before you begin, close your eyes and take some really deep breaths.
If you have chosen to receive this, you might be feeling curious, wondering if an approach like Be Nourished’s - one that supports body liberation, emphasizes healing over fixing, and trusts the wisdom of your body, could possibly be for you.

We know you have put more energy in the form of thoughts, worry, hope and fear into your body and weight than almost anything. We know you’ve tried hard, and also acknowledge you may not be sure you’ve worked hard enough. We want you to know that things can be different, but only if you try different, not harder.

First things first...

We are born embodied beings—feeling at home in our bodies—and somewhere along the way, we exit the body and become like floating heads in the world. We all have a body story—it’s the story of what it has meant to live in your body. Our bodies have been with us through it all. Exploring your body story allows you to widen the lens and change the narrative. We get to write the ending.

How did you lose trust with your body?

What experiences impacted your ability to feel at home in your body?

We aren’t born into this world fretting about our bellies, butts, thighs. Body shame is learned. How did you come to learn that your body was a problem? What experiences lead you to adopt “the body project”? 
Make a quick list of all the things you have done to try to change the size, shape, or appearance of your body. If you can, fill the page. (If you want, you can burn it later!) Examples might be traditional diets, non-traditional plans, workouts, prayers, cleanses and fasts, discussions, medical procedures, depriving thoughts, books, pills, laxatives, etc.

After making the list, name all the feelings you have when you look at it. It would be typical to notice things like frustration, anger or disappointment, and it might be harder to name things like shame or self-blame.

Now, this is a really important question to consider: Have you ever blamed “the plan” (see your list) or have you always blamed yourself? Most people blame themselves. In fact, many people believe they need to blame themselves in order to feel motivated and try again. The startling truth is the diet industry is a $60 billion dollar industry with a 95% failure rate. There is no evidence-based treatment that leads to sustained weight loss. The most consistent effect of weight loss at two years is weight gain (Mann et. al, 2007). These businesses make money off of your shame and self-blame. They depend on you coming back for more.
What’s it like to take a step back, pause, look at this cycle and realize the repetitive nature of it all? What feelings come up?

We want you to know that this isn’t your fault.

People who repeatedly diet often experience a “diet backlash” - increased rigidity regarding good and bad foods, restriction leading to increased binging, reduction in trust of self with food, feelings about not “deserving” food, social withdrawal, and shortened duration of dieting episodes. When you first got started, you were likely able to follow a plan for six months to a year. Now, many of our clients say they can tolerate a few minutes to a few days before they just cannot take it anymore. We want you to know that this is a sign of health. Yes, health!

You are not broken!
Body Trust is a healing modality—a way out of the predictable, repetitive pattern of dieting, disordered eating and weight cycling that is fueled by body shame. Freedom will not be found in another plan or program focused on “the problem of your body.” To begin to heal, start by calling out diet culture and putting thoughts about weight on the back burner.

Diet culture conflates size and health, pathologizes some bodies more than others, makes thinness a gatekeeper for jobs/benefits/comfort/accommodation, and encourages the following of external rules about what, when, and how much to eat and exercise. Virgie Tovar says “Human beings need food and movement to survive. Diet culture steals food and movement, deeply pathologizes them, and then commodifies them and sells them back to us.”

Here are just some of the things people do when participating in diet culture. Circle the ones you identify with:

• Calorie counting
• Judging a day of eating as good/bad
• Making up for eating with exercise or punishment
• Weighing/measuring your body and/or food
• Thinking thinner is better
• Reading and researching weight loss plans
• Apologizing for your behavior and body
• Waiting to live your life until your body changes
• Believing people in larger bodies are doing things wrong
• Bonding over weight loss strategies
• Upholding narrow beauty standards with others
• Keeping uncomfortable clothes around for “motivation”
• Prioritizing the plan over your social life
• Feeling like you are always hustling
• Hating yourself for not succeeding

What are some other ways you currently participate in diet culture?
Body checking behaviors tend to hold us hostage to the diet cycle. How do you currently “check your body” to see if it’s okay?

- Stand naked in front of mirror
- Step on the scale
- Step on the scale daily
- Step on the scale multiple times a day
- Feel for bones or fat
- Scan a room and compare bodies
- Measure body parts with hands or tape
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Body shame, dieting, and disordered eating harm us in so many ways. We lose confidence in our ability to make good choices for ourselves as we continue to spin in an endless, predictable cycle. Over time, trust in ourselves and our bodies is destroyed and we end up feeling more disconnected from our own experience.

If you are looking to change this predictable pattern of shame and self-blame, we’d like to show you a way out.

We want you to know it is possible to regain the trust you had when you were born into this world.

Your body can become a safe and welcoming home as time goes on.

Let’s explore...

**Body Trust is weight-inclusive.** This work is for all bodies. There isn’t a different set of rules for you, no matter how much you might feel different, isolated, broken, or in need of fixing. Body Trust is an invitation to be part of a new conversation about bodies, one that nourishes and celebrates who we are and who we can become, including every way we show up in the world. We want you to know we trust your body, regardless of your size. More importantly, we trust you with your body. No exceptions.

How has your body, just as it is, helped you survive in the world?
What are some ways your body shows up just for you?

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_________________________
_________________________

If there were to be no more judgment about your body - from yourself or others - what would you want to do to take care of yourself? (We know it can be hard to imagine a world without body blame, but just try)

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What would you want to do more of?

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Less of?

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What would be possible if you decided your body wasn’t the problem? Place some thoughts here. Make a list.

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We believe

you are not required to pursue health to be deemed *worthy* of love, respect or belonging.
How would you feel?

Complete this sentence: If there was no more weighting (waiting) for me to reach my “desired” weight, shape or size, I would...

Now consider what your life would be like a year from now if you continue to pursue your desired size, shape or appearance...

What about 5 years from now?

This is your invitation to...

Reclaim the Body Trust that is your birthright.

Body Trust is a radical revisioning of what it means to occupy and care for your body. It is a pathway to acceptance of the body, an alternative dialogue to the conventional paradigm of food, body image, and weight concerns in our culture. Body Trust is paradigm shifting work that invites bravery and fierce body compassion.
We’ve identified nine Core Elements of a Body Trust® Practice:

- Root self-care practices in weight-neutrality
- Rediscover, embody, and allow for pleasure
- Reconnect with your body’s needs and boundaries
- Externalize shame, blame and bias
- Look and listen to yourself with kindness and curiosity
- Redefine what healing looks and feels like
- Focus on small consistent acts to rebuild trust
- Explore, name, and reclaim your body story
- Find community
- Reconnect with your body’s needs and boundaries

Which one(s) stand out to you? Why?

Body Trust is repair work. We are healing our relationship with food, our bodies, and ourselves. Just like when you’ve lost trust in any relationship in your life, it takes time to get it back. When it comes to Body Trust, this trust is reciprocal—you are working on trusting your body and your body is working on trusting you to give it enough to eat consistently. We cannot heal our relationship with our bodies with a plan to make them into what the dominant culture thinks they should be.

If you lost trust in another relationship in your life, what would you need in place to rebuild trust?
What would you like your relationship with food to be like? To feel like?

Body Trust is liberatory. Our bodies cannot breathe when they are overtaken by cultural demands for assimilation. Our stories and bodies are too complex, too varied and too underexpressed to fit into a simple narrative about disordered eating, or body size, or skin color, or gender. Our bodies, claimed as they are now, are an act of resistance. Resistance does not always resolve oppression but it does bring us closer to humanity and connection. Body Trust is a move towards truth and freedom and a way to enforce boundaries around the prescribed stories and values that do not allow you to heal and know your own truth.

What have you always wanted but thought you couldn’t have?

If you weren’t having to think about or worry about your body all the time, what would you want to be doing in your life?

So What Comes Next...

Body Trust is a practice. So much of what we desire to bring into our lives takes time and practice. Body Trust is not a new plan, a gimmick, or a short-term solution. It’s a way to truly heal—an opportunity to focus on finding joy and pleasure again, as you turn your attention towards the parts of you that perhaps you lost sight of while dieting or trying to fix yourself. Body Trust is not a place we arrive, but a connective energy we cultivate. It is an ever-evolving relationship that changes with our healing, our complicated lives, and as we age.
What calls to you after reading through this workbook? Why?


What would life be like if you were to try different instead of harder?


Finish this sentence: My greatest hope for myself is...


If you could start by trying one small new thing, what would it be?


Envision your freedom; assume it is for you and everyone else. Allow the softness to come. Show it to us. We can do this. We all have to step into the skin of the fiercely body compassionate to be free. This will be an alarmingly bold conversation in the current paradigm, but for those of us who hunger for truth and can intuit the path to freedom, it will be an ecstatic unveiling. We will all go first, together.

Ready to move forward?

Our Body Trust e-course is a great place to start. “No More Weighting” is a six-week online course to help you rebuild body trust, rethink what the “problem” really is, and create a path that honors your physical health and emotional well-being.

You can read more about all of our offerings, and shop our online store, at benourished.org.