

Style Starts Within

**How Your Self-Image Shapes Your Style
(and How Style Can Reinvent Your Self-Image)**



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Style Is More Than Clothes

Style is often dismissed as superficial—merely fabric, trends, or a vanity project.

However, for those who have experienced the transformative power of clothing, style transcends what is merely visible. It serves as a means of expressing identity, confidence, mood, and even aspiration.

What we wear reflects how we perceive ourselves or how we wish to be perceived. Simultaneously, our internal world—how we feel about our bodies, self-worth, and abilities—greatly influences our clothing choices.

Style and self-image are in constant dialogue. When this relationship is healthy, your wardrobe feels energising and aligned. Conversely, when it is fractured, getting dressed can become overwhelming, frustrating, or even painful.

But here's the good news: your relationship with style and self-image can evolve. You don't need a new body, a new job, or a designer wardrobe to feel confident in your clothes—you just need clarity, intention, and the right tools.

This eBook is designed to help you reconnect with your style in a way that supports your self-image and aligns with who you are *and* who you're becoming. Whether you're feeling stuck, in transition, or simply ready for a refresh, you'll find practical guidance and gentle mindset shifts to help you feel empowered every time you get dressed.

Let's begin.



Self-Image isn't just a concept. It is a way of being.

Kelly Topsfield



Chapter 1: What Is Self-Image?

Self-image refers to the internal picture you have of yourself. It encompasses how you perceive your abilities, appearance, worth, and role in life. Importantly, your self-image is not always grounded in reality.

The Three Layers of Self-Image

1. *Mental*

This layer includes what you think about yourself (e.g., *“I’m disorganised”* or *“I’m capable”*).

2. *Emotional*

This layer encompasses how you feel about who you are (e.g., confident, ashamed, worthy, or insecure).

3. *Social*

This layer represents how you believe others perceive you (e.g., *“People think I’m boring”* or *“People admire my energy”*).

Self-image is shaped early in life by upbringing, cultural influences, body commentary, comparisons, praise, criticism, and personal experiences.

Over time, it becomes the lens through which you view yourself, including your wardrobe.

When your internal voice says, *“You don’t have the body to wear that”* or *“You’re not stylish enough to pull this off,”* it is your self-image speaking—not the truth.

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The Inner Mirror

The clothes you are drawn to (or choose to avoid) often reflect what is happening in your internal mirror.

For example,

- Someone with low body confidence may opt for oversized or dark clothing to avoid drawing attention.
- A person entering a new career phase might experiment with structured silhouettes or bolder colours to align with their future self.
- Someone healing from past criticism may gravitate toward clothing that is comfortable and soft as a form of self-care.

These choices are deeply personal—and they hold significant power.



Be yourself, but always your better self.

Carl C. Maeser



Chapter 2: How Self-Image Influences Style

Your wardrobe serves as a visual diary of your self-perception.

The way you dress—whether consciously or unconsciously—reflects how you view yourself, what you believe you deserve, and how comfortable you feel being seen.

Let's explore how self-image influences your style choices.

1. Dressing as Self-Expression

At its best, style is a tangible form of self-expression. However, when self-image is shaky, we often play it small.

If you think,

- *"I'm not fashionable,"* you might shy away from experimenting with your style.
- If you've internalised the belief that *"my body isn't good enough,"* you may choose items that conceal rather than enhance.
- If you feel like an imposter in your career or personal life, you may stick to "safe" choices, even if they don't truly reflect your personality.

Ironically, while style can be a powerful tool for expression, low self-image often leads us to silence ourselves—both visually and emotionally.

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2. Confidence and Clothing Choices

Clothing and confidence are closely linked.

When you feel good, you're more likely to take style risks and explore your tastes.

Conversely, when you don't feel confident, you might,

- Repeat the same outfits, even if they don't bring you joy.
- Avoid shopping or mirrors altogether.
- Delay purchasing "nice" clothes until you "fix" something about yourself.

This creates a frustrating cycle: if you don't feel confident, you won't dress confidently, and your appearance will reinforce that lack of confidence.

However, confidence doesn't have to come before you dress well. Sometimes, the act of dressing well—intentionally—can help cultivate confidence.



Be there for others, but never leave yourself behind.

Dodinsky

3. Style as a Mirror to Belief Systems

Open your wardrobe and you'll find more than just clothes; you'll uncover the beliefs you hold about yourself.

What do you see?

- Garments kept for that elusive moment *"just in case I lose weight."*
- Outfits chosen for a version of yourself that you thought you should aspire to be.
- Neutral, "blend-in" items that leave you feeling invisible.
- Statement pieces that mirror who you used to be, but no longer resonate with your true self.

Your personal style is a powerful expression of your identity, reflecting not just who you are, but who you wish to become.

If your self-image remains trapped in the past, your style will inevitably lag.

Embrace the opportunity to redefine yourself and let your wardrobe be a true reflection of the person you are today and the future you envision.



4. Body Image and Visibility

For many women, body image plays a crucial role in shaping their style choices.

When you feel uncomfortable in your own skin, it's easy to fall into the trap of,

- Avoiding bold colours or form-fitting styles.
- Over-layering to conceal your natural shape.
- Steering clear of shopping altogether.

But, here's the truth: style shouldn't be about hiding. Style should be about celebrating your body and dressing in a way that empowers you to feel confident and beautiful.

When you embrace this mindset, you'll find that your self-image transforms for the better.





Chapter 3: How Style Shapes Self-Image

Consider how your self-image influences your style—but what’s even more fascinating, is that this relationship is reciprocal.

The clothes you choose can profoundly transform how you feel about yourself. A carefully selected outfit can enhance your posture, elevate your mood, ignite your confidence, and even influence how others perceive you. This is where your style transcends aesthetics and becomes a powerful tool for transformation.

1. The Psychology of Dressing: Enclothed Cognition

There’s a compelling concept in psychology known as enclothed cognition, which highlights the significant impact that clothing can have on our mental processes.

In one revealing [study](#), participants who donned a white coat they thought belonged to a doctor, performed better on attention tasks than those who didn’t. This study illustrates that clothing does more than just change our appearance—it transforms our mindset.

You can harness this effect in your everyday wardrobe,

- When you wear structured tailoring, you project focus and authority.
- A flowing dress can inspire feelings of softness and freedom.
- Slipping on a bold red blazer provides an instant surge of energy and confidence.

The magic happens when you dress in a way that reflects how you aspire to feel.

By aligning your clothing choices with your desired self-image, you not only enhance your appearance but also start to embody the best version of yourself.

Embrace this potential—transform your style and elevate your life!



2. Style as Identity in Motion

You are ever-evolving, and your style should reflect that evolution.

Clothing is not just fabric; it's a powerful tool for embracing new chapters of your identity,

- Imagine the surge of confidence you feel when you slip into a tailored suit for a job interview.
- Picture the liberation of choosing clothing that celebrates your body, freeing you from the constraints of the past.
- Envision the boldness of donning vibrant colours again after weathering a challenging period in your life.

Every outfit you choose is an invitation to express who you are becoming.

Fashion is your narrative, and the beauty lies in the fact that you can rewrite that story at any moment.

Embrace the transformative power of your style—it's a reflection of your journey and a testament to your resilience.

3. The Power of Small Style Shifts

Transforming your self-image doesn't require a total wardrobe overhaul. Often, it starts with a single, intentional change,

- Wearing earrings again after years of not.
- Choosing a colour that lights you up, rather than playing it safe.
- Swapping tired joggers for a soft, stylish lounge set that makes you feel put-together.

These small shifts signal something powerful: *"I am worth showing up for."*

Over time, these small shifts create a feedback loop—where dressing with care builds confidence, and confidence inspires more intentional style.

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4. Real-Life Transformations

Clients often share the powerful moment when they look into the mirror and truly see themselves for the first time—not the outdated narratives or insecurities, but the empowered woman they aspire to become.

One woman embraced a daily ritual of wearing lipstick, not for anyone else's approval but as a profound commitment to herself.

Another woman bravely cleared her closet of “aspirational sizes,” items she had held onto out of guilt, and filled it instead with clothing that fits her beautifully. This shift has led to a profound sense of pride and inner peace.



Be yourself. Everyone else is taken.

Unknown



Chapter 4: Style Limiting Beliefs—and How to Break Them

Every woman carries an internal style narrative that often reflects self-imposed limitations.

These unspoken beliefs dictate your choices in fashion, guiding what you reach for, what you shy away from, and what you accept as the best you can do in your wardrobe.

But, here's the empowering truth: these limiting beliefs are not inherent—they're learned. This means they can be unlearned and replaced with a more empowering mindset.

Now is the time to shine a spotlight on the most common limiting beliefs and take charge of your personal style journey.

Let's rewrite those narratives and unlock the confident, stylish version of yourself that you've always wanted to be!

Limiting Belief #1: *"I'm not stylish."*

What it sounds like

- *"I'm not one of those women who just gets fashion."*
- *"I've never had good taste."*
- *"I don't know how to put things together."*

The Truth

Style is a skill—not a gene. It can be developed, refined, and personalised. You don't have to follow trends or be a fashion expert to have great style—you just need to *know yourself* and dress in alignment with that.

Try these empowering thoughts instead

- *"I'm learning what style feels like me."*
- *"I can build a wardrobe that reflects who I am."*

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Limiting Belief #2: *"I can't wear that."*

What it sounds like:

- *"I'm too old."*
- *"I don't have the right body."*
- *"That would look silly on me."*

The Truth

There are no universal rules for what you *can* and *can't* wear. Often, this belief is rooted in fear—of standing out, of being judged, of drawing attention.

Your style doesn't have to please anyone but *you*.

Try these empowering thoughts instead

- *"If I love it and it feels good. That's enough."*
- *"I give myself permission to experiment."*



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Limiting Belief #3: "I'll dress better when I..."

What it sounds like

- *"There is no point in buying clothes right now."*
- *"I'll shop when I hit my goal weight."*
- *"I need to wait until I can afford a whole new wardrobe."*

The Truth

Deferring style defers self-worth. You deserve to feel good *now*, not just once you improve.

Waiting until your body changes or your circumstances shift often delays confidence—and reinforces the idea that you're not worthy yet.

Try these empowering thoughts instead

- *"I can honour where I am today."*
- *"Feeling good in my clothes helps me show up more fully."*



**Your self-image is so powerful, it unwittingly
becomes your destiny.**

Unknown

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Limiting Belief #4: “It’s vain or shallow to care about how I look.”

What it sounds like

- *“I don’t want to seem like I’m trying too hard.”*
- *“Style is for people who are obsessed with appearances.”*
- *“There are more important things than clothes.”*

The Truth:

Caring about how you look isn’t vanity—it’s *self-respect*. When you show up in a way that feels good to you, you’re more energised, confident, and authentic. That has a ripple effect on every area of your life.

Try these empowering thoughts instead

- *“Style is a form of self-care and self-expression.”*
- *“I deserve to be seen as I truly am.”*

In the next chapter, we’ll explore how to actively rebuild your self-image using style as a powerful, supportive tool.



Chapter 5: Rebuilding Self-Image Through Style

Revamping your style goes beyond simply choosing outfits; it's a powerful journey of redefining how you perceive yourself, and confidently stepping into the world as the incredible woman you are and aspire to be, one outfit at a time.

In this chapter, you will unlock the potential of your wardrobe as both a reflection of your inner self, and an empowering tool for self-acceptance, confidence, and joy.

Embrace the transformative power of style and watch as it elevates your self-image and inspires you to shine.

1. Curate a Wardrobe That Reflects Your *Best Self*

Your wardrobe should be a powerful reflection of who you are and who you aspire to become—not a remnant of your past or a projection of others' expectations.

Take a moment to reflect,

- *"Do my clothes truly represent the woman I want to be?"*
- *"Am I filled with pride and comfort in what I wear?"*
- If someone assessed me solely by my outfit, would it resonate with how I view myself?

If your answer is "no," consider this your signal to realign your style with your authentic self.

Style Tip

Create a mood board or a Pinterest board filled with outfits that ignite your passion.

Focus on the emotions those clothes stir within you. Do they inspire confidence, serenity, or creativity?

Start infusing that vibrant energy into your actual wardrobe, and watch how it transforms your self-image.



2. Define Your Style Intention or Mantra

Rebuilding your self-image through style starts with intention.

Rather than chasing fleeting trends or mimicking influencers, take a moment to reflect on how you want to feel in your clothing. Select a powerful style mantra that will act as your guiding light. For instance, consider one of these empowering phrases,

- *"I dress to exude elegance and effortless charm."*
- *"I embody the most confident version of myself."*
- *"I aim to radiate power, poise, and femininity."*

Make this mantra a constant reminder by placing it in a visible spot—on your wardrobe door, in your journal, or as your phone background. Allow it to shape your style choices and elevate your self-expression every day.

3. Let Go of Clothes That Weigh You Down

Letting go of clothes that no longer uplift you—whether they're too tight, outdated, or linked to a past version of yourself—can significantly boost your self-esteem.

These garments can quietly communicate negative thoughts like,

- *"You used to be smaller."*
- *"You're not as exciting anymore."*
- *"You wasted your money."*

But remember, you owe nothing to these old clothes. Honour their role in your journey, and then make room for a wardrobe that truly represents and celebrates who you are today.

Embrace the opportunity to redefine your style and confidence!

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Quick exercise

Pull out five items of clothing that you don't absolutely love, and ask yourself,

- *"Do I feel good when I wear this?"*
- *"Would I buy this again today?"*
- *"Does this support the woman I'm becoming?"*

If the answer is "no", let them go—with kindness.

4. Shop With Self-Worth in Mind

Rebuilding your self-image starts with redefining your shopping habits.

Instead of using shopping to "fix" something—whether after a breakup, due to changes in your weight, or when you're feeling down—choose to nurture and empower yourself.

Seek out clothing that,

- Fits your current shape beautifully.
- Reflects your values and unique personality.
- Elevates your spirit, and makes you feel fabulous.

You deserve to wear clothes that celebrate your worth. Invest in pieces that honour who you are and how you want to feel.



5. Celebrate Style Milestones

Rebuilding your self-image is an empowering journey, and it's essential to acknowledge every victory along the way.

Embrace these transformative moments,

- Taking the bold step of wearing a vibrant colour for the first time.
- Discovering a new silhouette that makes you feel incredible.
- Finding those perfect jeans that boost your confidence.

Each of these choices is a powerful building block in establishing a solid foundation of self-assurance.

Celebrate them—and watch your confidence soar!



Self-care isn't selfish. It's self-esteem.

Ashely Judd



Chapter 6: Tools to Align Style with Self-Image

Now that you've discovered the profound connection between self-image and personal style, it's time to act.

This chapter equips you with essential tools to transform your wardrobe into a powerful daily expression of your worth, confidence, and unique identity.

Embrace these strategies to elevate your style, and let your clothing reflect the extraordinary person you are.

1. Use Colour as a Confidence Tool

Colour holds incredible emotional power, serving as one of the most effective tools to elevate your energy and presence.

- **Neutrals** exude calmness, refinement, and timeless elegance.
- **Bold colours** like red, cobalt, or fuchsia radiate strength and playfulness, making a statement wherever you go.
- **Earth tones** create a sense of grounding, connection, and natural beauty.
- **Soft pastels** invite openness, gentleness, and approachability.

Select colours that ignite strong emotions within you. There is no need to completely revamp your wardrobe; often, a single vibrant scarf or a striking lipstick can dramatically uplift your mood and confidence.

Style Tip

Discover your most flattering undertone—whether warm, cool, or neutral—and curate your wardrobe around shades that not only suit you but also energise your appearance.

Embrace the transformative power of colour and let it become your secret weapon for making an unforgettable impression!

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2. Understand Your Silhouette and Fit

Transforming your self-image can be as simple as wearing clothes that fit you flawlessly.

Forget about choosing pieces that are merely "small enough" or "big enough" — seek out garments that are tailored precisely to your unique shape. Consider these key aspects,

- The placement of seams (shoulders, waist, hips).
- Whether the fabric skims or clings to areas you wish to accentuate or soften.
- The positioning of waistlines in relation to your natural proportions.

Approach each fitting session with a sense of curiosity rather than judgment. Your aim is to discover silhouettes that provide support and confidence, making you feel empowered rather than squeezed or shapeless.

Embrace your body — the right fit can truly transform how you see yourself!





3. Discover Your Style Archetype

Understanding your style archetype is a powerful way to define and embrace your unique aesthetic.

Whether you connect with one archetype or a blend of several, recognising these styles can transform your wardrobe choices.

Here are five impactful archetypes to explore,

- **Classic:** Experience the allure of a timeless, structured, and polished look that never goes out of style.
- **Romantic:** Embrace your feminine side with soft, expressive pieces that evoke emotion and grace.
- **Natural:** Discover the beauty of comfortable, effortless, and earthy styles that reflect an authentic lifestyle.
- **Dramatic:** Make a bold statement with edgy, fashion-forward elements that showcase your confidence and flair.
- **Creative:** Celebrate your individuality with eclectic and artistic choices that truly express who you are.

By selecting your archetype(s), you can eliminate styles that don't resonate with you, empowering you to showcase your personality with clarity and confidence. Make your style a true reflection of yourself!

Prompt

- *"Which three words describe how I want my style to feel?"*

That's often a shortcut to your style identity.



4. Style Journaling and Self-Reflection

Exploring how you feel in your clothes can lead to powerful revelations about your personal style and self-perception.

Consider diving into these reflective journaling prompts,

1. Think about the outfit that made you feel exceptionally confident. What was it about that outfit that empowered you?
2. Identify the moments when you feel the most authentic in your clothes. What contributes to that feeling?
3. Reflect on the messages you received about appearance and style during your upbringing. Are those beliefs still beneficial to you today?
4. Examine your current wardrobe. What does it communicate about your self-image? How would you like to redefine that message?

By engaging with these questions, you'll uncover meaningful patterns and recognise valuable opportunities for personal growth. Embrace the journey of self-discovery through style!

5. Create a Style Formula

Imagine transforming your mornings into a streamlined, enjoyable experience.

A style formula does just that by making dressing effortless, consistent, and uniquely you.

Consider these inspiring combinations,

- **Elegant Minimalist:** Tailored trousers + luxurious silk blouse + discrete earrings.
- **Creative Chic:** Eye-catching printed skirt + classic neutral t-shirt + bold accessories.
- **Everyday Luxe:** Comfortable jeans + polished blazer + sophisticated leather loafers.

By establishing a style formula, you reaffirm your identity while minimising decision fatigue.

When your wardrobe truly reflects your self-image, getting dressed evolves into an empowering ritual of self-expression, leaving behind any confusion.

Embrace this approach, and watch how it transforms not just your outfit, but your entire outlook.



Style as a Self-Love Practice

Your style transcends mere clothing; it is a powerful expression of how you show up for yourself each day.

At its heart, personal style embodies self-respect. It boldly declares,

- *"I deserve to be seen."*
- *"I have the right to take up space."*
- *"I honour the person I am right now, even as I continue to grow."*

If your self-image has been shaped by the weight of criticism, comparison, or outdated versions of yourself, remember: you hold the pen to rewrite your story.

You have the freedom to dress with intention, kindness, and joy.

As you embrace this approach, profound changes occur. Your reflection transforms—not just in the mirror, but within your own mind. You stand taller. You express yourself more clearly. You begin to trust in your inherent worth—just as you are.

Transform your wardrobe into a sanctuary of celebration, not a source of shame. Create a space where you greet yourself with compassion rather than criticism. Allow your clothing to reflect the vibrancy of your personality, your core values, and your ongoing journey.

When you align your style with your self-image, it goes beyond simply looking good. You feel empowered. You embody authenticity.

This is the essence of true style—embracing who you are and shining brightly for the world to see.