

Rachel Rofe: My name is Rachel Rofe. I created this show because I wanted to help you see that if you have a choice you can choose a better life. If you're listening to this podcast, you're in a pretty fortunate position. You have free will, ability to connect to the internet, and access to all kinds of new education. This podcast is meant to help you make the most of your good fortune. We talk with all kinds of people here from all walks of life because I want you to see that, no matter what your situation, there's always a way to create a life that you're proud of. Hello everyone. Today we're here with Crystal Cave. Her About page says, "not-so-skinny can be oh so stylish. I didn't always feel this way. Growing up as a not-so-skinny girl was not easy.

As a young girl growing up in New York I would look at fashion magazines and dream of being as fabulous and happy as the women in them, but I didn't think that day would ever come unless I lost weight. Dreaming of the size I wasn't, I had no idea how to dress for my body. After getting trained in style school and as a personal stylist, I stepped out as an industry insider. In addition to Taylor Swift, I got to glam up Kate Upton, Usher, and Willem Defoe for a Mercedes commercial, accessorize Debi Mazar from Entourage, get a cast member of Twilight: Breaking Dawn: Part Two red carpet ready, and more. Not only did I learn that great style had nothing to do with shape, I also learned the insider tricks to setting up your closet for easy and effortless dressing every day, because truly, impeccable style has no size. Let me show you how.

Crystal and I were actually in the same mastermind last year and we just became great friends. I adore her and I know we're just going to be in communication for life. She's very smart; she has a heart of gold, and is just such an inspiration for being comfortable in your skin. She just, I saw, got finished with the most extraordinary photo shoot. She's competing for [Miss Plus USA](#) and just seems so comfortable with her body. For me, when I found out that I had PCOS and started gaining lots of weight, it just felt so frustrating to me and like I couldn't get rid of it no matter what I tried, and I was just getting so frustrated with all the close that I was trying on and hating them, Crystal just felt like a really great inspiration for me.

She was a huge inspiration for me. Regardless if you identify with the being "skinny" or not, most of us have some kind of body image issue. So in this podcast, in part, I'm going to be talking with Crystal about how you can feel amazing in your body no matter what it looks like, and then we're also go over how Crystal got over her vulnerabilities, including feeling like she should wait to have a fashion blog until she was thin, and then maybe even some clothing style basics, which I think will be really fun. So we're going to have a good time. Crystal, thank you for being here.

Crystal Cave: Thank you so much for having me and thank you for all those kind words. The feeling is totally mutual with our friendship. You are such a light. I'm so blessed to have you in my life.

Rachel: Thank you. The intention behind A Better Life is to show people that if they have a choice, they can choose a better life. In that spirit, can you take a minute to share some of the things that you're most proud of in your life?

Crystal: Yeah. My biggest thing, and you have kind of touched on it, was just actually getting over that I had to wait until I lost weight to do a number of things that I've done, especially in the last so many years. One of the most recent things was actually going on camera. I mean, for as long as I can remember I actually always wanted to be in front of the camera, but was one of the people behind it. So in November of this year I actually went in front of the camera to film videos that are coming out in January. That's one of many things I've been doing to really just allow myself to even feel more comfortable in my own body. There are other things that I've done in addition to just starting my fashion blog. I started it because I figured, okay, I'm a stylist and I know how to style my body and I have so much to teach people, and then just from my first post I had so many people commenting, "oh my god, this is so helpful.

Thank you for saying this. This is how I feel. There's nobody out there I've found that I can relate to. I didn't do it as a form of validation, but it made me feel good that I actually got over that fear of actually pressing Publish. It honestly took me about four months from getting the photographs to actually publishing them, but all that stuff takes time: putting out that first blog post or doing the on-camera stuff. It's less hard each time. So just realizing that I can do anything I want and not about how I look. It's about what I have to say and just really putting that into the world that's been the biggest thing for me.

Rachel: So how did you start to feel okay with your body? How did you decide after the four months to actually go through and post your pictures?

Crystal: I actually took the pictures at the beginning of doing [Live More, Weigh Less](#), which is run by Sarah Jenks, who I'm a huge fan of. I had just signed up. Her whole thing is, "stop waiting on the weight." That was such a novel idea to me because for about 20 years prior I was always waiting for the weight to do anything. I was like, you know what, I'm going to schedule my photo shoot, and I did it within a couple days of signing up for Live More, Weigh Less. I did the photo shoot and it was amazing because my photographer, [Kat Harris](#), who has also done all my recent branding photography, I've been very lucky with her. She's such a gem and she makes me feel extremely comfortable in front of the camera, but I also realized through that process, just the fact of putting myself out there and not waiting to lose 20 pounds, and I actually ate McDonald's the day of my first photo shoot.

It's just not getting so in my head and just being in the present and being in my own body. The photo shoot was such a big step for me. It was weird after a couple photo shoots with her doing some monthly style posts; I realized that alone, I was so much

more comfortable in front of a camera. With that I also became more comfortable in my body. It's amazing how vulnerable you can feel just getting in front of a camera. We're in a selfie-obsessed society, but there's a difference between taking a selfie and actually having a professional photographer do a whole photo shoot. There are ways to stand. Honestly I also have a lot more respect for models now with how hard it is to actually be in front of a camera because you don't know, if you're very in your head, nothing will come out good. Being in front of the camera is the ultimate test of being present in your body.

So taking that from the photo shoot and then integrating it into my everyday life. The tips I got from [Live More, Weigh Less](#), one thing that I did was just thanking my body every day for the amazing vessel that she is. Our bodies do so many amazing things for us. If you think of everything they go through, it's a lot, and somehow they're so resilient. Really having that gratitude for her and continually going in and thanking her was also another thing around that time that started to get me more in the process of really feeling grounded within my own body and comfortable within it.

Rachel: So the ongoing process of the gratitude helped you press publish?

Crystal: Yeah. It was crazy. I literally waited 48 hours after it was really done to press publish and then I was like, "it's now or never. If nobody reads this, nobody reads it. If it's only my grandmother, that's awesome too. Being in that grounded-ness and being like, "this is what feels right to me and this is what I want to do no matter the outcome," and just feeling more comfortable within myself really helped me be able to then press publish for the first time.

Rachel: I feel like you're just giving such a big gift to so many people because as you said, so many people responded to you when you made your first post. I know you say you're not doing it for validation, but I think you're helping validate so many people out there who feel like they have to wait on the weight and just don't feel good. For people who aren't feeling good it's like everything's affected. I remember when I used to go and look at the scale every morning. It was like if I lost weight, great, and if I didn't, the entire day was ruined. Forget about it.

Crystal: You know what's funny? One of the things I stopped doing was weighing myself. I haven't weighed myself in at least two years now, I think. That was something that I started doing around that time as well because I realized that I started to have a number validate my life, and I was having so much anxiety around it. I was like, "this is kind of dumb. It's more of a metric for doctors." It's amazing for me. That actually also helped me as well.

Rachel: Yeah, seriously. I'm a big proponent of what gets tracked your able to make improvement on, but I'm much bigger about a measuring tape and stuff. I know for the scale, there are just so many variables. I remember it was back in 2008 when I made

the decision to get rid of the scale, and I remember that I was on the phone with my ex and I had him, literally he talked me through walking from my apartment down to the dumpster and throwing it out because I had given this thing so much power it was terrifying for me to not have it anymore.

Crystal: I actually had my mother hide it when we were moving into my apartment. I was like, "hide this somewhere I will not find it." Then if in a few months I decide that I'm okay and I can weigh myself now, fine. But then I found it when I moved out of that apartment. It's a nice scale so I didn't want to throw it out. So it's just in storage now, but I'm not going to replace the battery. It will probably end up in a garage sale in the next couple of years. It's funny because I feel like even bathrooms are revolved around where the scale is, too. I don't know. That's just my own feeling around it. I wouldn't even want to go into my shower or whatever because I'd see the scale. So just by hiding it from my face every day was enough to also feel better about it, too. I'm impressed you took it all the way to the dumpster. That's really impressive.

Rachel: I still use a measuring tape and stuff, but I don't know. Having those numbers puts so much power, it's just insane. I can't get over how crazy it is that so many of us live like that.

Crystal: It's like that with clothing sizes as well. We so fixate on being a certain size when that actually can vary so much as well. These metrics are kind of just one of those crazy things that frustrates me so much, in a way, when I really think about it, but once you start taking off the pressure of numbers, and believe me, I'm one of the most analytical people ever, but once you stop looking at them and revolving your life around it, it really takes off so much pressure and so much anxiety from your life. Clearly you understand.

Rachel: Yeah, and I mean I think, just to speak to your point, it's like when you're not focused on that and you're in gratitude of your body, and like you said, your body's an amazing vessel, and appreciating it, I think you then naturally choose to eat healthier and do better things for your body, and it's coming from a place of pleasure and surplus versus just restriction and misery.

Crystal: Yeah I agree with that, and I think even those days that, say, you do want to go get a hamburger or something that's a little more luxurious and meaty or whatever you don't feel as bad about it. There's also that part where it's like you're just letting your body really choose what it needs, and sometimes it needs beef from a burger. Some days it needs a salad.

Rachel: Yeah, absolutely. A couple people say, first Jena La Flamme from [Pleasurable Weight Loss](#) and Sarah Jenks, I mean your digestion is such an important part of it, so if you can just take the time and enjoy whatever it is that you're eating, your body is better able to assimilate it. An interesting story is, Jena told me she actually was working with

a guy who was addicted to McDonald's hamburgers. She said, "You know what? It's fine. Eat whatever you want, just eat it slowly and enjoy it, and I'm totally fine." She said for him, he found that because the McDonald's hamburgers are designed to be eaten really quickly, he said that when he stopped and he ate it really slowly, he was tasting it and he was like, "I actually don't like this," and he never wanted to eat it again. But it was coming from a place that it was his decision, right? It wasn't like he was forcing himself not to because it was the wrong thing to do. So I think in just any case it's always good to make a conscious decision, not an autopilot, "this is bad. I should, should, should," all the time, you know?

Crystal: Obviously, yeah. That's one of the biggest things. It's like, we go through life a lot of times in such a big autopilot that we don't realize sometimes we just need to press pause and slow down.

Rachel: You mentioned to your mom, and one of the questions that I had actually for you was, I know in the past your mom has made some comments to you that haven't felt super good, and I'm just curious how you handled that and what your advice would be to other people who get comments from people that they love about their weight.

Crystal: You know, mothers are always caring about their children so much that sometimes they say things and they think, what I've realized especially through the mastermind we've been in and working with one of my coaches, [Kavita](#), the thing that we need to realize is that any time someone says something to you it's either because of their own thing, and at least for mothers I view it as, they care about you, so sometimes it doesn't always come out right. They're just human. I know it's not just myself, but people I've worked with and people I know, like good friends, will talk about going into a dressing room with their mother and how it can end up in a fight. Once you realize that sometimes maybe that's not the best situation for you to be in, I know recently I've had to do some stuff with my sisters.

My sister's engaged so we've all been going to the bridal salon and trying on bridesmaids dresses. So it's interesting being in that situation because sometimes mothers can be the ones that trigger you the most, right? But anything that, like I've realized, that I've taken from other people have mostly been because I have that judgment myself secretly and I hated that someone was saying it. That's been a big "aha" for me to realize that. It's huge. That's the one thing that I've realized with a lot of people, so many people get upset about anybody talking about them or saying something to them, and a lot of times the issue is really that you're triggered by it because maybe you believe that or you just care too much about what other people think that, unfortunately, you just have to realize that that person also is a human and has things that they're working through and you have no idea what they've experienced in their life.

So whether it's mothers or just people in general, I recently had some internet haters who said some mean stuff about me, and just realizing I know nothing about their lives and they know nothing about mine, and clearly for them it comes from a place of what I kind of think is a sad place that they have to go out and criticize people. It's almost like a sickness within our society that we want to judge everyone so much instead of just loving each other, and perhaps that's naive to think we can all just love each other, but the more we allow everyone else to shine, we also allow ourselves to shine just as much. I think that is the most powerful thing we can do for one another in this world.

Rachel: I think you make some phenomenal points and I totally agree that allowing each other to shine is the best thing we can do. I think you're absolutely right. I know, even as you were talking I was thinking there are certain things people could say to me, like you could tell me I don't care about my customers or the people that I love. You could say that and I would just be like, "that's a joke, right?" I just wouldn't care because it's just so not true, but if you say something that I'm worried about or have something about, of course I'll be a lot more worried about it. So I think that's really phenomenal advice. It's like really look at yourself if you're getting triggered about certain things or look at how much you care about what other people think.

The other thing, I just saw this picture on Instagram that I thought was so funny, and I do agree that some people are very judgmental and I also think that for so many of us, the picture on Instagram said, "dance like nobody's watching because they're probably not, they're looking at their cellphone." And that's how it is, right? So many of us have our own hang-ups in our head, but people are looking at their phones. They don't care, or whatever it is.

Crystal: That was the thing when I first started out doing photo shoots. We were out in L.A where I was living at the time. I lived in this really cool development called Park La Brea, which is right near the grove, so there were all these little enclaves in which we could walk around and shoot in. At first I was thinking, "oh my god. All these people are going to be looking at me. And it's like most of the time people are actually on their cell phones and they don't notice. It's kind of funny when someone ends up saying a comment that's really nice. For the most part it was like nobody was paying attention to you. It's mostly in our heads that we think people care so much, and then when they care enough to say something it's actually not about us, it's more about them a lot of those times.

Rachel: Absolutely. I'm curious, how's the [Miss Plus USA](http://www.MissPlusUSA.com) process going?

Crystal: Well, I actually have to finish applying to Miss Plus USA. I got a preliminary approval to submit the application, but with the general craziness of life, that is actually one of the things that is on my to do list, is to finish. I actually have to do a short one minute video. But I'm excited for it because I think it's really cool to have a platform in

which you can go and have women be celebrated, and double digit women. That's what I really liked about looking at Miss Plus USA and what that was all about when it came out last year and I heard about it. I think so often we want to have it be about who's the thinnest. The whole body positivity thing has been very hot in 2014, but even with all that aside it's like there still is so much out there where we don't celebrate women in community no matter where they come from and who they are, and I just really love Miss Plus USA and the whole process of that as just a really great opportunity.

At least for me what interests me in it is the fact that I'll be able to go out and really help make that whole message larger of really loving yourself no matter your size and just really feeling grounded in your own body. I'm excited to, basically what happens is you end up getting training. There's not really anything before next August. I don't have to do much before then, from what I'm aware. So it's kind of cool. You go up to Seattle and you end up having a week there and they train you. When I was growing up I wanted to be Miss America. Who didn't? I remember there was one, I don't know if she was a contestant or someone who won, and she had been heavy and she lost all this weight to actually become Miss America, or at least compete in the pageant. I remember it was a big thing maybe 10 or 15 years ago.

I remember sitting there, and I wasn't old enough to compete in the pageant at that point in time, and I was like, cool. She's going to be an inspiration. I'm going to lost weight and then I can be in Miss America. I didn't lose the weight that I "need" to do to be a Miss America contestant, but I love that they have these other ways in which you can still compete and do a beauty pageant. It's even, in a way, more about female and body empowerment.

Rachel: Absolutely. I was telling Don on the way here, I was telling him that I was about to do the interview with you and I told him, "I really hope she wins." I can't wait.

Crystal: I know. I think hopefully our entire group of 15 of us will be out there. I don't know who will be able to make it, but we have our little inner circle of people.

Rachel: Give us the details as soon as you have them.

Crystal: I know. Once I'm approved I'll let you know.

Rachel: Awesome. Another thing I wanted to ask you about, you've blogged about this and I know just from knowing you, all about your alter ego. Can you tell us about your alter ego and how it helped you get out of your comfort zone in both your wardrobe and your life?

Crystal: Yeah, so my alter ego is named Oprah. Actually today I just picked up a new car, so I kept joking like, "you get a car and you get a car. No, I get a car." It's funny because I kind of, a lot of celebrities, Beyonce is one of them, she has her alter ego, Sasha Fierce. I think they are really cool ways to allow yourself and give yourself

permission to let yourself be a little bit bigger than you normally play. So for me Oprah at first was really good within my business. So I was like, okay, I'm going to get into my Oprah. What would Oprah do? I kind of channeled the Oprah Winfrey, but whether the name is something different or it's like snazzy, I don't know, that alter ego is a really fun way to help you get outside of your head and more into doing different things that you wouldn't normally do, or give yourself permission, or for me give myself, Crystal Cave permission to do.

So as far as how that relates to style, I think one of the really cool ways of doing that is just experimenting with styles. When I was younger I was definitely more of a preppy person. I went to a prep school, so I was all around people who popped their collars and things like that. So starting in college, I mean this was really before I dubbed my alter ego my alter ego, because that's more of a recent way I've kind of articulated what it is, I started experimenting with different style archetypes. I'm one of those people that just loves dressing up. So I kind of view it as that idea, not that you have to pretend you're an actor or actress, but you can try on different things. So maybe Oprah is feeling really sassy, so she'll put on some leather with a low neckline or something, or she's feeling super conservative so she's going to dress in a cable neck sweater or something.

For me especially with Oprah and what I say within the alter ego is like, just kind of feel into the different personalities, kind of like a multiple personality idea. We all as humans have different natural sways between maybe wanting to be sassy or a little more conservative or sexy or fun. I feel like style is a really fun way to reflect that. So whether it's through accessories or the types of fabrics you're wearing or the colors, there are so many ways that you can let your alter ego shine. For me with Oprah, I feel like she's a little more presence-y, like I'm going to stomp on the board room table type of person. So one of the things I did, which was actually in the blog post, was my Oprah jumpsuit, which coincidentally, of all places I got from Forever 21. They have a really great plus size selection and it was really well-constructed and fit my personal body type really well.

That's one those things I get into when I'm maybe feeling a little down and I just need to feel like, I call it the HBIC, which is essentially Head Bitch In Charge, which is my Oprah. I'll wear that and I'll kind of instantly start to get into that and feel a little more sassy and kind of in control. Another thing I do is get into my girly Oprah, which is in my tutu. So there have been some days where I've just needed a little more sparkle in the day. It wasn't about stepping more into a powerful-ness; it was just more of a playfulness. So I'll put on my tutu and dance around, which I got the tutu for my branding shoot. It's now kind of become something that's kind of a fun pick-me-up during the day. So I think after we get to about 10, if played dress-up when you were younger, so many people stop doing it, and I think it's just such a fun way to just experiment and get yourself seeing style as a really fun art project.

You can try all of these different things. It doesn't mean you have to commit to it. You can buy stuff from Forever 21 or Wet Seal especially if you're a double digit size. They have things you can easily just try on and see how you like it instead of spending the same amount of money for something from a higher end brand. I feel like there are so many ways that you can really experiment within your style in what feels like a safe and not super edgy way that can kind of get you to explore yourself a little more or have a pick-me-up or more fierceness added into your day.

Rachel: Yeah. The thing that I really like about the alter ego is, I just think about, I forget exactly how many words it is, but it's something like, I think it's like, "the average person uses the same 200 words over and over." I'm pretty sure it's something that's that ridiculously low. It's just because we're such creatures of habit and so many of us don't have the opportunity where we stretch out, and I think that's why things like travel and new experiences are so important because otherwise it's like the same thing, the same thing. I think people get like that with their style, too. It's just so fun. It's a great way to feel more alive.

Crystal: Yeah and it's crazy how if you just do one small thing each day your day can be so different, whether it's putting on a fun pair of heels or putting on a bold lipstick. That is also a way, through makeup and hair, that I really allow myself to do small little things to really just help myself experiment with different moves. For me it helps me channel my inner artist. For someone else it might be something different. I have been in this very analytical life for so many years that I'm kind of allowing myself to be in that inner child of play and exploration and my inner little artist Crystal or Oprah, whoever, it's just a really amazing thing.

I think that's what I've always loved about fashion: it's totally a way in which you can explore, and it's not a commitment. You can take the thing off if you want. It's not like a hair color. You're not stuck with it for months. It can be fun. People think of it as such an intimidation, especially because so many of us put a certain pressure for size or a certain weight, certain numbers, whatever they are instead of exploring in the here and now and allowing yourself to just be, really.

Rachel: I love that, and I love how you mention it's bringing out your inner artist. As you were talking I was thinking, for guys who are listening to this podcast who might identify as being analytical, I think there are even ways that you can switch up your style, whether it be, I see funky ties or watches or sacks. Can you think of other things that guys can do to switch it up?

Crystal: Yeah. My focus right now has always, like 100% women. So I don't always give out men's style advice. I would normally leave that to our friend, Julie Wrath, but I actually started out doing a lot of banking commercials because when I started styling I was based out of New York. That's where a lot of those are filmed. I think a really fun

way is definitely the ties. I think even eye wear is a fun way that in the recent years so many guys have been able to experiment with things, whether it's sunglasses or clear glasses. You see someone like Usher on The Voice putting on glasses one week and Twitter explodes. I remember this happened a couple of years ago. Those are really fun small ways. I know my brother has said to me, "I'm a not-so-skinny guy. What are you going to do for me?" He actually does a really good job of, himself, just experimenting with fun colors of sunglasses or fun pants.

It's funny, he probably should do a male version of what I do, just fun patterns. He is a golfer, so I'm just using him as an example because I feel like he is just a good example of someone who kind of experiments. He lets himself play his range. So some days he's a little more skater, some days he's a little more preppy, but within that he'll do pops of colors. Instead of doing all black, he'll do all pink. I think men are so scared of colors, and I mean even women are, too. So many women hide behind just wearing black all the time, for example, instead of just allowing themselves to shine and stand out. So I think regardless of your sex, allowing yourself to stand out and do fun things is a really important thing. I definitely think the sunglasses, ties, different color pants are really fun with guys.

I always love seeing guys who will experiment with different colors and pants, which maybe because I grew up in my high school with such a preppy environment, I really love that. I think that's so fun, and I definitely think socks or shoes are really a great way. It's like a small thing that can add a pop of color. One of my mentors that I trained under, story, has told stories of how he'll go in to do a look book photo shoot and he'll be like, it's not the most bright and crazy outfit ever, but those will be styled by the brand and then he'll put a fun pair of shoes and be like, "oh my god, this made the outfit." Small things like that can make such a difference.

Rachel: Can you tell us a little bit more about just how you shop for clothes? Specifically, I know you said a lot about what looks good on your body. How do you know what looks good on your body? How do people listening know that?

Crystal: It's probably more detailed than we have time for, but the long and short of it, at least for women, the ideal way to dress your body is to dress it so it looks like an hourglass. Only 8% of women in the United States are actually an hourglass size, and that's actually how all clothing is generally cut. It was really interesting to me when I found that out. Basically ready-to-wear clothing is only cut for 8% of women, and 92% of people are kind of SOL. Knowing that most women actually have a larger bottom, so I'll just use that as an example of how you can make it more hourglass. So if you have a larger bottom, maybe doing something with a stronger shoulder, I mean I'm not saying do an 80s, like shoulder pads. I'm pretty hour-glassed actually. I've been very blessed in that to be basically one of those 8% of women, but I am a little bottom-heavy, and that's kind of changed throughout my 20s.

Most women have that, and clothing is not fit for that. Having the shoulders is a big thing. Also doing a belt can really cinch in the waist so it really allows you to see the hourglass shape. Those are kind of a couple quick tips around that. Personally what I recommend to a lot of people, if you don't want to do a belt, because sometimes those can be uncomfortable, like Peplum, when you have to have it sit on your waist, it's cut different ways, so you have to find the right one for your own torso. Peplum is also a really fun way to add a little flair to your style. It's super easy. Throw on a peplum top and tapered pants. It can easily hug your curves and is very tummy flattering.

Rachel: That's interesting because I thought clothes were designed for model types, straight up and down. Has that changed or has it always been? Models are an hourglass, so I'm curious.

Crystal: [There was actually an article](#), which we can put a link on the post when you put this out. I believe it was in Time and it talked about the history of clothing sizes. It was really interesting to me because up until about 60 years ago, give or take a couple decades, most clothing was ready to wear. You made it yourself. Around that time they started standardizing everything so it could be ready to wear. It was kind of the manufacturing revolution, I think. Everything started being in department stores and things like that. You wouldn't just go to someone who would custom design a dress, or your mother wouldn't sew your dress for you anymore. It became that you went to a store and it was quicker that way. What they did to standardize the size, apparently the government tried to do it. They had a standardization, but what happened was that it was largely skewed smaller.

The article doesn't go on to explain why; they just explain that essentially from the beginning the whole sizing system was flawed. Apparently, I think it was in the 80s that the government did away with the whole them controlling the standardized sizing. You have designers doing all different types of clothing, and it was interesting from other research I've done, really finding out that they do it based on the hourglass shape. Even when they look for plus-sized models my understanding is that they generally look for women who are hourglass shaped. Models are actually, the sizes can change. In certain decades it's been very waif, boy-looking bodies. At other times it's more curvy.

I think right now we're getting a little more to the curvy especially with a lot of the body love and body acceptance things that we kind of talk about. It's been a big trend in 2014, but even models can vary a lot. As far as fit models, they have them for each size. So it really can vary based on the brand and the model they use to fit the clothing and fit the samples of each size. It's kind of a really flawed, screwed up system, which is why you just have to be so gentle to yourself when you're shopping, knowing that this is actually more for your convenience rather than a judgment of who you are as a person.

Rachel: Absolutely. Because I want our listeners to know that you're still a real human, you still have everyday struggles and are always evolving, what is something right now that you're working through in your life? And how are you getting through it?

Crystal: Let's see. My one thing that I consistently am butting heads with is just the idea of surrender. A lot of times I go into what I would say is probably more of a masculine mode of trying to control all of it instead of just letting go and just knowing what's meant to happen will happen. Right now I have decided to purchase a car, and last week while I was searching for it, this is just a small example of everyday life, but I was just so frustrated because I had an idea of how I wanted to feel and something was not right for me. Then I got to a point where I was like, I can't control this. I can control it to a certain extent, right? I can control the fact that I'll go to a certain dealership and look at certain cars and try it, but I also can't control if the car's going to be right or if they're going to have it in stock, whatever it is.

I had just reached out to a group of women that I go to and I was like, "I don't know why I keep butting up against this where it's like I don't just let myself get to this point of letting go." It's going to happen. I have faith. Then everything came together. That's one thing. It's kind of the recovering perfectionist in me, I guess, that always wants everything to have all my ducks in a row. For me, how I'm getting over it is just really having amazing communities of people I can go to with support, including our community, Rachel, of girls that I go to when I have something that I'm struggling with. I think that's been the biggest thing for me. Community, I've found, has been absolutely so beneficial for me. A lot of times even if they don't understand, if you're in the right group of people they will just say, "Okay, I've got you. You've got this. You're okay. We're here.

Whatever you need to say, whether it's vomiting, word vomiting on someone, or maybe actual vomit, I guess." Being able to have and surround myself with people that really get me and accept me and are there for me, whether we've grown up in the same town or just met six months ago, has been completely revolutionary in my own life. Then also allowing myself to be vulnerable in that situation, because a lot of times, at least myself, I find myself so in my head. My brain goes really fast, so I can go from A to DEFCON 5 in 2.5 seconds. Just really catching myself in that thought process as well, it's like the community and then kind of, I don't want to say, "Kill," but stopping those mean girls in my head, as I like to call them, who will start over-analyzing things and making it into a bigger deal than it needs to be.

I think another thing on top of it all is just gratitude. In the middle of last week, for example, looking for a car, which, it's a car. I was in shock of why I was crying so much after we left the dealership. It felt so crazy to me. I did a meditation that [Oprah has with her and Deepak Chopra](#). It was just like the art of surrender and just really allowing

yourself to let go. Just allowing myself to go within for that 20 minutes to do that meditation was the self-care that I needed.

Rachel: That's great advice. I think that's going to help so many people. We're wrapping up a little bit, but I have two more questions. I'm curious, what would you say to somebody who is listening now and feeling like, "Crystal that's great for you that you were able to start to love your body more and all this stuff, but I don't really believe it." Or maybe they're just scared to make changes for themselves. What kind of advice would you give to them?

Crystal: The first thing, we're never going to change until we really want to change ourselves, right? If they're listening to that and they have resistance, it might be because it's not the right time for them to change. I hate to say that, but it's kind of one of those realities of life. If we're forced to change, that change will not be sustainable, but if you're in a place where you really do want to change, it's just about doing small things each day. The whole idea of Rome wasn't built in a day is so true. You don't get body confidence overnight. It might be at a point where you start doing small things and you suddenly realize, holy crap, I feel so much better in my body. You don't just come to that overnight. Little things each day, and just not being mean to yourself. If you notice that what you're saying is about what other people think about you or things that are coming up in your head or just consistent judgments, those are just small things. If you're noticing that, just start dialing it back and being gentle.

Our coach Mischa will always be about being nice to your inner child. If you hear yourself kind of crap-talking, the best thing you can do is just say, "okay honey. It's okay, I've got this," and not everybody can do that all the time. Even if you notice it once a day, then it becomes twice a day, and maybe in a couple weeks you're kind of eliminating whatever it is out of your life, or if you're trying to integrate, just doing some small things to help your wardrobe get fun, just add a fun color or fun accessory. You will not die by adding a fun necklace. Those are small little things each day that you can really do to just help play up things. So necklaces, fun shoes, earrings. I used to like to experiment with headbands. I'm not so much into those anymore. Maybe it was my Gossip Girl phase. That was always a way I would say, if you want to do headbands, that can make you feel a little sweet.

Even makeup, small things with makeup are a really fun way to help instantly give yourself a lift. One thing I actually also tell people is just smiling and eye contact because 70% of people when they first come into contact with you will look at your teeth and then your eyes, which is pretty substantial. So if you're going to do anything, just smile and look at someone in the eyes. If you have the greatest outfit ever styled, they're not going to notice it if you're slumped down and not looking at someone in the face and really close down. That's hard for a lot of people, but just even practicing with yourself in the mirror. There are so many different things you can do, I think. So

hopefully those are some different methods that different people can use depending on where you are in your own life.

Rachel: Yeah, those are fabulous. Thank you very much. I think that you've given so many awesome tips. I just feel like we covered so many different things, from pleasure and the alter ego and being okay with yourself. We just went so many different ranges, which I love.

Crystal: Who knew style could do all that?

Rachel: Right? So spectacular. Can you let people where they can go to find out more about you?

Crystal: Of course. You can go to xoCrystalCave.com and find out all about me, how you can work with me. There are some things I'm doing in the coming months that will be for free. I also have an [Instagram channel](#) which I'm running in January because I really found around the New Year we get so obsessed with wanting to lose weight. I've been hearing them all around me this week I feel like. I'm seeing all this propaganda, I guess. I was like, "why don't we just have fun instead?" So what I'm doing, which is kind of what we talked about, doing one small fun thing each day, is what I'm going to do in a 15-day Instagram challenge. Even if you sign up I'm giving away a free Kate Spade bag and some other prizes. You can find out all the information for that at NotSoSkinnyStyle.com.

Rachel: Awesome. Thank you so much.

Crystal: Yeah, and if you are on social media, I am at xoCrystalCave on every social media platform.

Rachel: Great, so if you are listening, there are going to be show notes on the page. So if you need links to anything, they'll all be right over there. Thank you so much again. I feel like even just doing this interview, I know you said you felt like you should be in front of the camera, and even in this interview I can see how easy it is just to talk with you. I know we're friends anyway, but you're such a great conversationalist with the interviews because you just feedback and keep going with the conversation stuff. So I totally agree. You're meant to be shining. Yes. All right, this has been great. Thank you again, and I guess I'll talk to you soon.

Crystal: Thank you so much.

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Thank you in advance!

I really appreciate you.

With love,

Rachel Rofé

