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Former model takes on "body terrorism"

Felicia Clark brings plus-size model experience to new book battling societal exploitation

By **Angelia McGowan**
YourHub Contributor

Am I pretty enough? Thin enough? Tall enough? Shapely enough? Young enough? These are questions women regularly ask themselves when seeking relationships, jobs and even acceptance from peers.

The impact of this question is compounded in the face of increasing advertisements showing idealized images of thin women with perfect lives, said Denver resident, Felicia Clark.

This is body terrorism, according to the author, professional life coach and former plus-size model. The general public is familiar with how terrorism attacks a person's psychology in order to inspire anxiety for political advantages.

"Body terrorism can increase



Felicia Clark. Photo by Victoria Janashvili

the false belief that looking pretty enough means you will have all of the things you dreamed of in your life. It is a psychological attack on the mind-body connection designed to produce feelings of inadequacy that are ex-

ploited for economic and social gain," Clark said.

This in turn, Clark said, makes them more susceptible to accepting the psychological impact of body terrorism, which pushes them to drop their standards and become more easily exploited by men, retailers and others who they know are not good for them.

This is detrimental for the community as a whole, according to Clark, who often cites the adage, "heal a woman, heal a nation," echoing a message from the Dalai Lama at the 2009 Vancouver Peace Summit, where he said "The world will be saved by the western woman."

A woman cannot connect to and express her feminine energy if she is self-conscious about her body or believes that her body is inadequate," Clark said. "Con-

necting to your own feminine essence as a woman has a very healing effect on a woman herself as well as the people around her."

Clark became keenly aware of body acceptance at an early age. Her mother enrolled her in modeling classes at the age of 12 to balance her tomboy tendencies. She has participated in pageants or worked as a model ever since. She was represented by the top modeling agency in the country, Ford Models, Inc., and has appeared in multiple national publications.

Clark earned a bachelor's in political science from the University of Colorado-Boulder, a master's in curriculum development with a math and science emphasis from California State University and a doctorate from Pepperdine University in institutional management. She makes

her home in Denver.

She has facilitated more than 1,000 coaching sessions over her career to help people move forward "when they are ready to grow." Also a professional curriculum developer, Clark has previously written home-study courses for her coaching clients and math textbooks for school children.

Clark sees her coaching sessions and publications as a small piece to aid in the healing process of the western woman so "that we may free up our feminine energy to heal others." In 2013, she will release her findings in her new book, "End Body Terrorism: One Size Never Fits All."

Angelia McGowan is a publisher at publisher at Canady's Corner.