

# Athletes As Leaders



## Session 4: Self-Image & Standards of Beauty

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### Make sure you have:

- Group agreements to refer to during “Warm Up” (only if needed)
  - Technology to show YouTube video during “Work Out”
  - Ball to throw during “Cool Down”
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### Warm Up

Point out the group agreements. Review only if needed.

Introduce topic: (1 min)

*Welcome! Last session we talked about privilege and oppression. Today we are going to talk about self-image and societal standards of beauty. People are receiving messages from a very young age about beauty standards from products, peers, the media, and their communities. Many of these beauty standards are unrealistic and impossible to achieve. They can make people feel like they are not good enough. Sometimes people feel pressured to change their appearance to fit this image. There is so much judgment, especially toward girls and women, about the way they look, that it can also take away the focus on all the other amazing things that they are doing in their lives.*

Introduce & show video: (4 min)

*We are going to watch a video produced by Karen Lum called “Slip of the Tongue” which she wrote when she was 16 years old. It is a spoken word poem and it goes very fast, so just try to get the main idea of what the author is saying.*

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“Slip of the Tongue by Karen Lum” (3:40)

<https://youtu.be/-8ad6c-aGt0>

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## Work Out

### Discussion Questions: (5 min)

- ① *After the guy is very focused on the way she looks, she responds with more depth. When she explains her “makeup” and her “foundation,” what are some of the things she talks about? [Possible answers: her roots, her ancestors, her confidence, her voice].*
- ② *What are some of society’s messages about what it means for a girl or woman to be beautiful? What do you think about those messages?*

### Talking Points: (2 min)

- » *The girl in the video re-defines her “make up” and “foundation” as being her inner confidence, her strong ancestry, and her confident voice. In a way, she is challenging the guy’s shallow definition of beauty and redefining it to mean something much more personal and meaningful.*
- » *People are diverse and complex! It’s not a bad thing if a girl wants to dress very feminine or get done up, but people need to see her for so much more than that- she deserves to be seen for who she is as a person.*
- » *If a girl does not wear makeup, or wears a style that is more traditionally masculine, or if they do not have the “perfect” body/ hair/ skin/ clothes, it is not okay to pressure them to change or to say negative comments. There are so many different ways to be a girl and to express one’s self.*
- » *It is also important to treat yourself with the same respect that you treat others. Thinking positively about yourself can be a radical act!*
- » **So here is a challenge for you:** *When you see a new person at school, catch yourself before judging their body, hair, skin, and clothes, and instead, get to know them. When you compliment your friend, see if it can be first about their personality, something they are good at, or something great that they did. And this includes you! When you look at yourself in a mirror or picture, see if your first thought can be something positive or empowering.*
- » **As student leaders and athletes,** *it is important for you to challenge harmful societal messages, redefine beauty, and look at people more deeply for who they really are.*

## Cool Down

### Team Talk: (8 min)

*Now it is time for you to lead the Team Talk! Let’s get in a circle and get ready to pass the ball. We are going to think of things that you can all do as student leaders & athletes. Hopefully these will be things everyone in the group can agree to do, when you are interacting with people on your team, at school, on social media, or in the*

*community. We are hoping they will become the new team norms that will help you take action as leaders in the community.*

*This week we are going to brainstorm ways that we can challenge traditional messages about beauty and promote a positive self-image:*

- ① How can we redefine what it means to be beautiful?*
- ② What are some great things to notice or comment on about someone, other than their appearance?*
- ③ How can we use social media to promote the fact that girls and women are diverse and complex? For example, when sharing or commenting on a picture or video? [Possible answers: comment on someone's strengths or character rather than their appearance; share pictures and videos of girls doing awesome things like competing, creating, leading].*

*Thank you for all of your participation and great ideas today. You all have awesome ideas on how to redefine beauty and look beyond physical appearance, and instead look more deeply ourselves and each other. It's time to break for the day (or get to practice).*

**Close the circle with a team cheer.**

