PROTECT

ACRONYM (TM)

The following acronym summarises some of the recommended strategies to use when body image (BI) is impacted by social media (SM) use. It can be used as an easy way to remember the different areas to cover that have been shown to be helpful in protecting and improving BI. Each of the steps will require expansion and exploration and the use of other strategies.

P

PAUSE

Pause, tune in and reflect. Before interacting with any SM platforms or once you are already on and notice something triggering - PAUSE and take a moment to reflect and consider the following steps as well as your own mood, vulnerability, needs and behaviours.

R

REALITY CHECK

Check in and consider how you can analyse and critically evaluate the content you are seeing - refer to your social media literacy! Consider what is being shared, who is sharing this, what might be their motivation, does anyone benefit from this, what information is left out?

O

OMIT HARMFUL CONTENT

Omit and reduce celebrity culture, fitspo, content that idealises thinness, beauty content & anything that triggers urges to compare your body to theirs. Unfollow, mute and report harmful or triggering content.

T

TAKE STEPS

Take steps to alter the algorithm and to diversify what you see. Focus on changing what content you see on your SM such as reducing harmful content, increasing diversity (e.g., body diversity) in the content you see & moving away from appearance focused content.

E

ENGAGE PURPOSEFULLY

Consider how you might use SM with intention by engaging purposefully and meaningfully. Focus on creating a more positive online environment, engaging with content in line with your values, building community & creating the type of micro-environment that you want to cultivate for yourself.

C

COMPARE LESS

Reducing body comparisons with peers, friends, celebrities, influencers and others. Consider, who are you comparing with? How do you feel afterwards? What thoughts/feelings/behaviour do these comparisons evoke?

T

TRY SELF-COMPASSION

Applying self-compassion and practicing using a self-compassionate tone with yourself, especially when you come across content that is triggering.