

Image Magazine

Issue 1 2004

In this month's issue:

You are **fat**

You are **ugly**

You **look** wrong

You **need** to buy clothes

You **can't** get a man

You **smell** bad

You are too **thin**



You can't **get** a man

You can't keep a **man**

Your breasts are too **small**

You **smell** wrong

Your **breasts** are too big

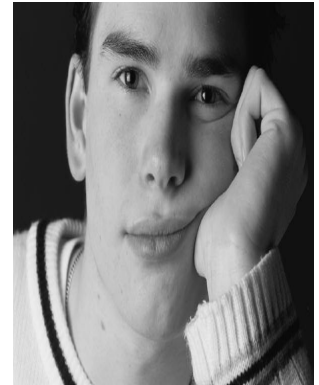
Your breasts **sag**

You are **fat**

You don't **know** what you need to know

You can **learn** the secrets of success

You can be **anything** you want



You are **puny**

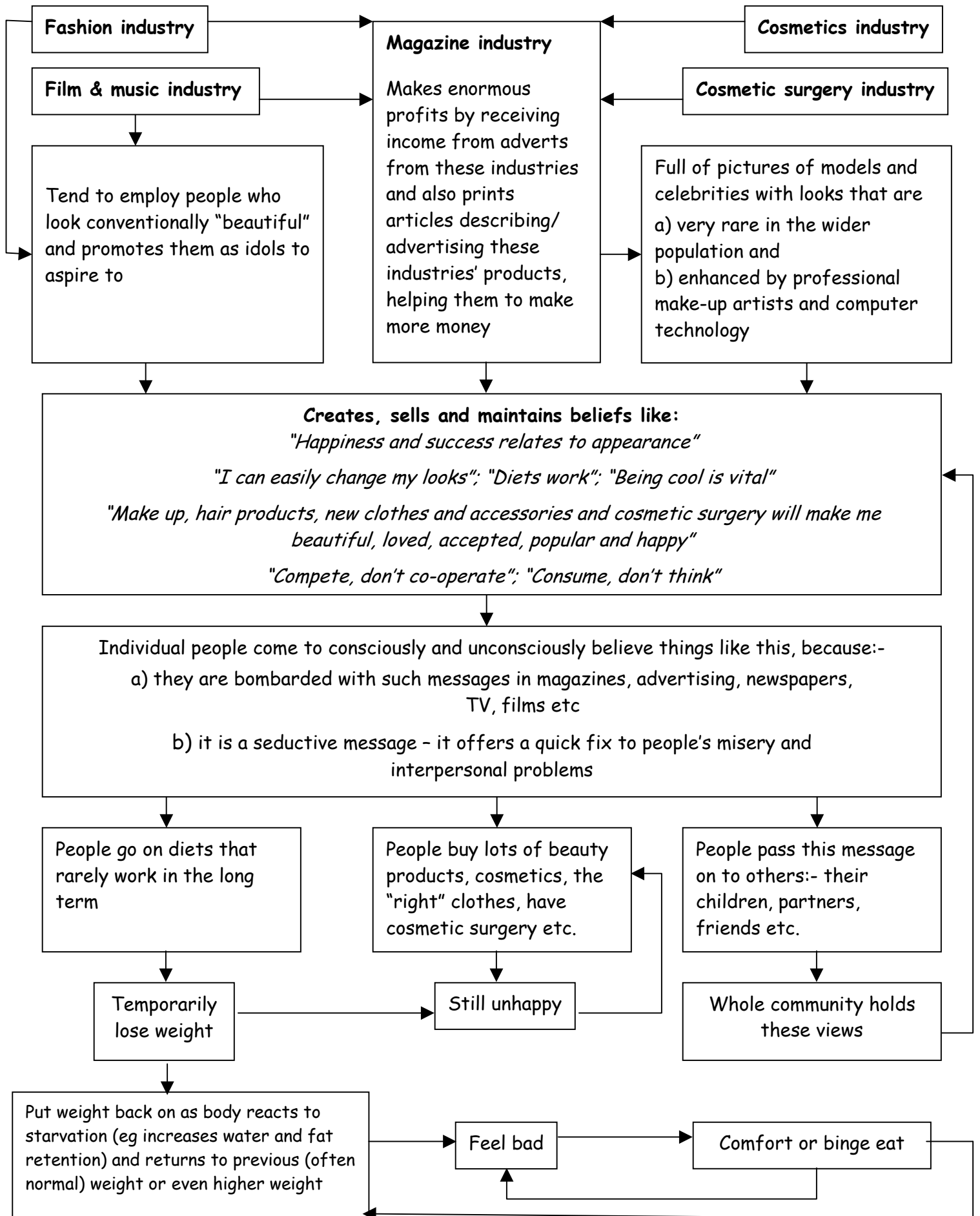
You're **hopeless** in bed

You **don't** look right

You are doing it all **wrong**

Special feature:

Why are so many people unhappy
with the way they look?



Why are so many people unhappy with the way they look?

Responses from people who looked at the diagram in this leaflet:

"I find myself comparing myself to other women constantly"

"I was no happier being 'thin' (and hungry) than 'fat'. When I put weight on, for a while I had curves and was excited about this. I felt incredibly feminine and womanly. I actually felt quite sexy. But then I started to feel fat and unhealthy. This leaflet explains why"

"When I was thin, I got a lot of praise about having a 'great figure'. This put pressure on me not to gain weight for fear of 'ruining my figure' that so many admired, thus perpetuating the cycle that women are drawn into"

"These things cause us to be hyper-critical about the way we look and if something is not right, you can fix it - by joining gyms, diets (that never work), or surgery - because we can't have imperfections can we?"

"I heard that over the past twenty years, the average size of women has gone up, whilst the average size of models has gone down"

"Women and increasingly men, suffer from unrealistic demands in society to have unachievable figures"

"I am thoroughly sickened by the fact that women starve and mutilate their bodies and endure incredible mental and physical suffering, all in the aid of profit!"

"The fashion industry produces clothing that only looks 'good' on emaciated women. I agree that it conspires with the film, TV, music, magazine and newspaper industries to create a celebrity culture where the women who are set up as style queens or role models are those that have access to stylists, make-up artists, personal trainers etc - a life that is unobtainable for the majority of us. And, as happened with Kate Winslett, if the photo doesn't look quite thin enough, it is changed by computer".

"The message is that if you dress in the latest style, have the latest haircut, perfect make-up and are slim, then you will be attractive and successful - you gain status (in your own eyes, the eyes of people you meet and in society in general). Other women might see you as a threat, feel more insecure and feel they must lose weight too. One woman that follows this sets a standard for others to follow, but women overall do not get happier. The big winner is the industry that preys upon our insecurities and exploits them for profit"

“Some people are happy with their body shape but for most of us it is such a nightmare – it causes so much misery, frustration and despair. Even when I have managed to get down to a weight that I aimed for and no matter how slim I was, I still hated who I was. At times I admit I felt more confident and even felt I had a weapon I could flaunt at other females to try and make them jealous, but it was in an aggressive way. A turning point for me was the thought that I was promoting the one thing I would hate to be subjected to”

“Research has shown that women feel more depressed and more unhappy about their appearance after reading women's magazines. There is evidence to show that if women who have been on many diets give up dieting, they reduce rather than put on weight, but we keep on buying magazines and going on diets”

“ In Fiji, eating disorders increased when western TV became available”

“Imperfect people find happiness and get a partner too”

“With the offer of surgery always present it furthers my dissatisfaction because always in my mind there is a solution to the problems: to mutilate my body, to ‘correct it’. But what is there to ‘correct’ when it’s my body, the way I was created?”

“Many cultures, until recently, had a great matriarchal system, with daughters, mothers and grandmothers united in support and sharing knowledge with themselves and other women. In some societies, larger women are much more revered, their size being a symbol of health, fertility and femininity, where being able to produce healthy children is a principle role of the female, rather than being easy on the eye. Whereas nowadays, here, women are pressured into having a pre-pubescent figure, shaven bodies and teeter on high heels - all indicators of childishness. Society can control women who are kept in such a child-like state. We are kept amused by trinkets, perfume and make-up, rather than thinking about the bigger issues. Women united are powerful”

This leaflet was researched and designed by Guy Holmes, Clinical Psychologist and Tina Jarvis. Reproduced by Caroline Lacey, The Health Shop, 31 High Street, Madeley, Telford. TF7 5AR. (Tel 01952 582659) or downloaded from www.shropsych.org

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