

# What Is Body Neutrality, and Why Is It Incredibly Relevant to Food, Apparel, and Health and Wellness Companies?



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The  
Deciding  
Factor

## Why are we here?

“

If you work in consumer insight, innovation, or marketing, odds are, you've had discussions about the body positivity movement (#bopo) and how this culture is impacting your business.



## Why are we here?

“

After all, how we perceive and discuss the body can have a huge impact on how we conceptualize and position products, and how we create the messages we use to sell them.



# Body Positivity?

**To understand what  
“body neutrality” is ...  
we need to understand what  
“body positivity” isn’t.**

## What is body positivity?

“

**Body positivity** refers to having a positive view of your physical body, regardless of shape, size, or other appearance-related attributes. It involves appreciating your body for what it is, even if it is not “ideal” according to society’s standards.





**But the CULTURE of “body positivity” is changing.**

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**In fact, the culture is  
transforming from  
meaning something  
positive to negative.**

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## What do we mean by “culture”?

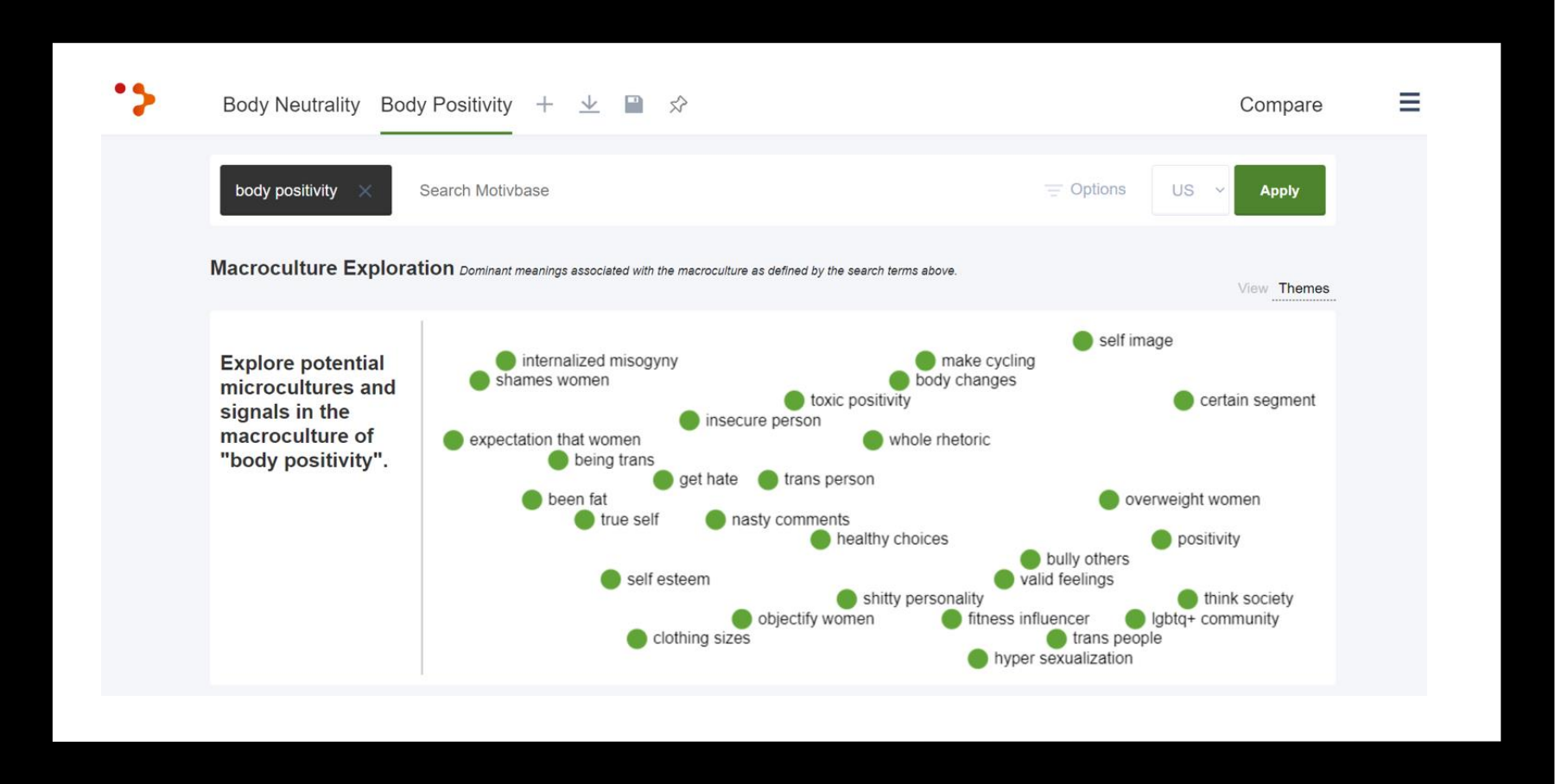
**“ A culture is a system of shared meaning in a particular context.**

- 1. Everything has a culture (food, fashion, healthcare, etc.).**
- 2. A culture is shaped by the language used to understand it.**
- 3. This language shapes what something “means.”**
- 4. More consensus around that meaning = more mainstream.**
- 5. Every culture and its meanings change over time.**

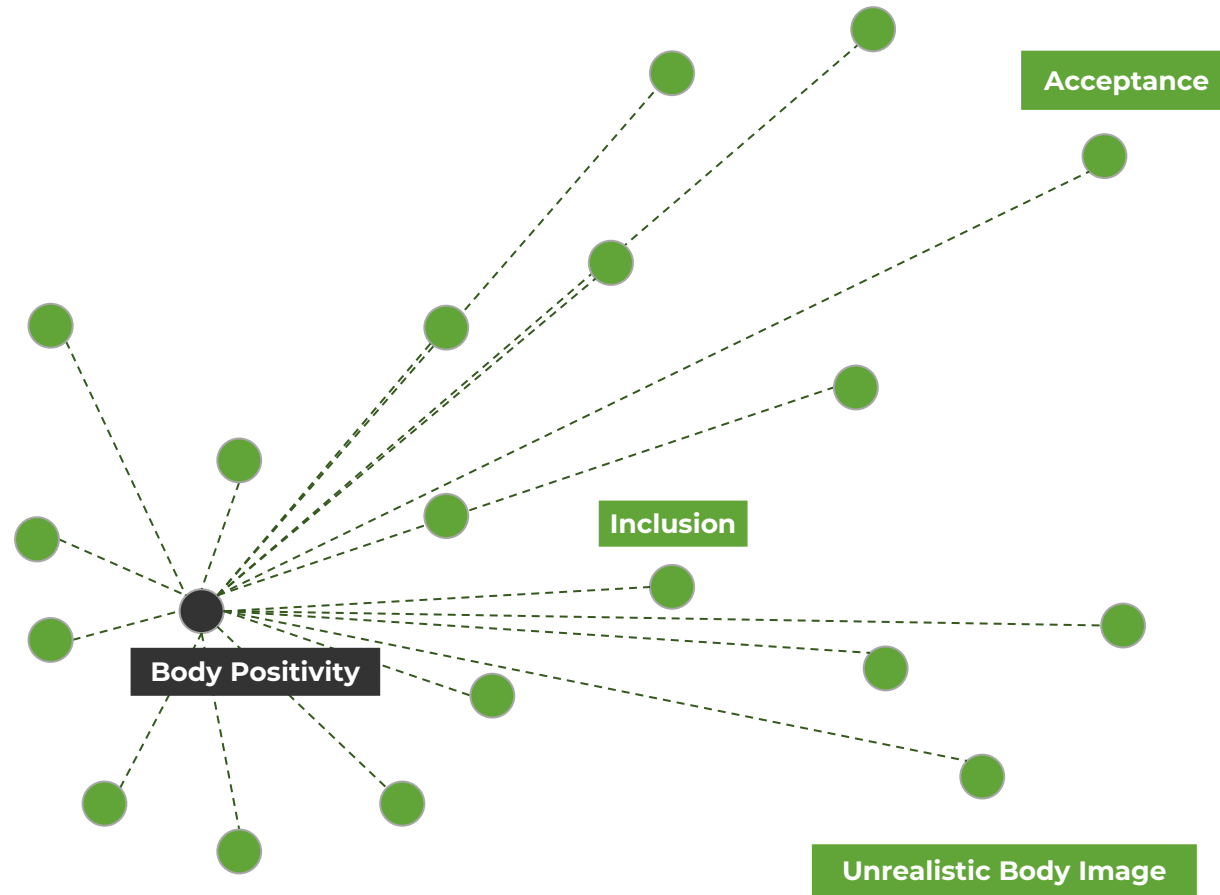


# **Body Positivity vs. Body Neutrality?**

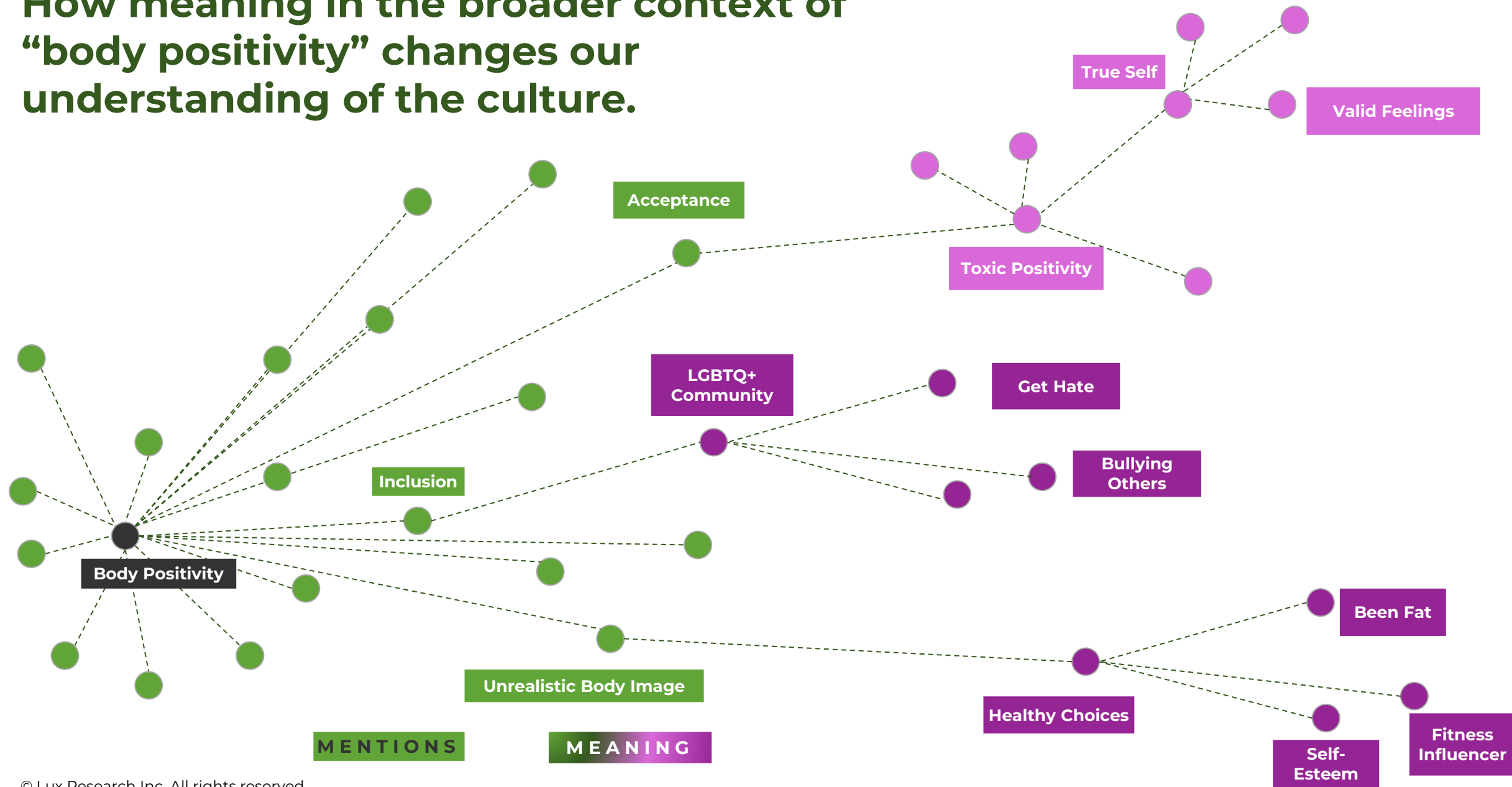
# What Lux MotivBase reveals when we explore body positivity



# Understanding systems of meaning around “body positivity”



# How meaning in the broader context of “body positivity” changes our understanding of the culture.



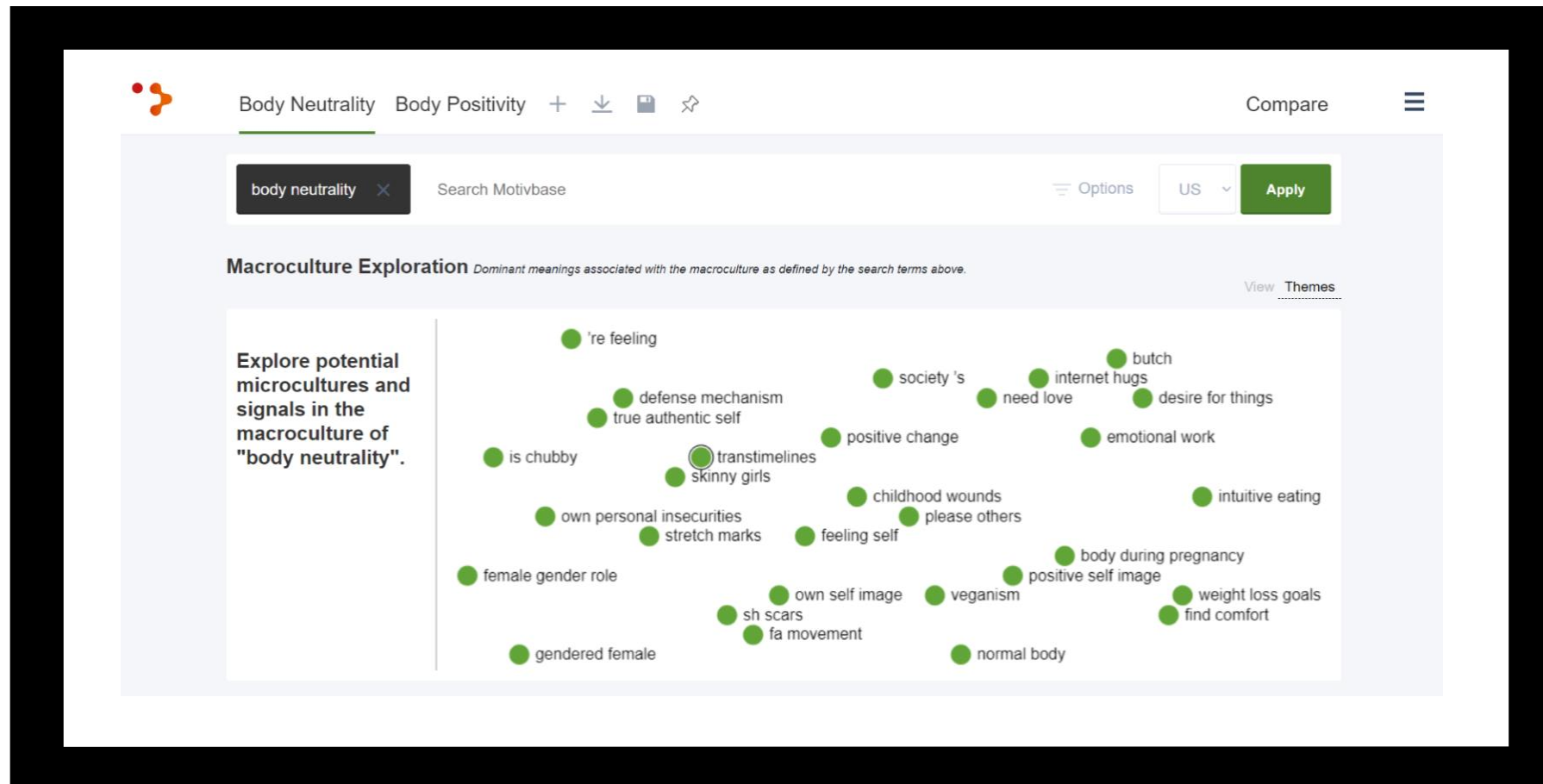
## What is body neutrality?

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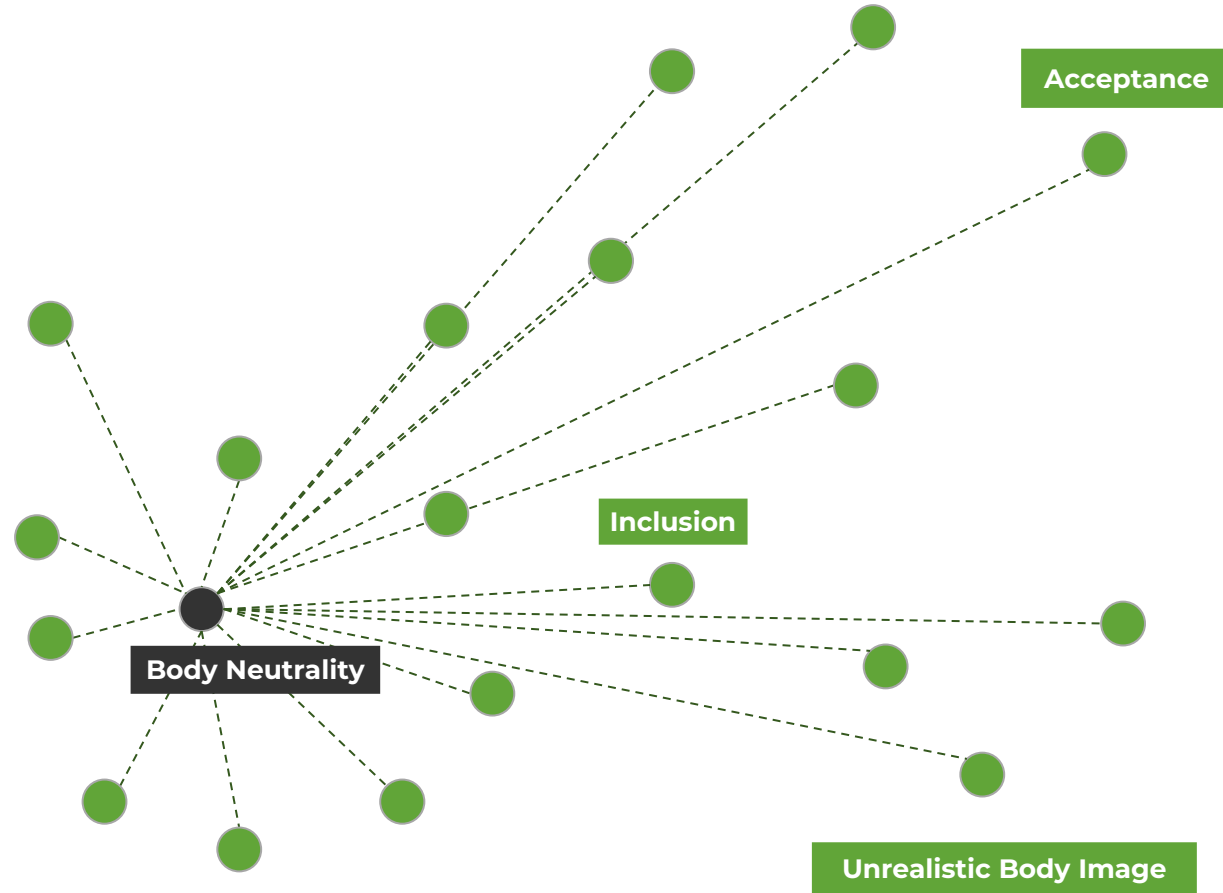
**Body neutrality** differs from body positivity in that it doesn't involve always loving your body but is more about accepting it. Instead of concentrating on your physical appearance, the focus is more on the body's abilities and nonphysical characteristics.



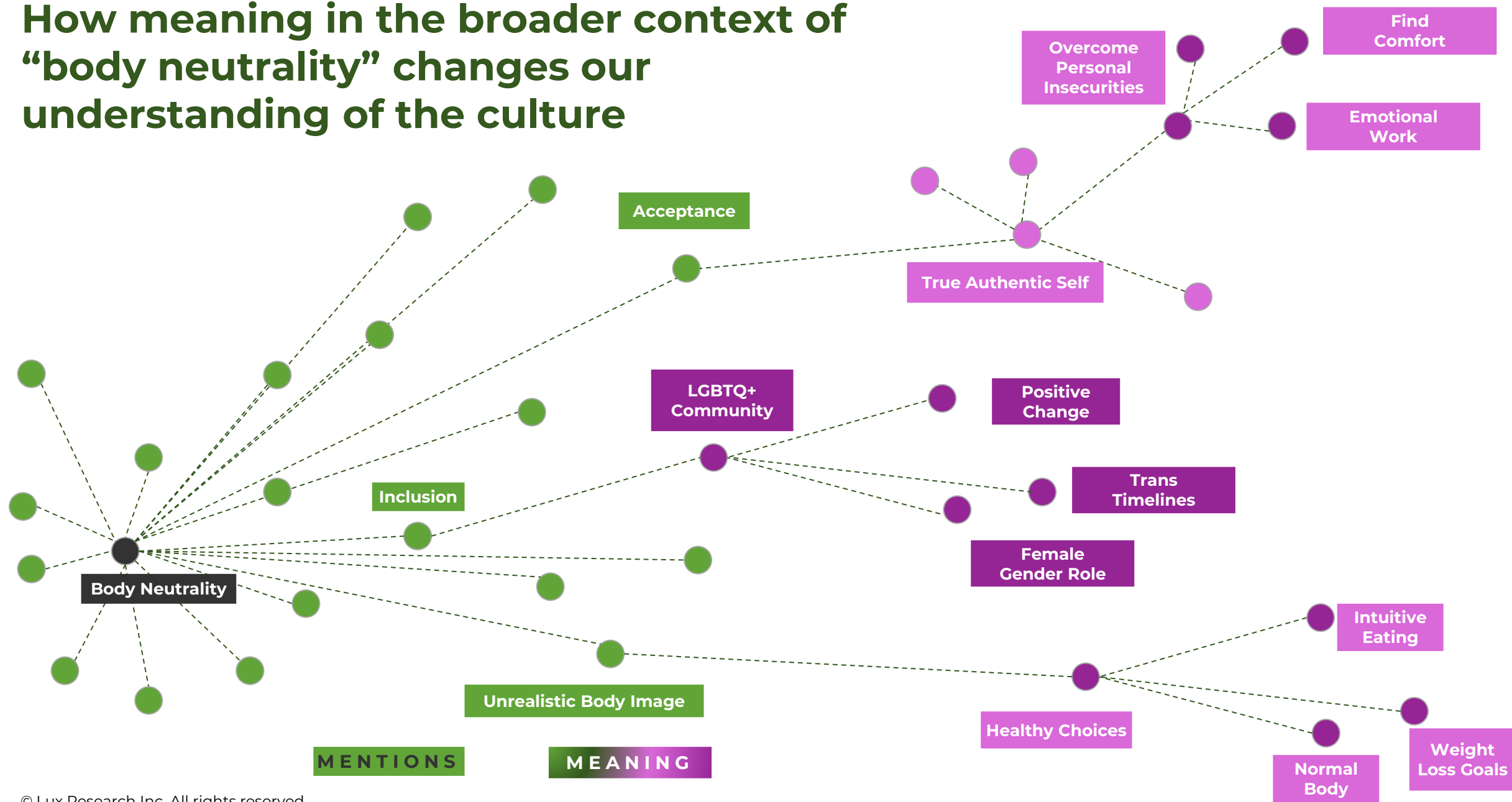
# What Lux MotivBase reveals when we explore body neutrality



# Understanding systems of meaning around “body neutrality”

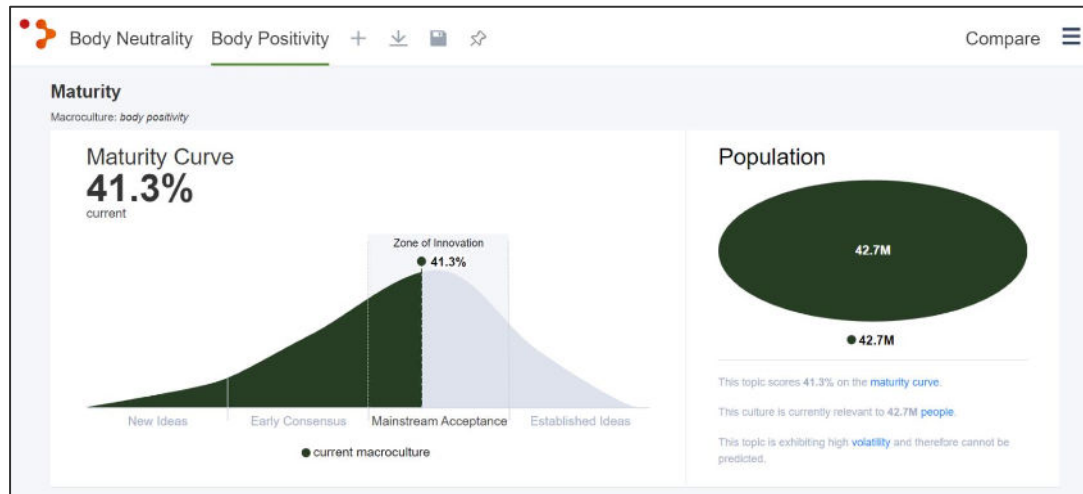


# How meaning in the broader context of “body neutrality” changes our understanding of the culture



Even though body neutrality is a lesser-known term, the meanings people associate with it are relevant to a larger portion of the population

## Body Positivity



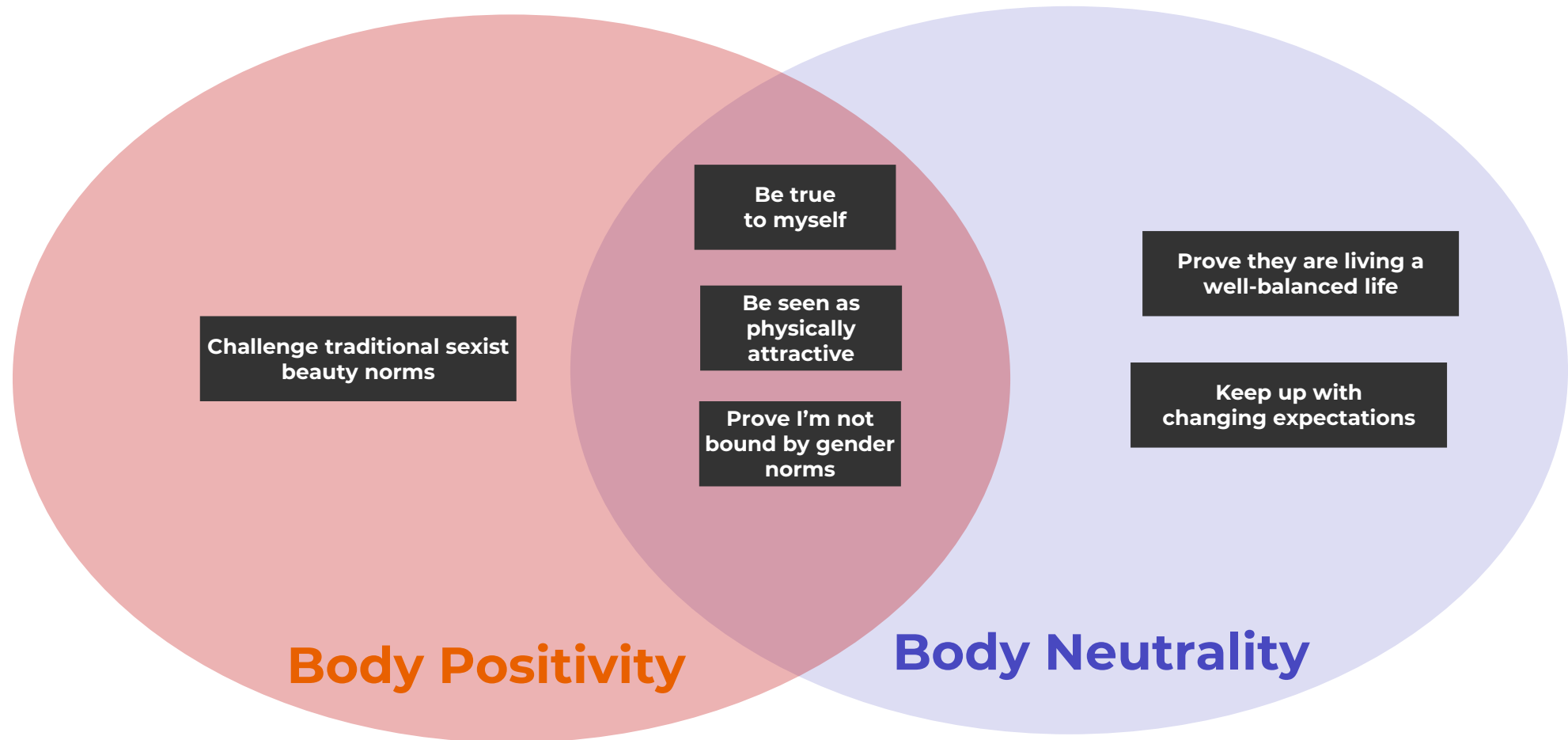
- Relevant to 42 mil. Americans
- Exhibiting no growth

## Body Neutrality



- Relevant to 63 mil. Americans
- Growing by 18% in next 24 months

## Consider the consumers' dominant motivations





## Implications

What does this mean for food, apparel, and health and wellness companies?



# Body neutrality and acceptance

## Brands & products need to consider:

“

1. **Is your brand or product promoting toxic positivity?** Don't tell people to be confident in their body shape. Few achieve that confidence. **Instead, celebrate those who are on the journey of self-discovery.**
2. **Is your brand or product telling people how to feel?** While optimism is OK, the pressure to not sometimes think and feel negative thoughts is increasingly becoming inauthentic. **Instead, help them envision your role in making positive changes.**



# Body neutrality and acceptance



## Food

- Growing interest in mindful eating and intuitive eating to develop a healthy relationship with food and their bodies.
- Skepticism of any messaging that uses guilt or shame about food.



## Apparel

- Clothes and accessories that help consumers express their authentic self no matter their gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Clothes that help consumers feel good in their bodies as they are (i.e., comfortable material and fit).



## Health & Wellness

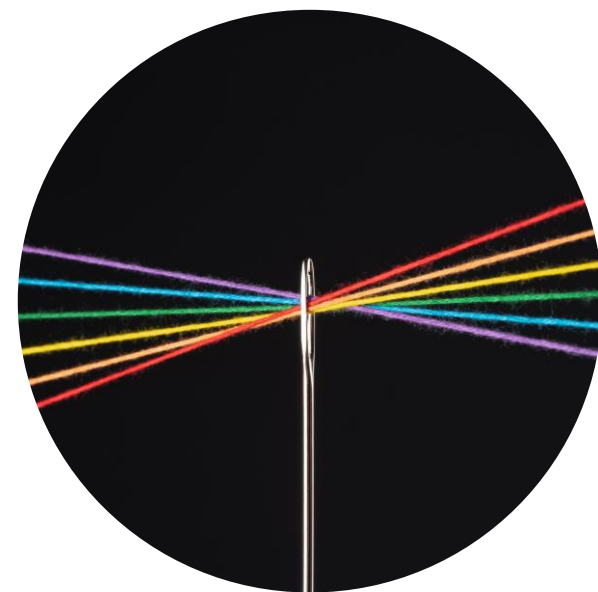
- Help consumers explore and better understand what their bodies can do rather than what they can't or what they should be able to do.
- Destigmatize mental and sexual health.
- Reinforce healthy habits with encouragement.
- Holistic medicine and approaches that offer healing with scientific backing.

# Body neutrality and inclusion

## Brands & products need to consider:

“

1. **Is your brand or product focused on a limited range of consumers and lifestyles?** Don't limit your focus to a single target consumer. **Instead, celebrate diversity with ads, imagery, and products intended for a range of consumers**, including racialized people, trans and nonbinary people, and people with disabilities.
2. **Is your brand or product pushing a single vision of health without considering consumers' lifestyles and the challenges they face?** While emphasizing health is OK, keep in mind that consumers want solutions that fit their lifestyles and want encouragement rather than judgment. **Help them find solutions that match their lifestyles and values.**



# Body neutrality and inclusion



## Food

- No forbidden foods — consumers are focused on balance; it's about inclusion rather than restriction.
- They want foods inclusive of a variety of lifestyles (e.g., vegan, gluten-free) and don't want others to be excluded for dietary reasons.
- Food security and equity growing in relevance.



## Apparel

- Continue to include a range of nontraditional models in ads and imagery.
- Go beyond messaging to more inclusive designs (inclusive sizing, adaptive clothing).
- Tailoring, customization, and made to order for increased personalization and inclusion.



## Health & Wellness

- Affirming, inclusive, and encouraging approaches to health and wellness.
- Celebrate small and incremental steps to health and wellness.
- Equipment and products for all bodies.
- Affordable solutions.

# Body neutrality and body image

## Brands & products need to consider:



1. **Is your brand or product promoting an unrealistic standard of beauty?** Don't define beauty based on an unachievable standard. **Instead, celebrate different ways of being and feeling beautiful.**
2. **Is your brand or product telling people how to look?** While celebrating consumers as they are is OK, don't try to force consumers into a box. **Instead, help them find their own voice and feel confident in their own skin.**



# Body neutrality and body image



## Food

- Looking for food to nourish their bodies, no matter how they feel about their looks.
- Food to enhance their personal performance and provide lasting energy.
- Food for self-care.
- Skepticism of messaging that uses guilt or shame about their bodies.



## Apparel

- Criticism of companies that promote unhealthy body image.
- Criticism of tokenism.
- Consumers feel seeing models that are their shape or size gives them a better idea of how clothes will fit them, especially while online shopping.



## Health & Wellness

- Avoid ads and messaging that make fun of their bodies — they increasingly see this approach as “bullying,” not tough love or inspiration.
- Interest in new ways to care for and heal their body.
- Consumers pursuing new sports and exercise to learn about what their bodies can do, not just what they should look like.



# Key takeaways

**1**

## **Stay body positive, and you risk being inauthentic**

It's not about accepting everything. Body neutrality is about accepting what's right for the individual.

**2**

## **Stay body positive, and you risk being un-inclusive**

Body neutrality is more inclusive with men and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

**3**

## **Stay body positive, and you risk promoting unhealthy lifestyles**

Body neutrality promotes celebrating what the body is capable of, which allows for promoting health and wellness.

# Thank you

A link to the webinar recording will be emailed within 24–48 hours.

## UPCOMING WEBINARS

APRIL 19

Identifying Where Algae's  
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Alternatives

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