



ANNE NOONAN

# The Power of Image

*underestimate it and suffer the consequences*

*Professional, personal and business stylist Anne Noonan knows just how vital image can be. Whether you want to impress a boss, make a statement or even stand out at that special dinner, it's all about the look and more importantly about getting it right. To help you get there, Anne has provided 10 key tips on using personal image as a tool to get noticed by those who matter.*

**1** Image is a perception – think about how others perceive you. What others say, and how you leave people feeling after you deal with them is a sure barometer.

**2** Know what colour works for you as it can be powerful. Black is safe, but colour speaks volumes. It can make you look healthy, vibrant and welcoming when chosen well or pasty, lethargic and ill when it's not.

**3** Know your unique body shape. It's far simpler than you think. No, it's not all about columns, goblets and bells. Body shape is simple and when you know your unique features, dressing it well will save you literally thousands.

**4** How's your grooming and hygiene. Nails, hair, skin, makeup and fragrance – believe me, people notice. Judgements are made immediately on grooming alone – don't let them be the wrong ones.

**5** Body language speaks louder than words. I've seen deals broken because of lousy eye contact, handshakes, conversation and general nervous behaviour at crucial moments.

**6** The written and spoken word on business cards, email etcetera. Your emails, letters, business card and your presence on social media all add up to an image of you. Bad grammar and spelling might reflect a cute personality, but in a world where image is everything, it's too risky.

**7** What shows on the outside is a reflection of what's going on inside. Your personal state of health will show in your skin, your posture, your eyes, your nails, your hair and your teeth. Your personal nutrition and health program will show in your image. How's your digestion? What's going on in the gut will show more than you think.

**8** How do you network and who do you network with? You are judged on your relationships. The office grapevine and political network is a jungle – and we haven't even touched on social networking!

**9** Behaviour and etiquette. Best not choose the office Christmas party to let the boss know how unhappy you've

been all year. It's the social events where you're observed more than ever.

**10** Dress for your audience whether it's one person or many. If the audience expects a suit, wear one. If soft knits or casual dresses are more expected, then wear them. But never, ever, ever dress down to come to another level. Always be a step above. Mind and body, health and wellness, image and self-esteem are all inextricably linked.

Just as mind and body are closely linked, so too is image and our sense of wellbeing. For example; the state of our mental health will affect our physical health and vice versa. And the state of our self-esteem affects our external image and our external image affects how we feel about ourselves.

**Here's 10 tips to stay youthful, fit, healthy for life, keep ageing at bay, boost confidence and stay full of good positive self esteem while at the same time, project a powerful image.**

**1** Cut out sugar – sugar is a reasonably recent discovery (last century) and our body is simply not designed to deal with it. Sugar and sugar related foods can be blamed for many diseases such as diabetes, coronary heart disease and cancer. If you want to age quickly, eat sugar.

**2** Moderate exercise – there's no need at all to slug it out at the gym for hours on long gruelling workouts. In fact, science proves that the excess free radical activity that's generated from over exercising can do more damage than good. Quick short bursts of good quality heart pumping exercise like dancing, swimming, walking and jogging are enough. Follow that with some resistance training to shape the torso but more importantly to give the core and upper body strength. It's vital to keep from the waist up, strong and upright. When muscles and bones are strong, we stay youthful for life and ward off diseases like osteoporosis.

**3** Stretch – so you've gone walking with a little jog, done some squats and lifted a few weights. Don't forget to stretch out those muscles that you've just worked. It's so easily forgotten. Why are

you stiff and sore later in the day or even the next day after a workout? It's because you haven't stretched. This simple and enjoyable activity after exercising - or even if you don't exercise - will help elongate muscles and improve flexibility.

**4** Meditate and visualise – I can't stress how incredible the effects of meditation and visualisation are. What body and what level of health and fitness do you want? What do you want from life? Meditate on it. Visualise it and believe it. It's powerful. It's an amazing way to de-stress and change what you want to change in your life.

**5** Detoxify – the main organs of detoxification in the body are the lungs, bowel and skin. It's well worth detoxing the body a couple of times a year and not with chemicals and tablets you buy over the counter. What's the point of putting chemicals into the body that promise to send chemicals out? There is no detoxing program out there that will rid the body of all the lead, mercury and petrochemicals we carry. But a healthy detox (see your naturopath) is very successful in ridding the body of many of those same chemicals. It improves your skin, makes you feel much lighter, improves energy and you feel the benefits of it for weeks afterwards.

**6** Know your personal colouring – colour is powerful and spiritual. When you stand naked and look in the mirror you emit a certain colour. When wearing a colour that clashes with what comes from you naturally we have a tendency to look ill, tired and listless. Not the message we want to send out to the world. We want to attract the world to us and the use of colour is instrumental. When wearing colours that enhance us, we look vibrant, healthy and welcoming. It then attracts compliments and in turn boosts our esteem.

**7** Know your body shape - you'll save thousands of dollars on the right clothing when you know what suits you. Cuts, shape and lengths are all crucial to fit. Think of architecture. To create a beautiful building needs a blueprint and a floor plan. Knowing our shape and how to dress it is a little like the blueprint for the amazing creation that is our body.

**8** Take good quality vitamins – the debate about whether we need vitamins will go on forever, but my personal opinion based on experience and medical facts are – take good quality vitamins. We hold toxins in our body, most of us don't eat organic, we're stressed out, we take over the counter drugs and antibiotics, we breath in car fumes, we work in air conditioning and we absorb chemicals from the air and from food. In order to prevent the ageing affects of premature disease you need a good quality supplement. Some of the best for an anti-ageing affect are good quality omega three fats, grape seed extract, coenzyme Q10 for skin and heart, Resveratrol (the fountain of youth) and a good quality probiotic for a healthy gut.

**9** Use paraben free, antioxidant laden, mineral oil free skincare – never underestimate the anti-ageing affects of clean, exfoliated, well moisturised skin. Remember, the skin is a detoxification organ - we sweat out toxins. Our skin is a barometer of what's going on inside us. Health problems show in our skin and it's the difference between looking 40 when you're 50 or looking 50 when you're 40.

**10** Have a massage at the very least three times a year. Massage is particularly beneficial for the ageing affects of stress. There's something very therapeutic about the stimulation of the skin, the circulatory system, the lymph system. Whether you massage for reasons of sports injury, pain or deep relaxation, it's proven to lift spirits, boost endorphin release, deeply moisturise dry skin and de-stress.

Remember – whatever is going on inside us is a true reflection of what's happening on the outside. And whatever image is being projected to the outside is a reflection of our health and self-esteem on the inside.

*Anne Noonan is an image consultant who runs her own business - Reset, Reshape and Restyle. She helps women regain confidence, dictate their own style, improve health and attract the right attention*

