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“Bà béo ơi!” My short stubby legs smashed the floor with each stride, hurrying to meet the commands of my Vietnamese father.

At just the tender age of seven, I had already become accustomed to these nicknames—“con heo”, piggy; “Marilyn mập”, plump Marilyn; and “bà béo”, fat women, the title my parents had personally bestowed upon me.

After all, compared to my three sisters, with their slim waists and slender arms, my body was built like a Roblox character. Fat oozed out from my cheeks, streamed down my neck, and settled around my abdomen. With a beer-like belly, I struggled to walk, my blubber bouncing, overwhelming any ability to move swiftly. Even the arguably skinniest part of my body—my ankles—swelled during any physical activity.

Thus, it soon became apparent that I couldn’t pass on the hand-me-downs from my older sister to my younger sisters; the tight stylish clothes that accentuated her curves strangled around my gushing love handles. Instead, the custom skipped over me, and I turned to oversized clothing, drowning my body in its bulky, awkward sizing.

However, in the fifth grade, when my weight reached its peak, my parents sent me off to the nearby swim team. The six days a week, fifteen minutes of “dry land” warm-ups, and one-hour long swim practices, proved to be incredibly effective. Within two years, I had shed a tremendous amount of mass and...I was finally underweight!

Unfortunately, it was also at that time I made a grave mistake. At a time where the fad was seeing if you could wrap your thumb and middle-finger around your wrist successfully, I had made the comment, “I did it! I guess I’m skinny.” Skinny? SKINNY? I was *only* at a BMI of 17.2. As I obsessed myself at night with that memory, that once unforgettable number of pure bliss vanished. After all, while my classmates had waists smaller than mines, skinnier legs, sharper cheekbones, and delicate curves, my rectangle body-shape still remained.

Even now, that recollection torments me...there is no happy ending. The past four years of correcting my mindset has only resulted in miniscule progress.

Just as exemplified in my experience, body dysmorphia is a condition primed by constant exposure to negative remarks about weight. Curing this mindset takes time, however, preventing it doesn’t. If social media influencers and family/friends stop correcting a person’s body, body dysmorphia can be erased.