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FUN

I Went to a Sex-Positive Nude Resort, And It Improved My Body Image More Than I Could Have Imagined

A place that welcomes any type of naughty behavior is good for the soul.

MELISSA HENDERSON · 3 HOURS AGO

"What's your definition of self-love?" my friend Rebecca asked me.

"It's an awareness of how your actions, your whole being, affect the people you come in contact with," I responded.

Another friend smirked at me and said, "Oh, really? You want to talk about self-awareness? Your stomach was hanging out last night and it looked like you were pregnant. I didn't tell you to suck it in because I knew you would get mad."

I was baffled because a conversation that wasn't about [body image](#) at first turned into one that was about body image unintentionally, intentionally. But our conversation about self-love had everything to do with body image and the way women care so much about their outer appearance, especially the stomach area, that it subsequently affects sexuality.

I'll be the first one to admit that dealing with body image issues is the norm in my social circles and it's a concern that adds to many women's daily stress levels.

"Suck in your stomach!" my ballet teacher would say to me in high school.

"Hold in your gut," my grandma would say to me and my aunts on the way to church.

In today's internet culture, women are still being nude-shamed for embracing their bodies in the public space. We saw this with [the Kim K photo](#), breastfeeding in public news stories, and the #freethenipple social campaign. There's a developing school of thought in feminism that believes that nudity is one of the pathways of true sexual freedom and #liberation. This is Third Wave Feminism: The idea that using one's sexual prowess is the key to success, confidence and living the best life in one's career and personal life.

So when I got invited to a "Naughty Girls Getaway" at the [Hedonism II Resort](#), the number-one nudist resort in Jamaica, I thought it was the perfect time to challenge myself to let go of everything people have told me about body image and truly feel empowered to go about my day with less clothes on. I wanted to feel good about feeling sexual even if, for me, that translates into posting a sexy picture on Instagram.

There would be no better place to truly be nude than in a judgment-free zone like Hedo II. This is where self-confidence and relationships are made, broken, and tested. An open mind would be a key to success here.

Here's what I learned.



Day 1: Bare Flesh, Threesomes, and Playful Energy

Lesson: Fall into nude formation and you will feel more comfortable.

All kinds of people come to Hedo II. There's a huge sea of hedonists from the U.S., Canada, and Europe who vacation here every year. While I was at Hedo II, I came across doctors, lawyers, therapists, strippers, and old people who righteously DGAF. I think anyone can find pleasure at this resort not because it's clothing optional, but because it truly feels like paradise, and the Jamaican people who take care of their land are amazing hosts.

The first surfer naked in the flesh of my naughty getaway was spotted during the resort tour.

"And to the left, we have the clothing-optional pool area," said Leethan from the hotel staff in a regal Jamaican accent. Five minutes later and at a different part of the property, I couldn't escape the sight of naked people.

They were everywhere — in the calm Jamaica waters, by the bar, in the dining hall, and on the beach, which was located a few yards from my hotel room.

My view was nude, and if I'm being honest, I was a little uncomfortable because of their boldness and friendliness, but I knew I had to get over myself. After all, this is a place where being nude is welcomed.



The [Hedonism Resort](#) is as kinky as it sounds. During the tour, we got a glimpse of the clothing-optional playroom where most people show up nude to indulge in some sort of promiscuous activity. It's as big as one floor of a mansion, with like 10 rooms, with no doors. There's huge open room that could accompany a pool but instead there's nothing by beds with white linens. It's like a *Miami Vice*-meets-airy bedroom feel. Another room is built like a dominatrix dungeon equipped with chains for bondage activity, like in [Fifty Shades of Grey](#).

As someone who previously got freaked out by seeing naked people at the gym and who barely walks in her own apartment in the nude, I was getting anxiety about talking to nude strangers at Hedo II. Trying to summon a real conversation with someone whose titties and ball sack are jiggling all out in the open like a '90s LL Cool J video was completely new territory for me, and it was only happening under the influence of a few martinis. So to the bar I went.

I met a dentist at the bar who was giving me major threesome vibes. We were the only people fully clothed and waiting for our drinks surrounded by other (nude) people who were waiting for their drinks. Mr. Dentist had on one of those Hawaiian collared vacation shirts, and when I saw him and his wife again on a nude boat ride to Rick's Cafe, they were lingering around me as I danced to reggae music in a tiny bikini. I felt the dentist and his wife's eyes on my ass the whole time I twerked. It didn't feel weird because there were naked people on the boat twerking as well.



For some reason, after that boat ride, I felt sexy in my wet swimsuit, so I took it a little further by stripping down to my bare skin and hopping in the personal Jacuzzi outside my room. I lit a jay and greeted people passing by my bungalow. As I watched the sunset, I thought about all the naked people I saw and how comfortable they were with their bodies. Of course, no one was walking around looking like Beyoncé, but I think I found comfort in the fact that we are all different shapes and sizes, as cliché as that sounds.



Day 2: Surprises

Lesson: Embrace what's weird about you and be present.

The next morning, I made my way to breakfast in 90-degree island weather, and Playboy Radio was broadcasting a live show in the main dining hall. "We have the [Playful Pussycats](#) here at Hedo II today, y'all!" I heard the broadcaster say as I waited for my omelet in another tiny bikini.

It was also fetish day for the parties that usually take place at night, so I knew I was bound to see some wild stuff. One of the girls on my #hedogirlsgetaway group said she saw one of the Playful Pussycats go up to another one of their group members (they were wearing matching shirts) and stick her finger right up her vagina! Another one of my girlfriends said there was a cake and ice cream table situation by a pool, where people staying at the resort were inviting guests to have cake and ice cream eaten off of their bodies. She indulged and loved every minute of that activity.

That night, during dinner, the resort staff put on a burlesque show, and I'm sure many people in the audience were creaming in their fetish-inspired costumes after watching that performance. One particular act that stood out the most was "the milky bath routine," which took place in a plastic kiddie pool.



One of the rooms at Hedo II's Playroom.

One of the babes from the hotel staff danced around in a strappy leather bathing suit that covered only her nipples and vagina. It was an outfit Beyoncé would wear on stage, and it was actually being sold in the resort's gift shop, which is where I purchased my spandex dress for the night. It was an extreme show that featured sexy, chocolate muscular men pouring milk all over "Miss Kitty." No pictures are allowed, so you'll have to see it for your own eyes or just think of the sexiest thing you can do in a tub without actually having sex.

But Hedonism II is not just an overtly sexual place full of exhibitionists. It's more like a sexually liberating place where being naked and sexual is highly suggested. I saw a lady giving her man a blowjob in the calm waters during sunset. There are secret coves to duck into for quickies and steamy pools everywhere. The resort is seductively quiet, but if you go searching, you will find your pleasure. I'm not going to kiss and tell here, but just know that a place that welcomes any type of naughty behavior is good for the soul.

I told myself I wasn't going to have sex because this was a trip for myself, and so my [Chakrubs](#) served as a cure if and when I needed something extra. After an erotic dance experience with a certain "chocolate thunder" stripper left me, um, totally caught off guard (this was my first stripper experience and I was excited to see the real deal so much I forgot to wear underwear!), I walked back to my hotel room alone, immediately stripped out of all my clothes and hopped in my Jacuzzi to smoke again, because I'm in my #2016Melissa stage. This wasn't the first time I've abstained. I remember laughing and thinking to myself, "Oh, Hedonism."

Day 3: #Liberated

Lesson: You adopt to the culture; you don't bring your own.

Even at Hedonism II, I feel like the black female body is sacred, and so it took me a while to fully find the confidence to go completely naked in public in broad daylight — even if I was never going to see any of the people at this resort ever again.

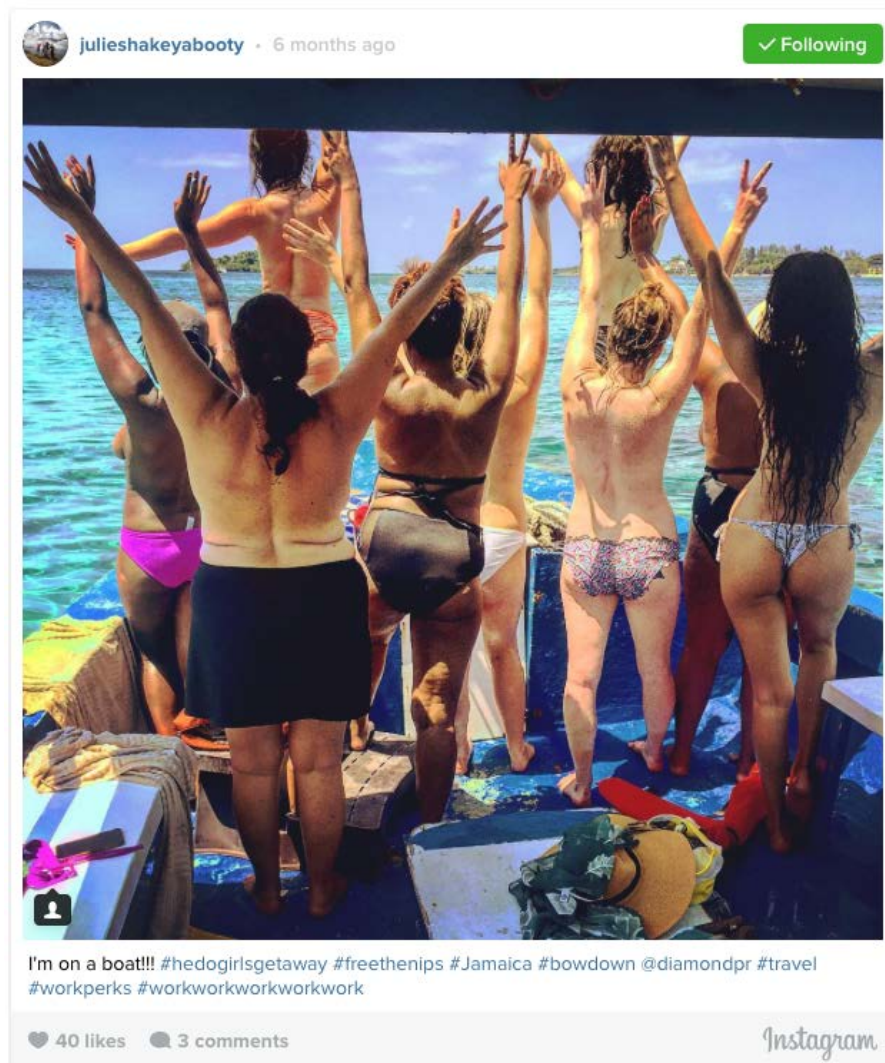
Just the politics of a female body in metropolitan cities is super controversial and with the release of Beyoncé's visual album *Lemonade* and my own internal issues, I felt like I was still being watched and judged. Or was I? Was this just all made up in my head?



After I went snorkeling topless, I felt so much more comfortable with the #hedogirlsgetaway group I traveled to Jamaica with. It turned into a boozy trip about building and displaying self-love in a safe environment. I didn't worry about getting catcalled like I would at home because I was topless. I didn't once think about sucking my stomach in. I stopped caring that I was the black girl and about how my body is perceived to the non-black eye. I wasn't looking to get catcalled for going topless. I mean, the least I could do was show my boobs at this resort. I didn't want to be told to suck in my stomach. I didn't want people staring me down for being the black girl that stands out. Instead, I found that I wanted to be free to do shit at my own liberty and show what I wanted to show — nothing more or less. I wanted to run around the resort naked after I found comfort in the kinky setup during fetish night and our chocolate surprise that had me creaming in my already-wet bikini and wanting more.

My nude moment came at sunrise, in the morning just when the sun was rising. I got out of bed naked, opened my blinds, opened the sliding patio doors that led to my beachfront personal jacuzzi, and stepped out for my morning wake and bake. Instead of reaching back when I saw hotel staff, I tiptoed to the beach naked, which was only about 100 feet from my room. I dipped my feet in the water, waded a little, then calmly walked back to my personal jacuzzi. The truly naked moment lasted less than 10 minutes!

People who come to Hedo want to be free to do whatever without judgment. You adopt to the culture; you don't bring your own. Try it and you'll stand out like a sore thumb. That was me on day one and day two. I was freaked out at first by all the nudity, but it became beautiful when I let go physically and mentally. Besides, I didn't have to wear half my wardrobe I packed for the trip!



Day 4: Your Body, Your Prerogative

Lesson: Manifest your pleasure with good thoughts and sexy scenery.

A boat pulled up beach side to usher resort guests to another resort for drinks at sunset. This is where the diversity of the resort showed its true colors. I couldn't stop looking at the only older black couple on the boat (and the resort for that matter). I kept sneaking glances of their nude bodies on the boat. They were leisurely playing with each other's private areas as they stared out to the sea. It was beautiful. The female's hair was unruly and curly, her body was normal and existing in the nude.



Honestly, I couldn't tell how old she was — maybe in her early 30s? She got up to dance nude to Rihanna's "Work" and I stared shamelessly, like the dentist who kept checking me out. At that moment, I realized that clothes definitely can make the person, but it's you who can make the rules.

After a clothing-mandatory drink at Sandals, we loaded back on to our small boat, and within a minute, the Hedo II boat went nude again. And here is when I realized I was ready to manifest popular ideas at Hedo II in my own life, outside of the resort.

Posting a nude selfie on social media should be viewed the same way as a sexy selfie or a “free the nipple” moment. Wearing whatever you want should not depend on being catcalled. Twerking should just be viewed as another dance routine where your ass is the main focus and you go crazy because you are woke about your body and feel good letting loose.

In other words: Being nude is beautiful, nude is normal, nude is life. Once those ideas are set, anything else is just extra.

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