1948

Mirror, Mirror On the Wall

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Recommended Citation
Olson, Emogene (1948) "Mirror, Mirror On the Wall," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 28 : No. 6 , Article 4.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol28/iss6/4
On the stage, every movement counts. It's the same in everyday life. Actresses have directors to coach them to be graceful but you have to be your own director and do your own analyzing.

A full length mirror is your honest critic. Try standing, sitting and walking in front of the mirror just as you naturally would. Then you can see what needs correcting.

Too many women think they are standing up straight when really they have their shoulders too far back, their hips back, the stomach forward and their knees stiff.

New York fashion and modeling schools teach that good posture should start with the head. Pull it up out of your shoulders. Bring it up from the crown, not by turning your face upward.

**Lift Your Diaphragm**

Then lift your ribs and diaphragm out of your waist and at the same time keep your shoulders relaxed. If you want to check your posture, back up against a wall. Stand with one foot slightly in front of the other and if your backbone touches the wall all the way from the hips to the neck you have the basis for perfect posture.

Of all the moves a woman makes, seating herself is likely to be the most ungraceful. Watch yourself in the mirror while you are getting into a chair. Are you bent in the middle and poking your rear into the chair. The graceful way is to place one foot slightly back of the other and bend your knees forward. Using leg power only, you lower yourself to the seat.

Getting out of a chair may be either hard or easy. The easy way is the graceful way. When a woman clutches the arms and hoists herself heavily up and out, she looks stiff and awkward. The right way is to slip one foot behind the other, push on it and you rise gracefully erect.

Once the body is in line, the problem of setting it in motion is much easier. The outstanding walking faults are hip swaying, arm swinging, too long or short steps and uneven motion. The easiest way to see what you have to correct is to walk slowly toward a full length mirror, watching what you do not only with your legs and arms, but also with your body. Many women move forward in sections—head, shoulders, hips, legs and feet. The easiest way to correct this disjointed, uneven movement is to think where you are going; imagine falling straight forward in that direction, then catch yourself from falling by moving your legs and feet.

Your walk should be easy, smooth and graceful, a natural yet deliberate movement with its tempo keyed to your personality. It should be conscious, like dancing or swimming, until such time as it becomes second nature to you and can be forgotten.