



**national association
to advance
fat acceptance**

NAAFA Newsletter

August
2016

In This Issue

[Seek Acceptance or Demand Fat Rights?](#)

[NAAFA Chronicles](#)

[Faces of NAAFA Update](#)

[Speak Up; Don't Be Shy](#)

[Balance](#)

[Media and Research Roundup](#)

Seek Acceptance or Demand Fat Rights?



by Darliene Howell

NAAFA receives messages and questions from people all over the world. A recent question prompted some serious thought and I wanted to share it with you and ask for your input.

A young woman from Scandinavia asked about membership, but also included this question:

Why do you ask to be accepted?

Why do not you, like the black movement, demand fat equal rights?

After answering her regarding membership, the following was my answer to the question above:

You ask a very interesting and thought-provoking question regarding why ask for acceptance and not demand fat rights. I don't know that I have a clear answer for you.

What's one word to describe your body?

[August Video of the Month](#)

This month's video takes an interesting look at body satisfaction and age. What word would you use to describe your body?

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=LdEHQHFrIKE>

Quick Links

[NAAFA.org](#)
[NAAFA-CC.org](#)

Facebook

[Main](#)

[Cause](#)

[SF Bay](#)

[Capital](#)

[Orange County](#)

[Los Angeles](#)

[Clark County](#)

[End Bullying Now](#)

Twitter

[MySpace](#)

Health At Every Size and HAES are registered trademarks of the Association for Size Diversity and Health, and are used with permission.

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

With the creation of NAAFA as a non-profit organization, our constitution named its purpose as "to promote more tolerance and understanding from society," with its mission "to change perceptions of fat and end size discrimination through advocacy, education, and support." The advocacy that is being conducted is through talking with legislators, education through public education, and education and support of our membership.

I believe that the "Black Lives Matter" type of protest and movement is looking to force enforcement of laws that are already written in American law; non-discrimination based on color/race. Their demands come from a strong group of people and a lot of emotion [passion] backing them in their efforts to change how they, as a minority group, are being treated (especially by law enforcement).

I see some basic differences in our separate movements in that, although there is a growing number of fat people, there is no cohesiveness amongst our group. Fat people are not united in their beliefs that they are being discriminated against as a whole. Many are stuck in the ideals that society/industry feeds them: that all they have to do to be "normal" or "acceptable" is to lose weight, then their lives will be wonderful and they will be fulfilled. So how do you demand change when the group itself is not united in the belief that change is needed?

I'm not saying that you are wrong that we shouldn't do so. I wish we were at a point in time where we would stand united and demand that we be recognized as a protected group under federal law. I just don't think we're there yet. So groups like NAAFA continue the work we are doing to make changes in the lives of not only our members but all people, no matter your size.

Thank you again for asking that question and thank you for your support of size acceptance and of NAAFA.

So, let me ask your thoughts on these questions: What should we do to demand equal rights for fat people? What are YOU willing to do? Write to me at naafa-secretary@outlook.com and let me know if you are willing to share your thoughts in our next NAAFA Newsletter.

NAAFA Chronicles

by Peggy Howell

This is the sixth in the NAAFA Chronicles series: historic newsletters that chronicle the history of NAAFA and the size acceptance movement, scanned for your reading pleasure. The newsletters are saved to a "Chronicles" file in the newsletter section of the NAAFA website. I hope you enjoy this opportunity to learn what those who have gone before us have done and the progress we have made.

This was NAAFA's sixth newsletter, the November-December, 1971 issue: http://www.naafaonline.com/newsletterstuff/oldnewsletterstuff/Chronicles/November-December_1971_Newsletter.pdf

Faces of NAAFA Update

by Tigress Osborn

At the time of this writing, almost two dozen NAAFA members and supporters (so far!) have submitted photos for our #FacesOfNAAFA social media campaign to help us push back against the media's use of Headless Fatties as their main visual representations of fat people. Submitters include past and present NAAFA board members, long-time activists, performers, speakers, body positive media favorites, and super-size models. Many submissions and posts from supporters who shared about the project included notes underscoring the project intention—we're tired of the media's use of headless fatties to represent us. Posts about the project also generated discussion of the Headless Fatty trope. (By the way, the term Headless Fatty was coined by Dr. Charlotte Cooper, and you can read the first article in which she used that phrase on her blog, here: <http://charlottecooper.net/publishing/digital/headless-fatties-01-07/>)



Friends and supporters, like Body Positive TED Talker Amy Pence-Brown, have also used their own pages to promote #FacesOfNAAFA. Pence-Brown said she was "honored" to participate and sees telling many people about the work of NAAFA and other fat right organizations as a way to help move people along the spectrum from more general body positivity to more political fat liberation. Chrystal Bougon of Curvy Girl Lingerie shared with her Facebook network of almost 200,000 people because, in her words, "There is nothing that pisses me off more than seeing fat

HEADLESS bodies on the news!" SSBBW fashion model (and two-time NAAFA convention fashion show model) Saucye West signed on because she's also tired of dehumanizing photos in media reports. "#FacesOfNAAFA is important because we will not be used as objects for shaming anymore. We have a right to not be objectified in a negative light. And we are proud to show our faces and own our space," she says.

To see the pics, find our Faces of NAAFA photo folder on Facebook or add @naafaofficial on Instagram. Haven't sent your pic in? We'd still love to see your face! Just send a photo to naafasurvey@gmail.com. Remember, your pic will be shared without your name or other identifying information (unless you choose to tag yourself in the pic on social media). Pics received by August 1 were included in the first #FacesOfNAAFA collage, but we'd love to make another! Send your pic in today!

Speak Up; Don't Be Shy



by Peggy Howell

Until a recent fall, I was blessed to not have spent a night in a hospital in 28 years. Even my lumpectomy 10 years ago was more or less drive through; I was taken to the hospital at 6:00 am and was having dinner in a restaurant with friends that evening. The drugs were powerful!

I have semi-annual doctor's visits that include the appropriate routine tests, x-rays, etc. I have advocated for myself with regard to finding equipment that will accommodate my weight,

which never occurred to healthcare scheduling staff as an issue until the day I showed up for the test and had to be re-scheduled at a different facility because the equipment would not accommodate my weight.

In mid-May of this year I tripped on a yellow speed bump in an asphalt parking lot and fell flat on my face, resulting in multiple breaks to my right elbow. I was admitted to the hospital on Thursday evening, had surgery on Saturday and was sent to a rehab facility on Sunday afternoon. During my hospital stay, I had only one issue that was size-related.

Before releasing me from the hospital, my surgeon requested a CT scan of my elbow. Because of my size, I could not lay on the bed of the machine with my arm/elbow beside me. The technicians informed me that I should lie on my left side with my right elbow extending behind me so they could get a clear shot of the repair to my elbow.

Because of the way they positioned my arms and hands, my left arm bumped the side of the tube and moved my right arm each time they tried to move me into the tube. They were about to reposition me again when I spoke up. I explained how the positioning of my arms was the problem and suggested that they position my right arm against my body with the left arm/hand on top. When the left arm was pushed by the wall of the tube, it should slide over the top of my right hand and not move the right arm. They tried my suggestion and got the shot they were seeking.

Healthcare providers are generally trying their best to provide patients of all sizes with good care but they have not been trained well in the care of large bodies. You know your body and what works best for you more than anyone. Don't be afraid to speak up when you are having an experience that would work better another way. Help them help you. If you are too shy or afraid to speak up, have a friend or family member advocate for you. NAAFA has created a [brochure that you are free to copy and take to your healthcare providers, Guidelines for healthcare providers who treat fat patients](#). It will make everyone's experience a better one.

Balance



by Cinder Ernst

Next month I will be cruising in the Mediterranean! I got tired of saying I've never been to Europe and decided to do something about that. In researching Seville, Spain I came across this quote:

"Strong enough to support the roof, but delicate enough to quiver in the soft night breeze".

That is how the locals in Seville, Spain describe the beautifully intricate (all silver and candles) float of their patron Saint. That quote makes me feel alive and beautiful. At my age and my place in life, I feel like it describes me emotionally and spiritually. It also describes how I want my body to be . . . strong enough to support me and supple enough to move me gracefully where I want to go.

Sounds like balance to me. How do I find it?

I am always checking in with my body to know what to do next. What sort of exercise or movement is for me today? Do I need more rest? More water? More social life? More quiet?

I ask myself this question: **What would a person who is willing to be happy and healthy do next?**

Sometimes the answer is read a book, take a walk, call a friend, take a nap, box, ride my bike, eat . . .

Write down the question (be sure to use the conditional tense and the word "willing"). Ponder it, answer it and take your next small, sweet step. If the answer feels lovely and friendly you are on the right track.

As always, email me at coach@cinderernst.com if you need help with this.

Media and Research Roundup

by Bill and Terri Weitze

July 3, 2016: A study on how often women in their 30s have sex found that obese women have more sex more frequently than their thinner peers.
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26036273>

July 20, 2016: Emily Baines discusses a run-in between Whitney Way Thore (star of *My Big Fat Fabulous Life*) and comedian Kerryn Feehan (first link), when Feehan made some fat-phobic remarks during a guest appearance on a radio show where Thore interned. Thore continues to be an activist for positive body image and has a TedX talk on the subject (second link).
<http://hellogiggles.com/body-shaming-comedian>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aaXBYcfVYZM>

July 22, 2016: People with lipodystrophy, a rare genetic disorder, are thin but suffer from the same conditions that are associated with being fat such as high cholesterol, fatty liver disease, and type 2 diabetes. Scientists have found a clue into why some fat people are metabolically healthy and how this knowledge could help everyone be healthier.
<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/26/health/skinny-fat.html>

July 24, 2016: Laura Bogart is fat, and she is okay with that. She shares her journey to fat acceptance and the lessons learned along the way. (Comments on this page are the usual sort of fat shaming, though.)
http://www.salon.com/2013/07/25/i_choose_to_be_fat

July 24, 2016: Kim Brittingham blogs about getting a big tattoo on her big, fat upper arm, and why this would have been unthinkable in her youth, but how her body acceptance now helps her celebrate all of herself.
<http://www.hipsandcurves.com/blog/got-tatt-big-fat-upper-arm>

July 27, 2016: *Ka Leo O Hawai'i*, the campus newspaper of the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, explains that the body positive movement is not the promotion of fatness, but rather a "feel-good cause" for people who don't fit society's ideal.
http://www.kaleo.org/opinion/the-plus-size-movement-does-not-promote-obesity/article_b5bad950-51ea-11e6-b968-873605b52027.html

July 28, 2016: Dawn Clifford, PhD, RD, speaks about being a competitive swimmer who fell short of Olympic glory because of her height, and how her experience supports the HAES (Health at Every Size) approach.
<https://healthateverysizeblog.org/2016/07/28/the-haes-filesconfessions-of-an-olympian-wannabe>

August 1, 2016: Enjoy a promo for (Australian) ABC TV's show *You Can't Ask That*, with questions fat people often have to deal with and featuring the great Kath Read.
<https://www.facebook.com/ABCTV/videos/10157147594590543>

August 2, 2016: Researchers find that being underweight as you get older may put you at greater risk for dementia and a faster decline in those with Alzheimer's disease.
<http://www.laboratoryequipment.com/news/2016/08/lower-weight-late-life-may-increase-risk-alzheimers-disease>
<http://content.iospress.com/articles/journal-of-alzheimers-disease/jad150987>

August 2, 2016: Sarai Walker discusses how after always holding back in her writing, she was able to finally let go and write *Dietland*.
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/aug/02/sarai-walker-i-stopped-holding-back-and-my-writing-had-a-new-energy>

August 3, 2016: Comparing the recently released 2011-2014 U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Anthropometric Reference Data report with comparable data from 1988-1994, the average American weighs about 15 pounds more. Not really news though, since this gain happened in the 1990s for the most part (3rd link).
https://medlineplus.gov/news/fullstory_160233.html
http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/series/sr_03/sr03_039.pdf
<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1832542>

August 3, 2016: Skepchick's Rebecca Watson comments on how the media is covering a small study that looks at brain function in people of various sizes. You'll be shocked to learn that the media got it completely wrong.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtOidvI10Zc>
<http://journal.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/fnins.2016.00234/full>

August 4, 2016: A study of changes in the structure of the brain finds that increasing BMI is not associated with global cortical changes, but may affect thinning of the cortex in two areas. Guess how the media did reporting this one?

<http://www.bbc.com/news/health-36975089>

<http://www.nature.com/ijo/journal/v40/n7/full/ijo201642a.html>

August 4, 2016: Some people in the UK with an eating disorder may be refused treatment if their BMI is too high. Of the 44 mental health trusts in the UK, one-third said they use BMI to decide if a patient qualifies for outpatient treatment.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/health-36956849>

August 4, 2016: Elizabeth Daniels, PhD explains how sexualizing female images can lead to body dissatisfaction, while showing images of female athletes in action are empowering to young women.

<https://healthateverysizeblog.org/2016/08/04/the-haes-files-shes-strong-and-powerful-and-so-am-i>

August 5, 2016: Presenting research results at the American Psychological Association's 124th Annual Convention, Bryan Karazsia, PhD, reports that over the past 31 years body dissatisfaction by women has been decreasing.

http://www.upi.com/Health_News/2016/08/05/Body-acceptance-rises-for-women/7781470419191

<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2016/08/bodies-weight.aspx>

<http://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2016/08/body-dissatisfaction.pdf>

August 5, 2016: Chrissy Metz, fresh from appearing on *American Horror Story: Freak Show*, will be starring in a new NBC dramedy this fall, playing a woman with more going on in her life than her size.

<https://www.yahoo.com/style/american-horror-story-star-demanding-155457507.html>

August 5, 2016: Fran Hayden discusses the evidence that anti-obesity campaigns often have the opposite effect as intended, and how a positive self image is more healthy for both the body and the mind.

<http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/finally-a-study-that-confirms-what-i-knew-all-along-fat-acceptance-is-good-for-our-health-10440615.html>

August 9, 2016: In a study of twins who have a BMI difference of at least 7.0 and with one twin having a BMI of at least 30, there was no increased risk of heart attack or death for the heavier twin; however, there was an increased risk of diabetes.

<http://www.foodnavigator.com/Science/Increased-BMI-not-linked-to-increased-heart-attack-risk-twin-study-shows>

<http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2540539>

August 11, 2016: In this video, women share actual comments made to them by loved ones, strangers, doctors, and teachers about their bodies and weight with the ultimate message that "You are not alone. You are seen. You are heard. You are appreciated. You are loved just as you are."

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/13-women-share-the-unbelievably-fatphobic-sht-people-say-to-them_us_57acbca6e4b0718404102e5c

August 11, 2016: Fat activist Charlotte Cooper looks back to the 1970s for this powerful video by the Fat Underground. Although forty years have passed, this video is fully relevant today because progress has been so slow.

<https://obesitytimebomb.blogspot.co.uk/2016/08/watch-1979-fat-underground-video.html>

August 12, 2016: Michelle Carter is a big, strong woman and she is now a gold medalist, earning the first gold medal ever for women's shot put for the United States, and breaking the US record.

<http://www.nbcolympics.com/news/michelle-carter-wins-womens-shot-put-gold-medal>

Founded in 1969, NAAFA, the National Association to Advance Fat Acceptance, is a non-profit human rights organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for fat people. NAAFA works to eliminate discrimination based on body size and provide fat people with the tools for self-empowerment through public education, advocacy, and member support.

On the web: <http://www.naafa.org>
Comments: pr@naafa.org