



**national association
to advance
fat acceptance**

NAAFA Newsletter

July 2016

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A recent *Cosmopolitan* Magazine article in support of JCPenney's new campaign for their plus-size clothing includes a video that is "magical" in Cosmo's words. I must agree. If you haven't seen it yet, please enjoy now!

www.cosmopolitan.com/style-beauty/news/a60123/jcpenney-plus-size-clothing-commercial

We Want to See Your Faces



by Tigress Osborn

We've all seen them. You're watching TV or flipping through a magazine and there they are. Maybe it's a story about baring it all at the beach. Maybe it's a report about (cue scary music) "The! Obesity! Epidemic!" You never know where you'll encounter them in the media, but you will encounter them. They are . . . the Headless Fatties!

Often carrying food, sometimes struggling to walk, frequently slumped; the Headless Fatties are a cautionary tale. OMG, what if you had a belly like

that? Would you ever leave the house with those arms? The Headless Fatty trope is not just anti-fat -- it is often classist, ableist, sexist and racist, too. The subtext is shame. The media believe they are doing you a service by not showing your face. In a culture where thinness is next to godliness, and where the quest to achieve a "perfect" body is one of our national pastimes, it goes without saying that no one with a body like the Headless Fatties would want to show their face, right?

And, yet, here we are. We live with those bellies. And we do leave the house with those arms. Despite the increasing visibility of fat people of all genders in positive media portrayals, fat people are still shown negatively in the media more often than as simply people. Constantly showing us headless allows others to become accustomed to thinking of our bodies as separate from our humanity, but we refuse to accept that dehumanization. Fat people every day provide examples of everything the Headless Fatty image is supposed to remind people they cannot be.

Social media is creating more opportunities for fat people to see each other and be seen as we exist in the world. If the media doesn't want to show our faces, we'll show them ourselves!

Quick Links

NAAFA.org
NAAFA-CC.org

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[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Please join NAAFA in our new summer social media campaign, #FacesOfNAAFA. There are two ways you can participate. #1 -- Simply post a photo on any social media platform using the hashtag #FacesOfNAAFA. (Remember, if your account is friends-only, only those in your own networks will see that you are participating). #2 -- Send us a photo and we'll post it on our official Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts. Photos should be sent to naafasurvey@gmail.com

In addition to posting them individually on NAAFA's social media pages, we'll also make a collage of NAAFA members and supporters. If you want your pic included in the collage, please submit it by August 1.

Here's the fine print on submitting photos directly to us: No identifying information will be posted with your photo, and you will not be tagged unless you choose to tag yourself. Submitted photos will be used for this campaign only and will not be used by NAAFA for other purposes without your express written permission. By submitting your photo to NAAFA, you verify that you are over 18, the photo is your property, and you are the subject of the photo (you're welcome to use group photos on your own page, but the official NAAFA page will not use a group photo without the permission of all group members). Please remember that NAAFA pages are public, and while we will do our best to control and delete any unsupportive comments in a timely manner, we cannot prevent all trolling.

NAAFA Chronicles

by Peggy Howell

This is our fifth NAAFA Chronicles report, a series of historic newsletters that chronicle the history of NAAFA and the size acceptance movement since its founding.

Each month we feature an historic NAAFA newsletter for your reading pleasure. The newsletters are added 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 fifth newsletter, the March-April, 1971 issue: www.naafaonline.com/newsletterstuff/oldnewsletterstuff/Chronicles/March-April_1971_Newsletter.pdf

Do You Feel Me?

by Darliene Howell



Since I've been involved in NAAFA's End Bullying Now Campaign over the last three years, and have seen the apathy of people toward the mistreatment and pain of others, I've wondered what has happened to EMPATHY? Is it simply not being taught any longer? Has something happened in our society that makes it a thing of the past?

I ran across two studies recently that caught my eye and may play a part in people's inability to empathize with the pain (both physical and mental) of others:

- The first is study from researchers at Ohio State University who found that Acetaminophen, a painkiller currently in over 600 different drugs, reduces empathy for others. This is a painkiller that 23% of the U.S. population (over 52 million people) takes every day.
- The second study is what I call the Rat Study. In this study, researchers found that lab rats taking the anti-anxiety drug, Midazolam (MDZ or Versed), were less willing than those untreated to help release a trapped cage mate. It's not that they couldn't open the door . . . because they did open the door to get chocolate (who among us wouldn't!) but they were "not motivated to help" because their feelings of empathy were blunted.

These two studies made me wonder if PART of the problem comes from what we are putting in our bodies to ease our own pains and anxieties; taking away our ability to FEEL and EMPATHIZE with others. Saying that this is potentially a result of taking these drugs, however, does NOT justify our actions if we treat others badly or walk around not caring what is happening in the world. It may mean we need to check ourselves and really listen when others tell us that an action or word is causing them hurt, pain or anger and believe them when they say that to be true.

Empathy leads to understanding, but empathy alone does not change what is happening. Empathizing should result in action; we should stand in support of others and work to change what is causing us all pain.

"I don't believe that children are born with empathy. It is something they learn by seeing it modeled by others." - Jacqui Rivait

Sources:

<https://news.osu.edu/news/2016/05/10/empathy-reliever>

<http://www.chpa.org/Acetaminophen.aspx>

<https://sciencelife.uchospitals.edu/2016/06/27/anti-anxiety-medication-limits-empathetic-behavior-in-rats>

Reluctance is Right



by Cinder Ernst

Hello NAAFA Friends,

Many of you know that I'm really good at helping reluctant exercisers become more active. The best part is how we get it done in sweet and satisfying ways.

I've come to the conclusion that exercise reluctance is an appropriate response to what I call "the great fitness mind f@#k". The fitness industry thrives on having you feel bad about yourself and your body. So if you are repelled by the thought of working out or getting exercise, I say bravo! It's good self-preservation.

The other component that inspires reluctance is that most fitness advice is downright crazy. There's always some new trend or guideline that is inappropriate for most. Again,

reluctance is the correct response to those trends or guidelines. Even well-meaning folks who offer a gentler approach evoke the same reluctance if you are nowhere near being able to get started. Maybe you have pain or no time or no energy.

So what if you do want to exercise or get stronger or move around more? You have to find a different path. I always have people start with a happy thought and a small step exercise. I know it seems simple, and well, it is! By thinking a happy thought first you point yourself in a good direction. Then when you do your small step exercise you are on a different fitness path. Happy thought, small step, relax and repeat. That's how it's done!

Here's my favorite small step exercise, the Tush Tilt.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DDQBv-rYhL8>

Happy thought, tush tilt, relax and repeat. Do this for a week, then send me an email and I'll give you your next step! coach@cinderernst.com

Media and Research Roundup

November 26, 2015: Rapper and singer Lizzo's song "My Skin" celebrates

living in your own skin with a music video featuring fat women (first link). As part of the Underneath video project (second link), Lizzo talks about being a fat woman as she removes clothing, wig and makeup showing the beautiful woman underneath.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfEhyi8N_Q

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-8wKpyjUons>

May 25, 2016: Artist and activist Kelli Jean Drinkwater presents a talk on the word "fat" and how existing in a fat body can be a radical political statement.

<https://tedxsydney.com/talk/the-fear-of-fat-the-real-elephant-in-the-room-kelli-jean-drinkwater>

May 31, 2016: Our own Peggy Howell blogs for *U.S. News* about the dangers of weight loss surgery.

<http://health.usnews.com/health-news/patient-advice/articles/2016-05-31/stop-touting-weight-loss-surgery-as-a-miracle-cure>

June 2016: A letter to the editor published in *Mayo Clinic Proceedings* takes the publication to task for categorizing body fat percentage as a healthy lifestyle behavior in a previous article. Unfortunately, the letter continues with hand-wringing about the "war on obesity".

[http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org/article/S0025-6196\(16\)30111-2/fulltext](http://www.mayoclinicproceedings.org/article/S0025-6196(16)30111-2/fulltext)

June 3, 2016: A new study finds that following hospitalization, overweight patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) have better long term survival than thinner patients. Previous studies have found that longer COPD survival is linked to being overweight and obese.

<http://www.medpagetoday.com/clinical-context/copd/58285>

[http://www.resmedjournal.com/article/S0954-6111\(16\)30101-9/abstract](http://www.resmedjournal.com/article/S0954-6111(16)30101-9/abstract)

June 8, 2016: A small study comparing weight loss intervention and weight-neutral health intervention finds that a weight-neutral intervention can yield many health benefits without weight loss, and those benefits are sustainable over a 2 year follow-up period.

<http://authors.elsevier.com/sd/article/S0195666316302343>

June 13, 2016: Katherine DM Clover shares her struggle upon losing thin privilege and relearning to love her body when she became a fat person.

<http://www.ravishly.com/2016/06/13/summer-i-got-fat-love-story>

June 14, 2016: London mayor Sadiq Khan bans ads that feature or promote unhealthy body images or are fat-shaming from the London public transportation system.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/06/15/world/europe/london-bans-ads-with-unrealistic-body-images.html>

June 14, 2016: The AspireAssist device, a tube to the exterior of the body through which one can remove up to a third of the stomach's contents, has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration. The second link is for a petition demanding the FDA withdraw its approval for this device. The device appalls many doctors, who say that it is mechanized bulimia and may lead to eating disorders (3rd link).

<http://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/fda-approves-weight-loss-stomach-pump-aspireassist-combat-obesity-n592141>

<https://www.change.org/p/eating-disorders-activists-demand-fda-withdraw-approval-of-the-aspire-bariatrics-assisted-bulimia-device>

<http://www.theverge.com/2016/6/21/11946252/fda-approved-weight-loss-device-assistaspire-obesity>

June 14, 2016: Researchers look at five weight-loss medications approved by the FDA and find that none of them are particularly effective.

<http://www.kpbs.org/news/2016/jun/14/san-diego-scientist-compares-obesity-drugs-finds-n>

<http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2528211>

June 19, 2016: Kath Read gives JC Penney's video for its new plus-size clothing a rave review, urging other companies to learn from what Penney is doing right in its marketing to the fat community.

<https://fatheffalump.wordpress.com/2016/06/19/marketing-to-fat-women-this-is-how-you-do-it>

June 22, 2016: Substantia Jones and her various projects are highlighted in an article about her current adventure, traveling through the Southern Hemisphere photographing fat people in the nude.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3649964/Substantia-Jones-travels-world-photographing-naked-fat-ladies-Adipositivity-Project.html>

June 24, 2016: Charlotte Cooper provides a basic do and don't list for healthcare practitioners when dealing with a fat patient, as well as some suggestions on how the fat person can recover after a bad run-in with the healthcare profession. Also, check out NAAFA's guidelines on the same subject (2nd link) and Stef's list of fat friendly healthcare professionals (3rd link).

<https://obesitytimebomb.blogspot.co.uk/2016/06/fat-101-for-nurses-and-health.html>

http://www.naafaonline.com/dev2/about/Brochures/NAAFA_Guidelines_for_Healthcare_Providers.pdf

<http://cat-and-dragon.com/stef/Fat/ffp.html>

June 27, 2016: A Swedish study finds that irrespective of access to health care, socioeconomic status is a predictor of all-cause and cardiovascular mortality among people with type 2 diabetes (first link). A related commentary (second link) states that addressing socioeconomic disadvantage may help us better treat type 2 diabetes.

<http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2530287>

<http://archinte.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=2530291>

June 29, 2016: An analysis of multiple data sets finds that eating butter has little or no effect on mortality, cardiovascular disease, or diabetes. An inverse (protective) effect may exist in relation to diabetes and thus more research is urged to explore the health effects of butter and dairy fat.

<http://www.laboratoryequipment.com/news/2016/06/no-evidence-prove-butter-consumption-leads-chronic-disease-mortality>

<http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0158118>

June 29, 2016: Brynne Huffman's Facebook response to a woman who dished Brynne for wearing shorts goes viral. Here's hoping that the woman has read it and has learned a lesson about acceptance.

<http://hellogiggles.com/woman-shamed-wearing-shorts-writes-awesome-fb-post>

July 5, 2016: Katie Clark explains what it means to be a fat person living in a fatphobic society and why body-shaming is not about health concerns but about buy-in to stereotypes and body policing.

<http://theindependent.ca/2016/07/05/dear-fatphobics>

July 5, 2016: Lindy West, author of *Shrill: Notes from a Loud Woman*, came out as a fat woman to friends and co-workers, confronting her boss on his derogatory comments about fat people. Talking about the discrimination faced at the workplace by fat people, she urges that employers embrace a "no body talk" policy.

<http://www.fastcompany.com/3061210/the-hidden-discrimination-against-being-fat-at-work>

July 8, 2016: A study finds that increased BMI is not associated with higher morbidity or mortality for hospitalized patients, whereas being underweight is an independent predictor for hospital complications.

<http://drc.bmj.com/content/4/1/e000200.abstract>

July 10, 2016: A market research firm claims that Americans are shifting their focus from weight loss and dieting to health, which is hurting the diet industry. One can only hope.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/the-death-of-the-diet-industry-2016-7>

July 12, 2016: Several past studies have shown a link between artificial sweeteners and increased appetite. Now, researchers in Australia show that these sweeteners trigger a neuronal fasting response, which explains the increased motivation to eat.

<http://www.laboratoryequipment.com/news/2016/07/why-do-artificial-sweeteners-increase-appetite>

[http://www.cell.com/cell-metabolism/abstract/S1550-4131\(16\)30296-0](http://www.cell.com/cell-metabolism/abstract/S1550-4131(16)30296-0)

July 13, 2016: A meta-analysis of 239 prospective studies on four continents shows increased mortality among overweight and obese people. Although people with chronic disease, smokers, and those who died in the first five years of the study were filtered out, there was no correction for other confounding variables such as socioeconomic status or ethnicity.

<http://press.thelancet.com/BMI.pdf>

July 14, 2016: A recent study finds that one in five "healthy" weight Americans has prediabetes, a sharp increase from 20 years prior. Although abdominal fat has also increased, it does not appear to be the primary cause of this.
<http://news.health.com/2016/07/14/normal-weight-may-not-protect-against-diabetes>
<http://www.annfamned.org/content/14/4/304.short>

July 15, 2016: Diet firm Herbalife gets hit with a \$200 million fine for unfair and deceptive practices, and is told it needs to restructure its business. The fine is due to Herbalife operating like a pyramid scheme.
<https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/press-releases/2016/07/herbalife-will-restructure-its-multi-level-marketing-operations>

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>
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