



**national association
to advance
fat acceptance**

July 2018 NAAFA Newsletter

In This Issue:

1. [All Bodies Are Summer Bodies!](#)
2. [Monthly Meme](#)
3. [Questions and Answers](#)
4. [NAAFA Chronicles](#)
5. [Easy Ways to Support NAAFA's Work](#)
6. [Media and Research Roundup](#)
7. [Video of the Month](#)

Video of the Month



All Bodies Are Summer Bodies!
by Tigress Osborn



I love summer! I associate it with many family memories, fun in the sun with friends, vacations and much more. I grew up

What's Wrong With Being a Gorda?

"Our families typically use "gorda" as a term of endearment, but can this term hold negative weight? In this episode, Kat addresses thin privilege and Latina beauty standards. How do you feel about the use of this word?"

WARNING: Some portions of this video contain **adult language**.

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=MaCzh31sYbc>

Quick Links

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swimming all summer -- I took my first swimming lessons when I was a tiny tot, my family spent lots of time at lakes and rivers, and the public pool was walking distance from my childhood home. I loved being in the water, and I never gave a second thought about my body or my swimsuit.

Then the culture caught up with me.

I remember the first time I dreaded going to a pool. It was the summer between 8th grade and 9th grade. There would be a swimming day at student council leadership camp, and all the other girls would be wearing cool swimming suits, the kinds teenagers wore in the magazines I was starting to devour. I'd be wearing an old lady suit because that was all that would fit me. I wasn't actually fat (yet), but I was developing curves sooner than most of the other girls around me. I was convinced someone would make fun of me for being the fattest girl there. (I was the fattest girl there, but no one made fun of me. No one paid any attention to me at all.)

What I didn't know when I was 14 was that probably almost every girl at that pool thought she was too fat to be at the pool, and many of the boys probably thought they were lacking in some way, too. Perhaps some of them took solace in my bigger body (teenagers, and let's face it, adults too, are encouraged to compare bodies and use someone else's "imperfections" to comfort themselves that at least they're not that bad). Our culture is relentless in trying to make us think our bodies are never good enough, but seasonal expectations add to the message that some bodies are acceptable and some are not. Swimsuit season is the most relentless of all. There is a never ending stream of "swim body," "beach body," and "pool ready" messages being constantly pumped out by the diet industry, the fitness industry, the fashion industry, and seemingly the vast majority of people everywhere from our workplaces to some of our own homes. No wonder 14-year-old me was scared of a swimsuit!

The internet and the rise of social networking sites has given us even more places to be subjected to the endless message that swimsuits are only for skinny people. Search "beach body memes" and you'll find all the evidence you need that anti-fat discrimination is rampant on the internet. (Actually, don't search that at all. Trust me). But there is hope. Among the bullying, body shaming, and internalized fatphobia, there are increasingly more and more rays of hope. The internet is home to fat hating trolls precisely because the internet is also often the most thriving communities of fat fashionistas, fat liberationists and radical self love enthusiasts, and boy do we make those haters mad. They can't stand our unapologetically fat bodies on display for anyone who knows how to use a hashtag to see. (If you're a social media user, check out hashtags like these for summertime fat visibility: #myswimbody, #fatandfree, #fatkini, #plussizeswimsuits).

But we keep posting. And posting. And posting. Facebook and Instagram have been roundly criticized for removing pics of fat bodies in swimsuits which have allegedly been reported as "offensive," while similar pics of people with skinny bodies thrive on their sites. Both mainstream body positivity influencers and more politicized fat activists are pushing back

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against this, and people with 20 followers or 20,000 followers are posting their swimsuit pics for all the world to see. Anyone can be a role model (or as I like to call myself, a roll model) for how to live in the bodies we have now without some arbitrary requirements that we reshape them for a different season.

Everybody who wants to wear a swimsuit should be able to wear one. Every body should have a suit available for them. And those of us fat folks who are able-bodied think about access to swimming being about finding suits and avoiding shaming. We should also think about it being about spaces that are physically welcoming to all bodies, with beach access that is friendly to mobility devices, pools that have lifts, sunny places that have chairs for all weights, and whatever else it takes to make sure everyone can enjoy these long summer days.

Monthly Meme: Radical Self Care

Self-care is a radical act.

naafa

#EqualityAtEverySize
#RadicalSelfCare
www.naafa.org

Questions and Answers

by Cinder Ernst



Hello NAAFA Friends!

Two people sent me questions this month and I loved it. Please email coach@cinderernst.com with your fitness or pain management questions.

The first question was about really severe, single sided thigh pain with an unknown cause. The writer had done everything the doctor recommended with no improvement. I did not think I could help; however, the writer mentioned lower body lymphedema as a possible cause. The best thing for lymphedema is breathing, laughing and walking. The breathing should be big breaths into your belly. Those three things are good for every body!

The second question follows:

Dear Cinder,

Several years ago an on-the-job injury left me with a permanent sciatic nerve injury. According to a chiropractor, I have a tilted pelvis which can be temporarily corrected with an adjustment but there's no permanent solution.

Last fall it would not adjust so I consulted my physician who gave me steroid pills to take over eight days. The next day the hip was great but my knee was blown out. I could not put weight on it at all. I have never had knee issues and have been very careful to protect them so this is very frustrating to me.

Physical therapy helped a little, but there has been no resolution to the problem. Your "flop over" exercise is a godsend. It helps relieve the back pain and the "almost kick your butt" is helping the knee.

My question today is, what would you recommend that might reduce the sciatic nerve pain when it flares up? Is there something that might make this go away forever?

Answer:

Thanks for reaching out.

Wow! Have you noticed how connected your body is? I've heard it said that your knee is a slave to your hip. Not sure I like that wording but it points to how we are a connected system.

The pat answer for sciatica is to build more core strength; however, it's not that simple. You have to build balanced core strength. So if one leg is tighter than the other, you need to stretch the tight one extra. Do you notice with the flop over that one hamstring/butt/low back feels tighter than the other? If yes try doing a split leg flop over. Stand with your feet comfortably spread then step forward with the right leg a small step. Then flop over. Go gently. Try the other side. Notice the differences without worry, relax.

If you are doing any other kind of hamstring stretching, notice the tighter side and do an extra hold on that side. Don't stretch harder, just hold longer or do an extra hold. Eventually they will even out or even switch!

If one leg is weaker, you have to strengthen that leg more. A good test for this is when you do the Miracle Knee exercise, is one side easier to squeeze than the other? If yes, do a few extra repetitions on the side that is harder to do. Let it catch up.

Stretching your hip flexors is also important. They are the muscles in the front of your thigh/hip and they affect your pelvis position and your low back. Try the split leg scissor stretch. Same starting position as the split leg flop over except just stand up tall and straight. You are looking for a stretch in the front thigh of the back leg.

Try it now.

There is quite a bit of trial and course correcting in all this. Take your time. Stay hopeful as you proceed.

NAAFA Chronicles #30

Here's a link to NAAFA's 30th newsletter, June-July 1977, as part of our NAAFA Chronicles feature:

https://www.naafaonline.com/newsletterstuff/oldnewsletterstuff/Chronicles/June-July_1977.pdf

For more, check out the "Chronicles" tab in the newsletter section of the NAAFA website.

Easy Ways to Support NAAFA's Work

by Peggy Howell



I recently took a very important step and updated my will. As a homeowner, it is particularly important that a legal will be created to insure that my assets are distributed the way I'd like. It's not easy to face one's mortality but none of us are insured another day so this is an important step.

I have been volunteering to serve NAAFA for about fifteen years, working to realize Equality At Every Size. I have seen positive changes that have encouraged me to continue until we are all safe from discrimination. For this reason, I have designated a portion of my estate to NAAFA.

Nonprofit organizations such as NAAFA depend on charitable gifts from donors. Monthly giving helps to create educational materials, funds special projects and programs like the End Bullying Now Campaign, can work to expand programs like the Size Savvy Project to a national level, and covers everyday expenses for administration (phone service, credit card processing, newsletter distribution, web hosting, etc.).

Beyond membership fees and signing up for recurring donations through the website, there are other easy ways to give to NAAFA. Here are some of the everyday ways to contribute, some without taking any money out of your pocket.

Search the web, shop online, or dine out and raise money for NAAFA through Goodsearch and Goodshop -- all at no cost to you!

It's simple to DO GOOD! Go to <https://www.goodsearch.com>, sign up and designate NAAFA as the charity you support.

Shop with Amazon Smile!

Love to shop with Amazon? Try Amazon Smile and part of your purchases can be designated as a contribution to NAAFA. For more information, go to <https://smile.amazon.com>

Sell your unwanted goods on Givium!

Givium is a resale website that allows you to list and sell goods and give the proceeds (or a percentage of the sale) to NAAFA! Not only that, you can give your friends a discount. Check out the details at <https://givium.com>

Designate NAAFA for charitable contributions through payroll deductions!

If your employer allows for charitable contributions to be made through payroll deduction, check to see if NAAFA qualifies for their program. Some employers will even match your contribution. It's a win-win!

Note: Employees need to prove the amount of any charitable contributions they made through payroll by retaining both:

- A pay stub, Form W-2, or other document furnished by their employer that shows the date and amount of contribution
- A pledge card or other document from the qualified organization that shows the name of the organization

Bequeath money to NAAFA

Although we don't like to think about our mortality, it's a gift to let your family and loved ones know your wishes when you pass. If you'd like to see the work go on, include a bequest to NAAFA in your will. (Pretty much everyone should have a will in any case.)

If you know of other easy ways to give to NAAFA, please let us know so we can share your ideas with others! You can email me at pr@naafa.org with your suggestions. Thank you for your continued support!

Media and Research Roundup

by Bill and Terri Weitze

May 18, 2018: Researchers find that, while all-cause death rates have declined in the US by 20% every 10 years, the decrease for all-cause death rate for persons with diabetes is significantly higher, particularly from vascular disease. This could be due to better treatment of diabetes.

[https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(18\)30314-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(18)30314-3)

June 5, 2018: Huffpost interviews Sarai Walker about how her book Dietland came about and her involvement with the TV show based on the book.

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/dietland-author-sarai-walker-talks-fat-positivity-female-anger-and-revenge-fantasies_us_5b158629e4b0129b529cd9fa

June 7, 2018: Ragen Chastain introduces you to various fat athletes and their journey to embracing fitness at every size.

<https://health.usnews.com/health-news/blogs/eat-run/articles/2018-06-07/these-higher-weight-female-athletes-are-shattering-myths-about-fitness>

June 18, 2018: A blog post in They Said What lists its Hall of Shame for the Workplace Wellness Industry, where body shaming is used as part of the program.

<https://theysaidwhat.net/2018/06/18/the-workplace-wellness-industrys-body-shaming-hall-of-shame>

June 18, 2018: A study finds an association between diabetes and pancreatic cancer. Persons with long-standing diabetes have a greater risk for pancreatic cancer, and recent onset diabetes may be a symptom of the cancer.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/jnci/djy090>

June 20, 2018: Anastomotic ulceration is a common long-term postoperative complication of Roux-en-Y gastric bypass. A recent study finds that a history of tobacco use is associated with this complication.

<https://doi.org/10.1001/jamasurg.2018.1616>

June 26, 2018: People in the "overweight" or "obese" BMI categories have a greater risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis (RA) and less likelihood of sustained remission. However, people with high BMIs are also more likely to live longer than those with a BMI lower than 30.

<https://www.rheumatologyadvisor.com/rheumatoid-arthritis-advisor/obesity-paradox-and-weight-management-in-rheumatoid-arthritis/article/776135>

June 29, 2018: Huffpost celebrates Self magazine's weight issue for trying to get body and fat acceptance right after the movement has been watered down to exclude certain bodies as too fat. However, Ash of The Fat Lip (second link) explains why using Tess Holliday for the cover is problematic for many.

https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/tess-holliday-self-cover-fat-acceptance_us_5b354781e4b0f3c2219f45be

<http://thefatlip.com/transcripts/episode-44-self-magazines-weight-issue-big-transcript>

July 3, 2018: Meet comic creator Drew Edwards as he discusses his plus size feminist character Lucy Chaplin as part of the long running indie comic series Halloween Man.

<https://www.volup2.com/blog/lucy>

July 9, 2018: Your Fat Friend explains how she came to body positivity/fat acceptance, how it has failed, and what she expects from a movement that will actually benefit fat people.

<https://medium.com/@thefatshadow/a-draft-agenda-for-fat-justice-db878d93cd98>

July 12, 2018: A recent study finds that men and women in the "obese" BMI category who are metabolically healthy have no elevated risk as to all-cause mortality.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/cob.12263>

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

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