



November 2017 NAAFA Newsletter

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Video of the Month

CLASS, NOT , MATTERS

Class, Not Mass

In the final video of her new series, Dr. Linda Bacon makes a convincing argument that the real villain in poor health is not our weight!

<https://lindabacon.org/videos/class-not-mass-matters>

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Holiday Air Travel and TSA Screenings

by Darliene Howell



NAAFA received a message from a woman about pat-downs by the TSA (U.S. Transportation Security Administration). She stated that the TSA body scanner screenings were problematic, that she was patted-down every time she flies and wanted to know if others were having the same problem.

I knew of the Facebook group *Flying While Fat*, so I posed a question to the group to find if this is happening on a consistent basis.

Of the 92 responses received, 65% stated that they "ALWAYS" receive pat-downs after body scanner screening, 16% said

"OFTEN", 11% said "OCCASIONALLY" and only 8% said that they "NEVER" have a pat-down after body scanner screening. 11% of respondents had TSA PreCheck (Pre✓).

In reading the responses, it became apparent that the scanners cannot differentiate between foreign objects and dense fat, so they give a false positive reading. This appears to be especially significant for women with lipedema. There were also comments on the feelings of embarrassment and violation resulting from pat-downs.

NAAFA wrote to the TSA asking for information regarding the type of technology being used and information regarding the manufacturers so we might be able to address this problem. Additionally, we asked what large passengers might do to help facilitate TSA screenings to avoid the need for physical pat-downs.

The TSA response to our request for information didn't provide much more information than they do at airports. However, they did say that loose and/or baggy clothing may cause the AIT (body scanner) to highlight an area for additional screening.

The TSA gave some basic information on the technology, but no information on the manufacturer. However, with further digging we found the name of the manufacturer and also wrote to them. We have not received a response from the manufacturer.

While NAAFA asked how we as a group can work with the TSA to make the process better, with the goal of facilitating TSA screenings and avoiding the need for physical pat-downs on a consistent basis, there was no interest on their part to work with us.

So what can you do to get through the TSA screening faster? If you will be flying consistently over the next five years, you may wish to apply for TSA PreCheck. The cost is an \$85.00 application fee. They do require an in-person appointment, a background check, and fingerprinting. What's the benefit? In October 2017, 97% of TSA PreCheck passengers waited less than 5 minutes in line. Wait times may be longer during the Holidays, and everyone is still subject to additional screening when deemed appropriate.

For more information on TSA PreCheck go to <https://www.tsa.gov/precheck>

Wishing you happy and safe Holiday travels!

Be Aware of Physical and Sexual Assault by Kandee Lewis

Although October has passed, it was a very important month, one that we should heed all year long. October is Breast Cancer Awareness, Bully Awareness, and Domestic Violence Awareness Month!

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You may have seen news articles about breast cancer, but not about domestic violence or bullying, and I'm sure you haven't seen anything in the news media about it relating to men and women of size or color.

Oh wait, I know you have seen the #MeToo campaign. It appears sexual assault has taken over the airwaves, news articles, and every social media site you can find. People are coming out of the woodwork to talk about their experiences, and the injustices done to them and their bodies.

Yet when people start talking and news or government agencies pay attention, the victim doesn't look anything like me, you, our communities, nor the vast majority of people who are affected by every form of abuse (domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, gun violence, murder-suicide of partners, etc.).

When a person of color or size reports or files a claim that she/he has been sexually assaulted, the results are that she/he is frequently IGNORED, called a LIAR, asked what "SHE/HE DID" to warrant this behavior, been accused of "WANTING IT", OR that "SHE/HE PROVOKED THE INCIDENT". Or they're looked at with such disdain, disgust and disbelief, like no one would want them/us. But we know that is not true. We are (people of color or size) often the secret (and not so secret) desires of so many people the world over!

We will be further shamed, blamed, victimized and put down by everyone, from law enforcement, family, friends, so called peers, employers, and maybe our significant other. We may be harassed to such a degree, especially as young girls, that we often contemplate, attempt or even take our own life.

One in four girls/women will be assaulted in their lifetime. When you look at communities of color, that increases oftentimes to 1 in 2 (women). What is NOT accounted for: 1. Anyone who did not report the abuse to authorities, 2. Anyone who is 11 years old or younger, 3. Anyone who is not a girl. And there are NO records for people of size, although children of size will often be picked on or targeted.

One in six boys/men will be assaulted, but there is almost no way to determine the real number since there is so much stigma around boys and men being assaulted. If sexually assaulted, they're accused of being "gay", called a "punk" or even worse, because someone doesn't understand how a man can be raped or taken advantage of sexually. Parents would prefer their sons "get over it" instead of getting counseling.

In communities of color we very often do not report because of our distrust with law enforcement agencies, which in certain cases can also be true for our big beautiful men, women and children. We have also been systemically trained to "take the abuse" and keep moving.

Did you know that children are raped five times more than adults! Unfortunately, because of inter-generational violence, rape and abuse stemming before the slave trade, post-traumatic stress disorder, community trauma, and way too many other items to list here, we have no clue to the magnitude of how many people of color or people of size, or children were/have been/are being sexually assaulted, even now. No, I mean right this exact moment. EVERY NINE SECONDS A PERSON (over 12) IS BEING SEXUALLY ASSUALTED!

Am I outraged, YES! Am I angered, YES! Am I concerned, YES!!! But I am outraged because when women/children of color and women/children of size report rape, sexual assault and abuse, we are ignored, AND YET, not only has nothing been done about it, the incidents of sexual assault continue to escalate.

What can be done?

1. Watch over and protect your children. Do not allow anyone and everyone to have access to your children.
2. Tell your children and significant other often that you love them, no matter their size, shape or color (or anything for that matter. Let's just love them because we can).
3. Let them know that they matter more than your phone, computer, television or anything or anyone.
4. Talk to your children or significant other every day and look for signs that they may be going through some form of trauma (sleeping more, isolating themselves from people, places or things they used to enjoy, sadness, bouts of anger, drug or alcohol use).
5. Encourage them to seek counseling and if they request it or if you can, go with them.
6. Don't judge, blame or shame them.

Remember, Believe People! Watch with your eyes, ears and heart to determine truth!

Love is an action item! You Are Worthy! You Matter, Simply Because You Are! Simply Worthy!

Monthly Meme: Give Thanks



Thirty Years!

by Cinder Ernst

I was speaking to a potential new client and she asked me "how long have you been doing this kind of work?" I answered "30 years!" Holy smokes! 30 years! Long time. I have two clients who have been with me that long. To know me is to love me, LOL.



For 30 years I've been working with plus size folks in fitness. I was always bigger than the other personal trainers. I was a size 14 personal trainer in a size 4 fitness world. I'm so glad I found size acceptance all those years ago so I could stop hating my body. Finding size acceptance for myself changed the course of my business. In 1990, I began teaching classes for women over size 16. I even trained 20 large women to become Great Shape instructors (the first fitness guide for large women, by Deb Burgard and Pat Lyons) for Kaiser.

All these decades of experience have given me a filter that I run information through. The filter asks "how could I adapt this exercise for a larger body, and can it be done in a chair or in bed?" Strength is the building block for mobility and stamina so small strengthening exercises, easily accomplished, make a big difference.

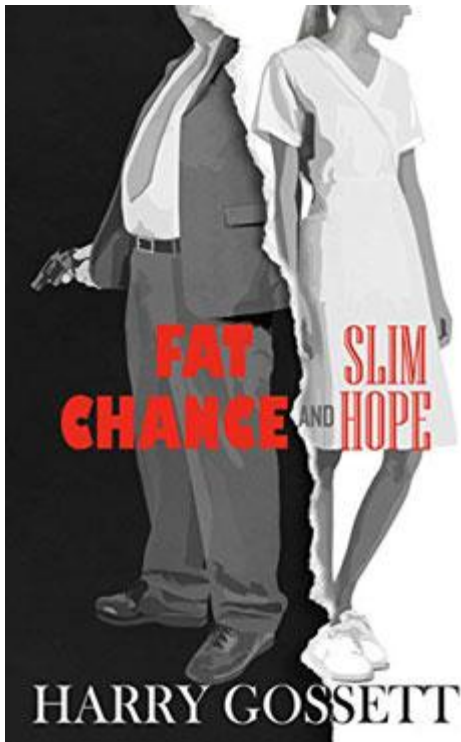
Most recently I read some info on plantar fasciitis. Through the years I have gathered the best tips and exercises to help soothe this condition. If you've had it (I have), then you know how much it sucks. I recently read an article that made a case for strengthening in a particular way that made sense to me. So I ran it through my filter and am trying out the adaptations now with a few clients. Next month I'll give you the *Easy Fitness* way to soothe plantar fasciitis.

Until then, Happy Thanksgiving!

Book Review: *Fat Chance and Slim Hope*

Book by Harry Gossett

Review by Darliene Howell



Harry Gossett's novel, *Fat Chance and Slim Hope*, involves intrigue, action, humor and shows the lengths to which some will go in order to try to control another's body size.

Hope Olson is a nurse and naturally thin. Some believe TOO thin and think she may need an intervention.

FBI Special Agent George "Chance" Chancellor is considered TOO fat by his new Assistant Director (A-Dick) and subject to daily weigh-ins.

The two cross paths when Hope goes to the FBI to report her attempted kidnapping by masked abductors. Chance takes the case, and the events that follow lead him on an unauthorized chase across the country, with his A-Dick all the while trying to force Chance to be weighed and reported on daily.

Take a "chance" on this roller coaster of conspiracy and secrecy to find "hope" at the end of the ride.

You can order a copy of Fat Chance and Slim Hope through your local bookstore or buy it online at www.smile.amazon.com

NAAFA Chronicles #22

As part of our NAAFA Chronicles feature, here's NAAFA's 22nd newsletter; October-December 1975:

http://www.naafaonline.com/newsletterstuff/oldnewsletterstuff/Chronicles/Oct-Dec_1975.pdf

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

The Fat Census and the Importance of Fat-Focused Research

by Tigress Osborn



I've never met Ashleigh Shackelford, but I'm a long-time admirer of her work as an intersectional fat activist. When I learned from her Facebook page that she was planning a widespread research project to collect data on fat lives, I was confident that I would want to support this personally and through my own activists networks. Ashleigh's organization, Free Figure Revolution, launched their first Fat Census on November 7. This important self-reporting tool allows fat people to share

our experiences with size discrimination and other forms of body oppression. Free Figure Revolution plans for this to be the first of many census projects, with the results to be studied used by a coalition of fat liberation advocates.

Why is a project like this so important? We know that fat people face discrimination on multiple fronts. Media depictions of fat folks often imply that the only barriers we face are being bullied as kids and having a hard time finding clothes. While those challenges are significant, those of us who live in fat bodies know that fatphobia is not limited to name calling and fashion choice. We face life-limiting discrimination in medical treatment, employment, justice, education and more. Free Figure's aim is to use this research as a basis for planning revolutionary change. They want "to name demands for the change we seek to create, and to hold accountable the systems that harm us."

Research can be essential in providing evidence of what we know to be true: that fat life is full of barriers that are treated as individual problems but are actually systematic and widespread. So many of mainstream cultural beliefs about fat people are based on stereotype and assumption. When research has been used to support theories about fat people, the research quoted often has been funded by the multi-billion dollar diet industry, which clearly has a vested interest in any research outcomes. Even when it's not, thin-centric bias and fatphobia often taint research about fat bodies. Other biases often mean that even the best intended research about fatness fails to examine fatness across demographic and identity groups. According to the creators, the Fat Census "is intentionally curated to interrelate how sizism is

amplified by antiblackness, racism, ableism, colorism, transphobia, etc." This information is being collected with a focus on understanding fatness from multiple perspectives, and with a commitment to ensuring that the additional pressures faced by fat people from marginalized groups are given the important attention they deserve.

The Fat Census will only take a few minutes of your time. You can find it at www.freefigure.org/fatcensus (Content warning: the census includes questions about personal trauma, including rape and sexual assault). The NAAFA Board has initiated discussions with Full Figure Revolution about how NAAFA can support this important work. In the meantime, I hope that you as individual NAAFA members will support it by completing the survey and by following the results when they become available.

Media and Research Roundup

by *Bill and Terri Weitze*

August 24, 2017: A recent study finds that weight change over four years, independent of the starting weight, is associated with all-cause mortality, with weight loss being associated with a greater risk than weight gain.

<https://academic.oup.com/jcem/article-abstract/doi/10.1210/jc.2017-00787/4093337/Change-in-weight-and-body-mass-index-associated?redirectedFrom=fulltext>

August 25, 2017: A recent study concludes that behavioral weight loss intervention for obese patients with type 2 diabetes results in greater cognitive decline overall compared to a control group.

<https://academic.oup.com/biomedgerontology/article-abstract/4093899>

September 18, 2017: Building on her previously published work, Elaine W Yu, MD presents research at the American Society for Bone and Mineral Research 2017 Annual Meeting showing that bone loss following gastric-bypass surgery continues to show deterioration up to 5 years postsurgery.

<https://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/885861>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/jbmr.3101/full>

October 20, 2017: Google Maps added a feature telling users how many calories they would burn if they walked to their destination and then converted calories to mini-cupcakes. Thanks to complaints, the feature has been removed, and Ragen Chastain explains why it was such a bad idea to begin with.

<https://ravisly.com/walk-not-cupcake-googles-worst-idea-yet>

October 24, 2017: Kelly Burch shares her experience of healthcare services being denied due to her provider's fat phobia and bigotry.

<https://ravisly.com/my-doctor-body-shamed-me>

October 26, 2017: A *Longreads* essay tells personal stories of fat-bias encounters in the doctor's office, along with input from both NAAFA and Marilyn Wann on this serious problem. (However, the essay accepts the premise of fat=unhealthy to an extent.)

<https://longreads.com/2017/10/26/no-fatties-when-healthcare-hurts>

October 26, 2017: A 17-year old victim of sexual assault suffers further indignities when during the trial, the judge states that she probably was flattered by the attention because she was overweight. The attacker was found guilty, but the provincial Justice Minister plans to file a complaint against the judge due to his unacceptable comments.

<http://www.theroot.com/judge-says-overweight-teenage-sexual-assault-victim-w-1819891714>

October 26, 2017: A resort in the Bahamas caters to fat vacationers offering privacy and a fat-friendly environment. The resort is limited to 24 guests at a time and the guests must book the entire place (for a flat fee of \$16,400) to ensure privacy.

<http://people.com/bodies/plus-size-resort>

October 27, 2017: A group of costumed children meeting with Donald Trump from some trick or treating were congratulated on not having any weight problems.

<https://www.vanityfair.com/style/2017/10/donald-trump-halloween-kids-weight-problems>

November 2017: Live in or near Toronto, or are heading there? On December 2, 2017, Body Confidence Canada is having its fundraiser dance, the Body Love Ball.

<https://www.bodyconfidencecanada.com/body-love-ball>

November 2017: Volume 6, 2017, of *Fat Studies*, an interdisciplinary journal of body weight and society, is now available.

<http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/ufts20/6/3>

November 1, 2017: A small study of adolescents undergoing weight loss surgery (WLS) finds functional changes in the brain following surgery, with improvements of cognitive improvement and better brain efficiency. More studies are planned to find if the cause is from healthier behavior or from weight loss alone.

<https://www.medpagetoday.com/meetingcoverage/obesityweek/68940>

<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/oby.22013/full>

November 2, 2017: Manitoba, Canada's Size and Weight Discrimination Bill is rejected by the Manitoba Legislature by a 35-16 vote. The Progressive Conservative caucus claims the proposed bill was too vague and would be difficult to enforce.

<https://www.change.org/p/9064250/u/21884797>

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/manitoba-obesity-rights-bill-rejected-1.4384627>

November 4, 2017: Aaron E. Carroll discusses why many myths about "bad food" are not founded in science.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/04/opinion/sunday/relax-you-dont-need-to-eat-clean.html>

November 5, 2017: In a non-peer reviewed study, researchers find that disease activity for people with systemic lupus decreases significantly as BMI (body mass index) increases.

<http://www.rheumatologyadvisor.com/acr-2017-coverage/obesity-effects-on-disease-activity-in-lupus/article/704317>

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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