

DRAFT OF SLIDES – UNFINISHED PRESENTATION

**Filtered Realities: Addressing the Impact of Social Media
on Body Image and Eating Disorders**

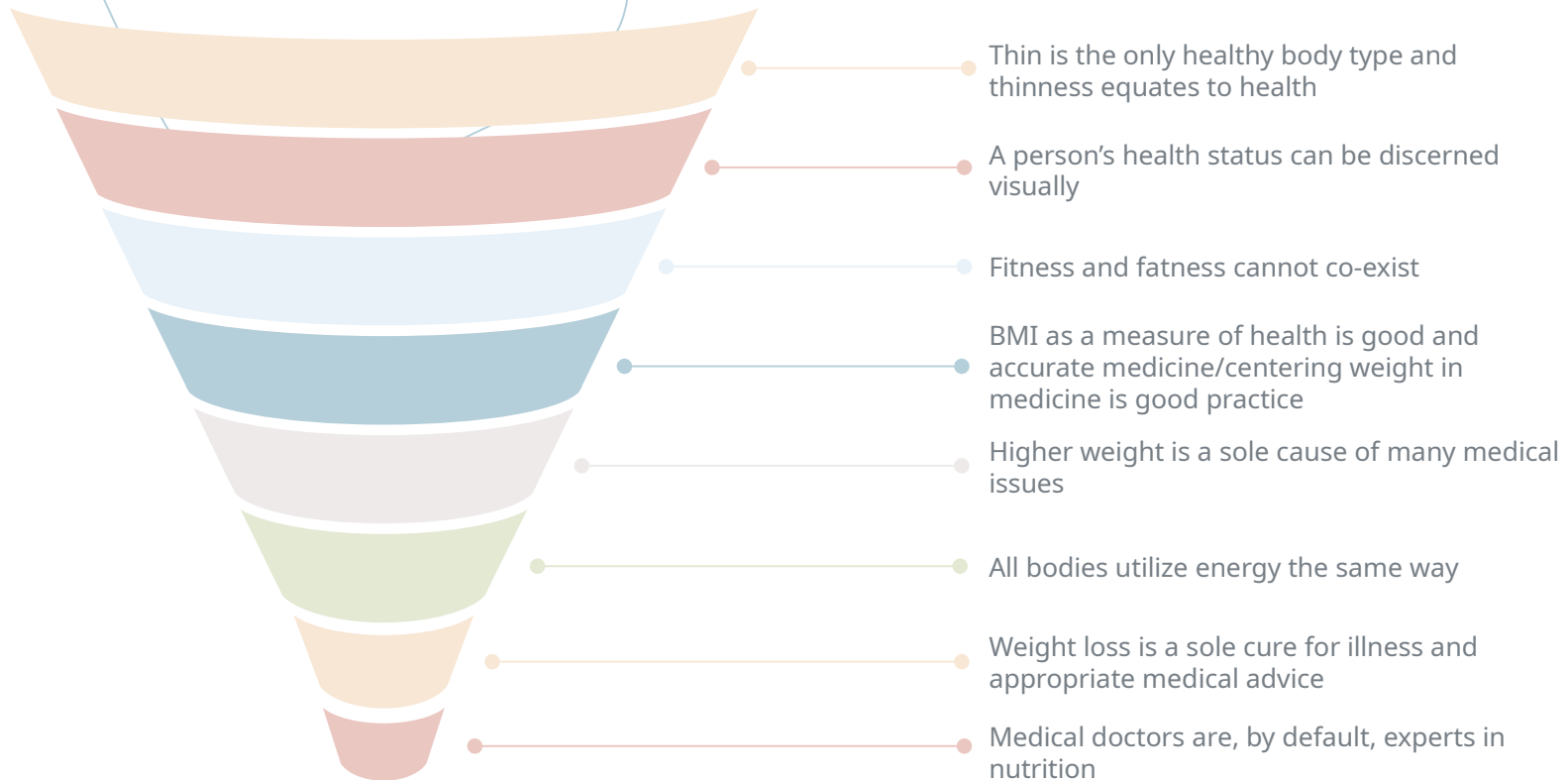
**Marie-Laure Firebaugh, LMSW
Jenny Copeland, PsyD**



Some Harmful Diet-Culture Beliefs

Diet culture provides no space for diversity and denies decades of research that challenges and disproves tenants of Diet Culture such as:

Some Harmful Diet-Culture Beliefs



The Marketing of Unattainable Beauty




- Advertisements' purpose is to sell us the idea that using a certain product will help us achieve ideal beauty/body
- Body representation in advertising is very limited:
 - Women: thin, white, young, flawless
 - Men: muscular, white, young



Selling perfection

Before

After



♥

\$12.99
Instagram Filter "PERFECT FACE" with White Teeth + Eyelashes + Eye Brightener | Spark AR
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~

Add to cart

Item details ^

>

Digital download
 Digital file type(s): 1 File

Translated by [Microsoft](#)
 See in original language

Instagram Filter "PERFECT FACE" with White Teeth + Eyelashes + Eye Brightener

TRY THIS EFFECT:
[Learn more about this item](#)

Advertising on Social Media



- In 2022, companies will spend \$56 billion in the U.S. advertising on social media
- 90% of companies advertise on social media
- Celebrities and “influencers” are paid to advertise products

Fitspiration: Strong is the New Skinny



- Extremely fit, toned body in addition to extreme thinness
- Still emphasizes unattainable beauty by promoting:
 - Exercise for appearance-related reasons
 - Sexually objectified women's bodies
 - Thinness and stigmatized excess weight
 - Messages that support disordered eating
- Same risks for women as thin ideal
- Exercise promotes body satisfaction when done to improve health or as a fun activity

Examples From our Daily Lives

Peers

"I am only going to eat green vegetables to detox from Thanksgiving, I found this person that shared their experience and it worked!"

Family

"Honey, you need to watch what you eat when you are away at college, you don't want to gain weight."

Self

"My stomach is so big, I can't believe I let myself eat a cupcake last night."

Men are not Exempt



- Body dissatisfaction is a growing problem
- A survey of 8-18 year old boys in the UK found:
 - 55% would consider changing their diets to look better
 - 23% believe there is a perfect male body
- The most desirable body is muscular, athletic, and thin



The Impact of These Messages

Exposure to these messages puts people at risk for:

- Body dissatisfaction, low self-esteem, steroid use, muscle dysmorphia, depression, stress, eating disorders

Body dissatisfaction is the best-known contributor to the development of an eating disorder.

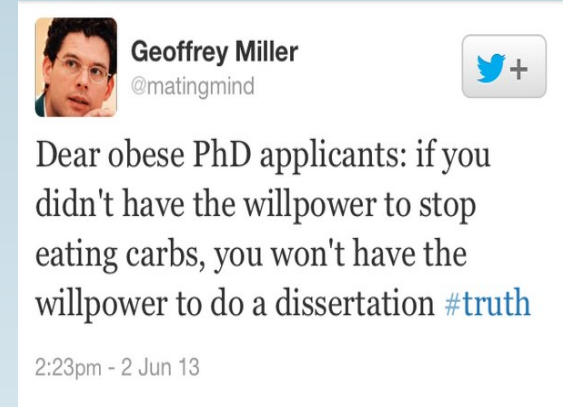
Weight discrimination promotes weight gain and the onset of obesity.

How to Create a Body Neutral Environment

- Model healthy, balanced, and flexible dietary & exercise patterns
- Ensure students of all sizes are encouraged to participate in school activities
 - i.e., band, cheerleading, student government, theater groups, etc.
- Utilize verbiage like “bigger” or “smaller” bodies rather than skinny or fat
- Avoid labeling foods as bad and good
- Avoid discussing personal diets around students
- Abstain from “fat talk”; discuss others in terms of accomplishments and character, rather than focusing on appearance
- Discourage the idea that a particular diet, weight, body size will lead to

Be aware of your own weight biases


- Weight bias is a negative judgement, stereotyping, or discrimination towards a person based solely on their weight
- Described as the last acceptable form of prejudice
- Weight stigma is a key factor for healthcare avoidance
 - Higher weight women tend to avoid preventive and emergent healthcare
- One study found that 69% of people with higher weight feel stigmatized by their healthcare providers



Mensing, J. L., Tylka, T. L., & Calamari, M. E. (2018). Mechanisms underlying weight status and healthcare avoidance in women: A study of weight stigma, body-related shame and guilt, and healthcare stress. *Body Image*, 25, 139–147.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bodyim.2018.03.001>

Creating Change

- Be mindful of fat talk
- Become educated on these topics
- Avoid labeling food as good vs. bad
- Discourage the idea that a particular diet, weight, body size will lead to happiness
- Create healthy boundaries
- Become a critical viewer: most media images are photoshopped
- Learn to challenge thin ideal thoughts and conversations
- Avoid labeling food as good vs. bad
- Talk about your body in a neutral way
- Speak up



LOVING
YOURSELF
IS THE
GREATEST
REVOLUTION

LANGUAGE

Person First

Students are not defined by their diagnosis

This person is anorexic.
A bulimic student...

The person has anorexia nervosa.
A student with bulimia nervosa.

Strengths Based

Often language portrays students as at the mercy of their eating disorder.

Use language that is neutral or focused on strengths.

Jason suffers from an eating disorder.
Tyra struggles with her eating disorder.

Jason is showing eating disorder symptoms.
Tyra is seeking treatment for her eating disorder.

Not Focused on Appearance

These comments can be misinterpreted and place too much focus on the body and appearance.

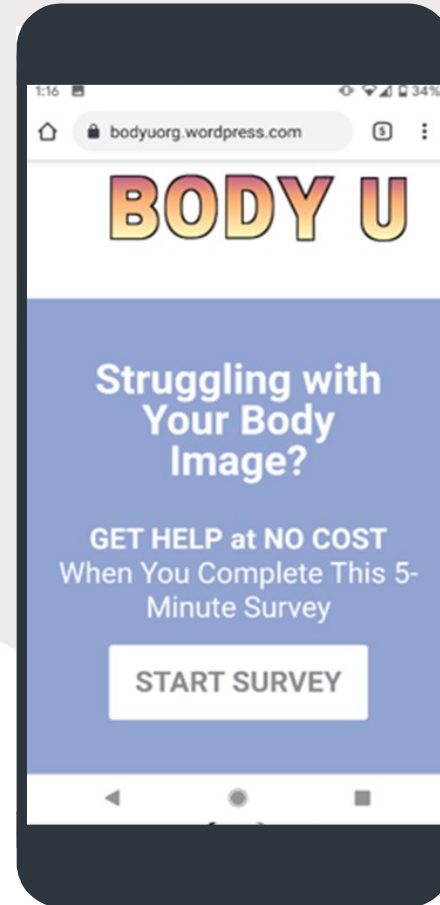
You look healthier!
You've lost weight.

I'm so glad to see you.
I'm concerned about you.

Body U – A Free Resource in Missouri

- Funded by the MO Eating Disorders Council
- Offers free online self-self tool that strives to promote healthy lifestyles
- Evidence based programs

www.bodyu.org



360 Eating Disorders Training Program

- Founded by the Missouri Eating Disorders Council
- Access free eating disorders trainings

