



**THIS IS  
MY BODY**

WOMEN TALK ABOUT THEIR  
RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR BODIES

EDITED BY JUNE STEVENS WESTERFIELD

This Is My Body:  
Women Talk About Their Relationships with Their Bodies

Compiled and Edited by June Stevens Westerfield

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The This Is My Body Book Project is ongoing. Would you like to be a part of it by sharing your story and opinions? For more information or to fill out a questionnaire go to June Stevens Westerfield's website: [juneofallthings.com](http://juneofallthings.com)

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# DEDICATION

For all girls and women. You are not alone.

And for Gladys Gonzales Atwell, because she was bold and brave enough to be the first to step forward and share her story and she wasn't shy about putting her name out there. You are an amazing woman Gladys.



# A NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

Dear Readers,

My name is June Stevens Westerfield. In my professional life I am a romance novelist, but in my everyday life I am a fat girl and body acceptance advocate. This book has brought together both aspects of my life into one incredible project.

I came up with the “This Is My Body” project one night when some author friends and I were discussing books we’d written in a writer’s group I belong to. I was telling them about a book I put together a few years ago that consisted of women discussing what they really wanted from the men in their lives. The conversation drifted to body image, and the idea to do a similar book for women about body image blossomed.

I couldn’t get the idea out of my head. I kept thinking about how alone women often feel, yet when feel safe enough to share our stories with others, we so often find out we aren’t alone in our struggles. Over the next few days The “This Is My Body” project was born. I put together some forms both via Google Forms and on my website asking women to share stories about their relationships with their bodies. I shared the forms across the Internet via Facebook, Twitter, and

body positive groups. Several body positive activists shared the forms with their communities.

The moment I started letting people know about the project, I started getting a ton of private messages thanking me for doing this. Women I'd never met were thanking me and telling me they couldn't wait to read it. Over the course of the next three months women came forward with their stories. Not as many as I'd first hoped, but more than I expected. Even when it is safe and anonymous, talking about how you really feel about your body can make a person face truths they rather not think about. I know this from experience. I knew it would be hard for women to come forward. I wasn't completely sure anyone would share with me.

But they did, and many contacted me afterward letting me know that the process of writing down their feelings about their bodies was cathartic and actually helped put them on the road to being more accepting of themselves.

The stories that lie within these pages are both inspiring and heartbreaking. As I read the submissions—in tears the entire time—I learned more about body positivity and acceptance than I'd learned in my past few years as being an advocate, or even in my entire life. I am more convinced than ever that the more we talk about how we feel about ourselves—the raw, unpretty truth—the

more we heal, and the more we help other women know they aren't alone and give them the courage to start sharing their own stories.

For this reason, the "This Is My Body" project will be an ongoing project. I will continue to gather stories from women and use them in articles and blog posts and when there are enough stories, I'll do another volume of the ebook. I will keep doing whatever I can to get the message out to women that they are not alone in their struggles with self-love.

But, before I share the stories of other women, it is only fair that I first share my story with you.

One of my earliest memories of hating my body, really and truly hating it, is from when I was fourteen and I stood in my mother's bedroom in her full length mirror with my arms rigidly straight down my sides, hiding the curve of my hips and wishing I could take a knife and cut off the curvy parts and be straight all the way down.

Yes, you read that right. I was fourteen and I fantasized about cutting my hips and thighs off with a knife.

If you had asked me at the time why I felt that way, I would have told you because no boys liked me and neither did girls. And if you'd asked me what I thought would happen if my hips and thighs

were straight, I would have told you that I would have more friends and boyfriends.

But looking back, I know that is not true. You see, two years before that I had been the most bullied kid at school, though my weight had never been what I was teased about at school. All of the weight pressure came from home in the form of no-sugar diet.

But the next year, the year I was 13, I lived with my grandmother, my Mimi. Mimi's focus was always on health, and I can't ever remember her calling me fat, saying I had to lose weight, or saying anything bad about my body. But even though she was pretty strict about eating healthy foods and exercising, I never felt bad about myself. That year, though I wasn't the most popular girl in school by a long shot, I was very popular in my class. I had lots of friends, and "shocker" boyfriends. (As much as 13 year olds can be boyfriend/girlfriend.) I even made the cheer squad for the next year (but I moved, so that never happened).

Then I moved back home. For Christmas in 1987 (right before my 14th birthday) my mother bought me two pair of boys Rustler jeans. That is what she always bought me. But, I was an almost 14-year-old girl with hips (I'd had breasts for almost 4 years already) and the pants she bought me didn't fit. She allowed me to ride my bike to the store she bought them from and exchange



them myself. It was the first time I'd had the freedom to pick out my own clothes and no way was I getting pants from the boys side any more. They didn't fit right and were ugly. So, I went to the girls' side and got my very first pair of Chic jeans. (I don't know if they make Chic anymore, but they were THE THING to have if you were a junior high girl in the mid to late 80's.) I was so excited. They were acid washed, with tiny ankles that didn't have to be folded over—what we'd call skinny jeans today—and they were a Misses size 10. The only problem was that one pair of Chic jeans cost the same as two pair of boys Rustlers.

I got home and put them on with the pretty pink sweater Mimi had bought me for Christmas. I did my hair and makeup and put on my two pairs of socks, the colors alternating (pink and white on one side, white and pink on the other) and my pink faux-converse. I was every inch the 80's teen queen (if you've ever seen Teen Witch, you'll know how I THOUGHT I looked). I felt so pretty. So “just right”.

Then my mom got home. She saw the pants and the receipt showing the price and screamed at me for not getting boy's jeans. Then told me I looked slutty and disgusting in those pants with my fat ass and hips hanging out over my skinny legs. I was devastated.

So, now, looking back, I know that when I wanted to cut the flesh off my hips and thighs, it had absolutely nothing to do with boys or popularity. It had everything to do with my mother and being body-shamed on a daily basis. What I really wanted was to be straight hipped so my mom would think I was pretty.

I know, now, that my mother thought shaming me and being hard on me was the way to make me tough. She was doing what she **THOUGHT** was best with the tools she had. In a way, it worked. But mostly, it didn't. It just made me a neurotic mess, and I think I finally started appreciating myself despite of how my mother conditioned me, not because of it. I also know now that the Chic jeans incident probably had a lot more to do with my mom being mad because I'd bought the more expensive pants (and had taken the tags off so they couldn't be returned), than with how they actually made me look.

When I think about how I used to stand in front of that mirror and wish my hips away and the things I'd say to myself. I think about what that 14-year-old girl I was would say if she could see me now. She would be horrified... that's who I was, a person who would have been horrified by a person as fat as I am now. To me becoming what I am now was the worst thing imaginable. But why? Not because of boys, or even other girls. Because

of what I was taught about my own self-worth... and not just from magazines and TV and gossipy mean girls in gym class.

Shame is never the way to teach a lesson. Your words matter, even if you “mean well” you can’t count on a young girl to get your meaning.

And the things you say to yourself matter too. Back then I had no idea my mom probably felt the same way about herself. What I always saw was a well put together, confident woman. It wasn’t until later, after we’d moved to a town where she didn’t know many people and her depression started becoming more apparent that I started seeing some of those negative feelings directed at herself. Yet it took me many more years, into my own adulthood, before I was able to look back and recognize it. I know now that she couldn’t be someone who could teach me real self-love, or even how to be neutral about my body, because she didn’t know how to do that for herself. I can understand that now, but what I know now, as an adult, will never be able to fix how I felt as a teenager.

Loving yourself is not easy. It’s especially not easy when you’ve been conditioned to loathe everything about your body from someone who didn’t love theirs (and who knows what my mother was taught by example). But somewhere we HAVE to break the cycle. We can’t change the

past, and placing blame does no good. The only thing we can do is go forward one moment at a time. If you can't start loving yourself for you, think about that little child that looks at you and learns how to be a person from the person that you are. Love takes time, and it takes work. To start, just try to be kind to yourself, so that you can help the girls (and boys) you love learn to be kind to themselves.

Thank you for your time. You are brilliant. You are beautiful. And you are not alone.

June Stevens Westerfield

# **TRIGGER WARNING**

Please be aware that the stories in this book are the true feelings of real women. They are not always pretty. There is negative self-talk, discussions of eating disorders, diet talk, negative family experiences, abuse and more. Please be aware that there are many topics that may be triggering.



# THE STORIES

*I asked 25 women from various walks of life about their relationships with their bodies. The following stories are their answers, in their own words. I have **lightly** edited the responses, only correcting spelling and grammatical errors that were obvious and made it difficult to read. For the most part I kept the grammar, including “all caps” words exactly as the submitter wrote it.*

**\*\* ~~~ \*\***

Struggled with PCOS, 5 different surgeries (hysterectomy etc.), Partial molar Pregnancy, Scars and going from a size 4 to a size 12 in 5 years. I don't mind mentioning my name. It's been a hard journey but a rewarding one.

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I started on my body positive journey out of pure curiosity when I stumbled upon a couple plus-size fashion blogs (these women are curvy, AND they're showing it off!? How is this possible!?). This led to more and more blogs (you mean I can be fat AND healthy!?), me signing up for a half-marathon, finishing it, then finishing two more in the span of one year. And now I am doing my doctoral dissertation on weight stigma in college

settings. However, I seemed to have plummeted in my own journey. Since finishing my last half-marathon last May, life got the best of me. That summer was a milestone in the doctoral program, I got a new (more stressful) job in October, all which lead to me stopping exercise completely and eating whatever the hell I wanted.

Now I am at my heaviest (probably...I threw out my scale, but I can feel my belly a lot more than I used to, and my clothes are tighter). And on a daily basis I feel like a hypocrite. I am wholeheartedly supportive of the body positive movement, yet I am so full of self-hate and shame that I keep having thoughts of needing to lose weight. I have tried over and over to rekindle the motivation I had when I did those half-marathons, but I can't seem to get past the "first" workout. I keep doing one workout, then not again for like 2 weeks, then I tell myself, ok let's try again. I keep feeling like a failure.

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I have struggled with my weight my entire life. I have Turner's Syndrome so I'm really short and overweight. I can't stand pictures of myself. I see a woman who is a failure and a loser. I have tried different things and I hate it! I'm not sure that I even enjoy food anymore. I also have a thyroid



issue which makes it very hard to lose weight. Thanks for listening.

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I am a 38-year-old married mom of 3 boys. I also consider myself a great success story when it comes to being body positive. I have always struggled with body image. I use to think I was so fat and ugly to the point of wanting to commit suicide. I'd spend HOURS a day looking up plastic surgery info/pictures, mainly tummy tucks. In my private moments, I would look in the mirror and cry and quite often, I'd want to smash my face into the mirror. I thought I had the ugliest body ever, it consumed my every waking hour and I was miserable. There were times when I couldn't leave the house as the anxiety was too much and when I did go out, I was paranoid that people were staring at me, thinking about how ugly I was. I was on the scale many MANY times a day!!! During my worst bout with an eating disorder, I was 83 pounds and purging as well as laxative abuse were all too familiar. Allowing a partner to touch me or see me was tough and so, sexual intimacy wasn't as great as it could have been. I was just so unhappy and needless to say, not living life to the fullest. These words are not sufficient to describe how much a bad body image controlled my life and my relationships. After the birth of my 3rd son, a little

over 2 years ago, I knew I had to make some changes, I wanted to be happy with me. Now, I am about 30-40 lbs. heavier. I can tell you though, I accept my body now and more often than not, I feel pretty dang beautiful. What changed? I smashed my scale, I haven't weighed myself in over a year and will never own a scale again. I no longer spend any time/money/attention on anything that tries to tell me I am not good enough be it magazines, commercials or other messages in the media.

Instead, I seek out body positive messages (Taryn Brumfitt was instrumental at the beginning of this journey and to this day). I wear clothes that make me feel good, clothes that fit my body as it is, not how it was. I have made peace with the mirror and after A LOT of practice, I no longer engage in negative self-talk...when I catch the negative thoughts, I promptly replace them with loving ones. I am learning to listen to my body and my approach to health has more to do with my whole self and has nothing to do with how much I weigh. I go out and do the things that scare me and find that there was never any reason to be scared of in the first place. Look, some days, I still struggle. I can be jealous and insecure still but that voice in my head, the one that would scream, "You are not good enough", is much more quiet now. Another thing that really helped me was I made a

list of all my good qualities and even now, I read it when I'm low. These qualities are my new definition of beautiful and I wouldn't trade them for what I use to think meant being beautiful.

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My body is something that I try not to think about a lot of the time. It holds my scars for all to see. When I was 11 I found that self-injuring was better than allowing my mum act on me so my skin became my safe zone. When I was young it was minor things that build up so slowly and eventually at 23 my cutting got deeper and people noticed. People didn't notice before because I was never really noticeable. I was 4 foot 10 and 6 stone 2. People often say they want to be skinny but when you're that weight and short people think your about 12 years old.

I was lucky that my thyroid mucked up and I've actually grown since then but at time it gets tired of are you old enough and as I worked behind a bar the number of times I heard people I had ID they would always kick off that I wasn't old enough to serve alcohol anyway that got old quick. I'm getting ahead of myself. I have two brothers both of who are six foot and both of whom are very sporty and intelligent. Basically if I grew up in America rather than England they would be the Jocks and I would be the geek. Which nowadays I

don't mind I embrace my geek life but as a teenager it was much harder. My parents would go away sometimes and my elder brother was left in charge. This usually meant house parties for his friend and for me it would always be 4 foot 10 put the burgers on. I was pretty much just invisible I wasn't seen as another person other than the kid sister when in reality there's only a year and half difference in age. Due to illness I went onto medication that side effect affected my thyroid gland meaning that now I'm actually 5ft 1 still short but I don't look like I'm 12 anymore. In fact, due to mental health and physical health the medication I'm on I have over doubled in weight which I know most people would want to be thinner rather than heavy I'm kind of glad that I put it on.

For one thing I get ID less though I still do get ID. However, I have made getting ID into a game I went to buy my friend a series of Angel dvd when the person at the counter instead of asking for ID goes are you 15. To which my reply was no I'm not 15. He says I can't serve you. To which I reply you didn't let me finish I'm not 15 I was 18 the year it aired on tv but I'm not 15 when he looks at my id and saw I was 32 he kind of did a double take. It things like that that allow me to have some confidence in myself.

As for the self-harming my skin I get days I still want to or do it but then I did it straight for 16

years. I was lucky and got some help from some amazing people got back into education and go an applied psychology degree along the course of going back to college and then university I found people who didn't think I was a freak for self-harming or care that I was short. The thing about studying psychology you find out a lot about yourself and others. The thing I learnt that pretty much everybody is fighting their own battles and that its okay not to be okay with yourself but finding good friends and learning to be okay that you don't have to fit a mold is okay too.

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I honestly struggle with loving myself each and every day. Most days I don't love anything about myself, but other days it's easier to find something about myself that I like. While growing up, I was told I wasn't good enough, and that has been deeply ingrained into my very soul. I am constantly reminded of my shortcomings, but I keep trying to tell myself that we all aren't good at everything. We weren't created to be perfect. We were created for a specific purpose in mind, and only in that thing can we truly succeed and soar to the highest of heights. If nothing else, I try to remind my girls every day just how beautiful and special and good they are. They deserve to know that they are perfect just the way they are. They

don't need to be more for me to love them unconditionally.

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I will be turning 50 this year. I weigh around 250 and really wanted to lose over 100 pounds before my birthday but that isn't happening. The reason why is simply because I can't get myself motivated. You see in Dec of 2004, I lost my nephew who was 24 at the time to suicide. He was my oldest brother's child and I loved him like my own kid. Losing him put me in a funk that I stayed in for over 10 years. Along the way, I lost my older brother (49 years old) in Sep 2010 to suicide then his youngest daughter (22) in Mar 2011....the same way.

Last but not least, I lost my next brother in Feb 2012 to suicide so I had a deep despair that I just couldn't get out of and the depression only added the weight. It took me a long time to learn that all those deaths were nothing I did but more about relationship problems and I knew I needed to work on mine. My husband has always supported and loved me. He is my best friend and I don't know how he put up with so much except as I said, he loves me. I haven't figured out why my heart and my brain can't get in sync with this whole weight issue. I buy all the products out there to help but I never see them through. I keep hoping

that one day the light bulb will go on and the weight will fall off.

I know it took me a while to realize I might not like how I look on the outside but I love the me on the inside. I have good friends, coworkers, and family that see the kindness I have in my heart and my husband always tells me I have earned my wings to get into Heaven but I am just not happy with myself. I am still working on it continuously day in and day out. One day soon, I hope to find the secret to successfully getting off my butt and losing this weight!

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It's amazing what can trigger a string of hurtful memories. My sister and I went through the same thing all throughout high school. I was a size five - six and my sister was a zero to a three. Our mother use to tell us, "Watch what you eat because no man will marry you, or stay with you, if you're fat." She would dish our food out and make noises at the table if we cleaned our plate at dinner. I know now she was hurting because her marriage failed and she was still in love with our father. We were all scarred emotionally from the outcome of our parents split. Right now, I'm 70 lbs. overweight, but "Look, Mom, I'm still married and we are going on 21 years this Aug." My advice, "Your physical health is important, but your mental health will stay with

you until your last breath. Stay strong in mind and spirit, for it will keep you beautiful. Love yourself."

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I have come to peace with my body finally in my 60's. My mother was a ballerina, tiny and athletic. I take after my father and his mother: I am soft and round, have been from birth. They anticipated the birth of their first child, a son: I was a girl, not the body they wanted. My mother told me (many years later, after the birth of my first child) that she had refused to touch me, never changed my diaper or held me. I did not know the details, but I had known for years that I disgusted her. I was a round girl, not the body she wanted. My father was angry, and felt cheated. From about age 5 onward, he molested my body. It was not the body he wanted; he wanted to punish, and he wanted control. I took refuge in dissociation. Unsurprisingly, I grew uncoordinated. I was poor at sports, poor at dance, poor at anything that required me to pay attention to my body. It was not the body I wanted. I was hungry for love, hungry for attention, just plain hungry. I took refuge in food, sneaking it into my room, hoarding bits of it. My father kept telling me that fat women were ugly, that no one would want them, so I ate more. I was unable to get fat enough for him to not molest me.



My body was not the body I wanted. In high school, kids began to tease me about my fat body.

I pretended to ignore them. My body was not the body anyone wanted. In college, I found out that there were boys who thought I was ugly but fuckable. Desperate to be truly wanted, I began to diet, and discovered a new obsession: dieting. Even if it killed me, I was going to get the body I wanted. My body dwindled. I would lie in the sun, covered with baby oil, and study my hipbones.

Why did I not have a perfect hollow between them? Why could I not drive myself below 90 lbs? I lived on scraps of lettuce and sunshine. It was still not the body I wanted. The following 30 years were spent on diets, self-hatred, shame, and more diets. I left the abusive husband, but kept my abusive self. My metabolism shot, I dieted my way to 300 lbs. and above. I learned that a 300-pound body is a body people love to hate. But Love challenged the whole story. I had two sons who loved me, despite all my failings. I met a woman who loved me, just as I was. We ate cookies together, and went to get ice cream. Gradually I came to value myself, healed by love, healed by people who loved my hugs, loved my kisses, came from my body. A kind therapist introduced me to Fat Acceptance.

I began to accept my fat body.

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My relationship with my body can be summed up in six words: Fake it until you make it. I know how I SHOULD feel. I know how I WANT to feel. But most days, I can't. I want to be able to look in the mirror and say, "Yes, you are one beautiful person." Most days it's impossible. But some days I can, and that is better than it used to be. And those good days are coming more often. What changed? I started faking it. No, I can't look in the mirror and tell myself I'm beautiful, but I've found I can look at the rest of the world and tell everyone else I'm beautiful. I put on a confident, and sometimes cocky, mask and project it out to the world figuring that eventually I'll start believing my own press. I have found that the more I fake it, the more I pretend to believe others when they tell me I'm beautiful... the less I have to pretend. Maybe someday I won't have to pretend at all.

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In high school I was super self-conscious. No one ever teased me for being fat, but I felt I was. I wore super baggy clothes and never did my hair or makeup. I dated one boy for a short while, but after we broke up no one else asked me out. I assumed it was because I was fat and plain. It

didn't bother me much, I was pretty focused on school and getting into college.

Then there was this girl in college who weighed about the same as me, but she was about four inches shorter and so much cuter. She had these natural ringlet curls and tiny, "cute" features. All the boys ran after her. Next to her I felt so fat and ugly. But now I realize it wasn't any of those things that made her the one more attractive to boys. It was her confidence. She smiled and laughed and sashayed her curvy hips like she was the hottest thing on two legs, and they ate it up. I, on the other hand, was nervous and shy, laughed too loud, and said idiotic things. I had such low self-esteem that when a boy did pay attention I either ran for the hills or got too excited and scared them off.

Years later, I'm old enough, and wise enough, to see it never was my body, which was, and still is, voluptuous in all the right places, that put them off. It was my lack of confidence and my awkwardness.

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### Being Small Doesn't Mean Self Love

I've never been big, not my traditional standards, but I have been skinny. During my teen years, I had eating issues. I had an abusive mom, who also had a serious mental illness, and so eating didn't happen

often. We often forgot to go to grocery store, or stock the house with food. So I maintained a small size all through high school. I was unhealthy, but I thought, oh well, I'm young, I'm skinny. But I still hated my body then. I still hid it under baggy clothes, and pretended like there was nothing wrong. Skinny doesn't make you happy. Being skinny, I developed depression and anxiety, and first struggled with self-harm. I thought going off to college would fix things. Leaving my home life, and my small town behind...

In college I put on weight, I moved in with my aunt and uncle, and I ate. I ate healthy at home, and unhealthy at school, and I started gaining weight, and again, I hated my body. I never felt confident in my skin. Though my friends were bigger than me, and often remarked about how they'd like to be my size, I felt ashamed of the weight I put on. I was healthier, I had more energy. I went to the gym, I walked around. I had good friends, good grades, and truly enjoyed college. But I still hated myself. I still felt like the least pretty girl in the room, in every room, all the time. I've never been 200lb, but I felt like it every day. I would confide in friends, and they'd brush me off. I struggled to form any real relationships. I didn't love who I was. They'd tell me that I'm skinny, and I don't understand. Body shaming doesn't pick a certain weight.

Post college, I gained more weight. I was stressed, I was overworked, I was poor, and I was tired. I had nothing going for me. Except, I did. I was on my own. I moved 2000 miles from home. I had an amazing man in my life. I had an adventure waiting for me, but I didn't see it! I didn't see one speck of the amazing things I had because I was too busy self-sabotaging. I pushed away intimacy because I felt fat, I felt ugly, I felt unsexy. I couldn't make new friends because I felt like no one would like me. I felt like I'd always be the ugly friend. I struggled. I spiraled, and I went on fad diets, starvation diets, and worked out like a fiend. Nothing changed, nothing improved. I felt hopeless, and my depression latched on to that feeling and allowed me to give up. I stopped trying to feel better, and believed this is what life is. Until one day, I found out it wasn't.

My advice to you? If you're like me, like I was, and sometimes still am... get your mind in the game. What changed me, what made me start to see what I had to offer the world was personal development. It might seem corny, or crazy. I don't care. Judge away if you want, but listening to others who struggle, others who know that there's a whole lot of dark before you ever get to see the light. They helped me realize that, hell yes I was sexy! I'm damn beautiful. I am healthy. I am loved. I am

successful. I'm pursuing my passion of helping others, working in media and really making a difference. It helped me see that a tiny number on a scale does not even being to get into the big ol' package that is me. So, if you're like me, or different. I honestly urge you to find something like I do. Find a podcast, find a book (I highly recommend *You Are a Badass*), and begin to realize you're not alone, you are NOT fat, and you are one of the most beautiful people in this world. Shine bright, and don't let anyone tell you otherwise!

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Food. The substance of life and for most, an addiction. I am addicted to food. I love it. I love eating, cooking, and watching videos on food. I can't get enough. As a child, I never realized I was addicted to it. I always thought it was my nonjudgmental friend. When things got tough as a kid, instead of crying I would eat. I'd eat a whole bag of chips and feel so good afterwards. I was no longer thinking about the issue, I was living on the high that food gave me.

I grew up in the south. Southerners are known for throwing down when it comes to food. So there was never really an issue about my overeating. It was like it was okay because that is what we do or no one wanted to discuss their own issues.

I remember I was in sixth grade and all the kids were being weighed. When they got to me, the scale said "199 pounds". I was around 11 years old. My teacher told me that this wasn't good. This was the first time an adult had ever mentioned this to me. It didn't sway me, I still over ate.

By the time I reached adulthood, my food addiction was the norm for me. My weight rose and my self-esteem plummeted. This was about the time that media was stressing that skinny was the way to be. I weighed 300 pounds, in my eyes skinny was never an option. I began to feel like no one would want me because I didn't meet society's standards. This led to depression and the vicious cycle of depending on food. I couldn't win.

Over the years I tried every diet, every pill and nothing worked. I finally got to the point I accepted that I was going to be overweight forever. That changed until recently. I got a scale that went up to 430 pounds. I stepped on the scale and got an error message. This meant that I weighed over 430 pounds. That was the game changer. I had reached my highest weight and I was shocked. I needed to change. This wasn't a change to be what the world wanted me to be. This is a change to be who I wanted to be. I wanted to be healthy and see my nephews grow up. I'm not setting out to be skinny, just healthy. If that means plus sized, well then I'm okay with it.

I'm battling my addiction. Unlike alcohol or drugs, I can't avoid food. I can control which foods I take in though. I've been at this for about 5 weeks and I now weigh in at 417. I'm making progress and I am proud of myself.

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I've been fat my whole life.

Well.. Almost.

I started out as a skinny kid- really skinny. I was popular, had "boyfriends" (even in Kindergarten!) and everyone wanted to know me. Unfortunately, life wasn't as great at home. I came from an abusive home life including physical and emotional abuse. The constant stress and fear and hyper vigilance lead to early onset Bipolar Disorder by age 7. I struggled with severe suicidal depression and anxiety as my weight climbed.

I gained over 100lbs in just a few years. By 11 years old I wore a women's size 24 and was the fattest kid at my school. I watched, horrified, as my friends and "boyfriends" simply turned their backs on me. No one said anything, they simply refused to talk to me anymore, pretending that I'd suddenly become invisible to them.

The message was clear to me that my fat body was unwanted. Boys began asking me out as dares or pranks by then. At home, my abusers assured me that I was lazy and gluttonous (despite the fact



that everything that went into my mouth was controlled and I worked and played no less than my thin siblings). There was no longer anywhere left for me to turn. At the age of 10 (before my weight had even peaked though I was still plenty fat), I attempted suicide for the first time. I tried to hang myself with a rope tied to a tree in the back yard.

By age 15 I had developed Anorexia (atypical because I wasn't "underweight"), began self-harming, and had years of more suicide attempts ahead of me. I was put on medication by the age of 23, but it did nothing for the hatred of my body. by 25 I was married and had a son and, every day, thought of ending it all. I constantly wondered how anyone could love such a disgusting, fat, person like myself.

One day, I was bragging about how little I'd eaten for the past few weeks to a friend, expecting another "good job!" or some form of female bonding over attempts to be thinner. Instead, she gave me a fat acceptance book. It took me two weeks to read a small book because I kept getting angry and putting it down. It challenged everything I knew about the world and my own body. Two weeks after I had finished it, the message had begun to seep in. I am, after all, a science based girl, and the book had plenty of science in it to tell me how wrong I was to hate my body.

That was it.. I was off like a rocket. A fat, shiny, rocket. I had photos taken of me, professionally, started a fat acceptance blog, put myself into recovery for anorexia, and, most importantly, I was no longer suicidal. Don't get me wrong, I definitely still had bipolar disorder, but without constant self-hatred, the meds could do their job. It's been almost 6 years since then (2010-2016), and I still run my blog, a photography project called The Fat Naked Art Project, have been on fat positive podcasts, filmed a pilot for a fat positive show, spoken at conferences, taught fat acceptance workshops in my home city, and I'm getting ready to launch a new photo project called Body Love Through Struggle which focuses on people with a history of eating disorders.

I know it seems simple-read a book and feel better! But the truth is that people find empowerment and healing in different ways and over different amounts of time. For me, no one had ever told me before that loving myself was ever even an option. Once that door was open to me, I ran through it full force! Fat acceptance not only literally saved my life, but has changed it in so many positive ways that I can't even begin to count them.

I still have bad days, but when I do, I take photos of the parts of me that I feel least comfortable about and I study them until I love them. My cellulite covered thighs, my small breasts,

my stomach rolls, even the leftover scars from years of self-harm. It's amazing what happens when you embrace your body. I weight almost 300lbs, I wear bikinis and crop tops, skinny jeans and vertical stripes, and I'm never going back.

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I see myself as beautiful. But I seem to be nothing but a sex object to other men, or nothing at all. And to others, I am nothing but a lazy fat pig. I just can't understand why no one seems to see me as the beautiful, classy woman I really am.....the way I see myself.

When I look in the mirror, I often see a beautiful woman looking back at me. And I am not trying to be conceded about it. I see a woman with a young, beautiful face. (I am 38, but look younger) I have natural knowledge of how to apply my makeup and have it play up my natural features, rather than ""caking"" it on.

I am multi-talented....I can sing, write, play 2 musical instruments that I taught myself how to play, and I am a die hard romantic! What about me is there not to love? Simply because I am fat? All of my good qualities are diminished or overshadowed (or suddenly become nonexistent) because all anyone sees is my fatness.....as if that is a bad thing.

Why? Why is being fat seen as something bad? I feel I am being unfairly judged. And I get it allot. People look at me and assume I cram cheese burgers all day. If they even bothered to get to know me, they would learn that I am a Vegetarian. So that there would smash their pathetic stereo type about fat people. I also have a disease called Lipedema, same as what Lisa Chandler has posted. I would be happy if you used my story! smile emoticon

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My relationship with my body is one of awe and wonderment, but it took me awhile to get here. I have been fat since the 3rd grade. I am 48 presently.

I own a plus size lingerie boutique, so I get to talk with fat women all day every day and it's been so eye opening for me. I get to see my body reflected back at my almost daily and I have found a new appreciation for my body.

I have always enjoyed all of the pleasure my body can create. But, now when I see all of these beautiful women, I am reminded that I am also beautiful.

We sure as hell know the media is trying to convince us on a daily basis that we are not smart

enough, not thing enough and definitely my ads are not washboard enough!

It's such a beautiful thing to see my customers step into their beauty and own it. It's also a great daily reminder for me to NOT put my life on hold and own it. Stop waiting for that perfect diet. (In fact, I have completely given up on dieting.) Stop waiting for that one perfect outfit that hides my tummy so well. Stop waiting and start living for the moment in the EXACT body I own right this very second!

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When I was younger, I would look at other little girls, then myself, and I really didn't see a difference. It wasn't until I was nine that I noticed that I wasn't like those other girls.

I wasn't skinny, as those girls claimed, I was considered, "fat". Never has a word hurt me like that word did when I first heard it. This was around the time I started having an interest in boys and what they thought about me.

Middle school came along, some years worse than others, and I still didn't like my body. When I started making new friends, I noticed how most of my female friends were skinny and got the attention of boys...that hurt, admittedly. I used to have the attention of the boys in elementary

school, but never noticed, or cared, after I lost my confidence in myself.

My friends had flaws/obstacles, like anyone. One believed she was a witch (I'm not kidding about this) and didn't have many friends, one had trouble with schoolwork, and another struggled with her weight. What's the one thing that connected these three girls?

They had confidence and believed in themselves, even through obstacles.

It isn't until recently that I realized how appealing and beautiful confidence is. When I started having confidence in my body again, started believing that I was beautiful, curves and all, the more I started feeling better about myself. It wasn't their bodies I was most envious of—it was their confidence that allowed them to hold their head high and accomplish anything they set their mind to, even if they failed along the way.

I still struggle with my weight, but now I have confidence in myself. How much you weigh is just a number. Who you are means so much more than that. Never forget that. And never forget that you're beautiful.

Remember that weight is just a number.

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My dad was only in my life for fourteen years, but he managed to damage my self-esteem in such

a way that it followed me well into adulthood. I'd love to say I'm totally past it and have no more self-doubts, but I can't. Still, I'm better than I used to be about it. He weighed over 300 pounds and told me I was going to look just like him when I grew up. You don't tell a little girl that. I felt like it was a done deal and didn't bother to eat healthy. When I was in my teen years, I felt like I was huge. Every time I looked in the mirror, I saw myself in a distorted way. It wasn't until years later that I was shown pictures of myself back then and couldn't believe how skinny I was at the time. One thing that has helped me is that my dad got in touch with me when I was in my early 30's, and I realized while talking to him that he had no idea what he'd done to me, the lasting pain and doubts he piled on top of me when I was a kid. I also realized that he didn't know how to love anyone but himself. Knowing my grandparents as I do, I'm sure his childhood wasn't roses and puppies. They never showed me (or anyone else from what I saw) love. So now I know it wasn't because of me that my dad didn't love me. It wasn't something I did or because I wasn't pretty enough or smart enough or whatever. The problem was his. That made it easier to change my outlook. The other thing that has helped me more than I can say is knowing God. I cried the night I realized that I have a heavenly Father who loves me more than words can say. He's always

there for me, never lets me down, and only wants the best for me. Through him, getting to know him, I have changed so much and feel like I can finally have a good life.

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I have never loved my body. Not one single day. There have been only two experiences where anyone ever made me feel good about my body. Some of my earliest memories are of friends and family members pointing out that I had too much body. By middle school my own grandmother was secretly supplying me with diet pills and by high school I developed an eating disorder. My relationship with my body has always been destructive.

As I reached adulthood and started seeking out real meaningful relationship I carried with me everything I knew from growing up. That being fat isn't considered attractive and that it was going to be a real barrier to finding love. I tried online dating for a while and met a lot of guys that I really connected with. We would have so much in common and would agree on everything we wanted in a partner or relationship. Then the nail biting moment of truth would come where they wanted to meet. I'd either avoid it or have to confess the truth about my body. That's what it felt like. The confession of a dirty secret. The moment



you tell them, they never talk to you the same way again and while most find gentle ways to let you down, others just get cruel.

My body has become something I apologize for.

When my ex-partner started going on walks with me I would breakdown and cry because I was embarrassed that I walked slower than he did. That I got winded. That I needed to take breaks. I feel like I have to apologize for the fact that I'm the person he's walking with. For the looks we are getting from other people.

My body makes me feel shamed daily.

I worry constantly what people will think if they see me in drive though, holding a soda can, walking into a gym, if they see me in a swim suit getting into the pool at my apartment complex, if they see what's in my shopping cart. It's been made painfully clear over and over again that while people don't think it's okay for me to be fat, they also don't want to be forced to see me doing anything to correct the issue either.

I avoid life because of my body.

I get embarrassed playing with my kids in the park. I've been mooded at while stopped at a red light with my kids in the car. I worry every time I leave my house that someone will say something hurtful to me in front of my children. I can't just agree to plans with people because I don't know

what kind of chairs will be available where we are going or if the seatbelt will fit me in their car. I've gotten nasty comments from other women at the gym.

I've made lots of changes in my life. I've eliminated soda and made healthier eating choices. I've even started exercising. The frustrating part? Nothing changes with my body. It stays the same taunting me no matter what I do. As I teen I hated my body so much that I started to self-harm, because nothing was working to fix it. I got satisfaction in hurting myself because I felt like I was attacking my body. A body that made me the butt of jokes, an object of ridicule, and left me isolated from many of my peers.

Hating my body has made it hard to trust other people.

I never ever accept physical compliments. I've had two partners that adored me and my body just as it is. I never believed a word of it. I've outright called them liars to their faces or assumed that it was a joke. When I meet a new guy if he gives me any sort of flattery then I assume he's being duplicitous. That he was dared to come flirt with me or has some ulterior motive. I can't count the number of guys who have assumed because I'm a big girl that I will accept anything they want to give me. That it means I'm desperate.

Having a big body doesn't mean I'm lazy, desperate, sloppy, stupid, a bad person, or making unhealthy choices. What it does mean for me, is a lot of loneliness. Loneliness that is excruciating and has had me considering suicide on more than one occasion because doctors and dieticians don't know how to fix the problem either. I've tried every diet, point system, and pill I could find. I even found exercises I enjoy. None of it makes any difference. I wish I could unlock my body and make it move on the scale. That I could enjoy life and living without the constant worry and fear of what other people are going to say and think. I hope that my children never have to know what being fat in the world feels like. Being fat isn't a crime and I wish I could stop being labeled, sentenced, and imprisoned for it.

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All my life my mum has told me that I need to lose a lot of weight in order to "get a boyfriend" in other words, and her genuine opinion, fat women are less deserving of love than slim women. I left home at 18 (UK size 18). Married at 22 (UK size 26). Fast forward a dozen years and 2 children and now I am a UK size 18(ish) again.

I also seem to have a deeply perverted sense of self image- according to society. I am happy with my body. It has created life 3 times

and borne life twice. It has flabby bits, saggy bits, stretchmarks and more scars than I personally can count. And, unless I'm standing naked in front of a mirror, in harsh light, none of this bothers me. In my head I am still 21 years old. Strong and perky.

And despite my body being in, arguably the worst cosmetic shape of my life, my husband says I have never been sexier. Because now I strut, I dance, I wiggle and I jiggle. And in my head I'm a UK size 8. I call it "inverse body dysmorphia". My husband calls it "self-confidence"

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I'll start at the beginning. My struggle with body image started when I was a teenager. I had a "perfect" body, but I was a dancer, and weighing in between 120-130 pounds meant I was "too big." I was the largest girl in my troupe for quite a while until I ultimately gave up on my dreams of dancing because it was too much on me mentally to handle. I still have the biggest love of dance, and there is nothing more therapeutic for me than watching a dancer lay out all of their emotions on the stage. I can ugly cry just as easily watching someone dance as I do watching a sad movie or reading a book.

When I look at pictures from back then I always think to myself, "I really wish I was as fat now as I thought I was then." And that's somewhat true, except that is not really possible now. I've had

three children, and my body has changed in ways that cannot be changed back. I'll never be able to have that body ever again, and I am completely okay with that. It has taken me a very long time to get to this point, though.

I was 145 pounds when I got pregnant with my first child. I was married and so happy with life. I did not care at all that I would be gaining weight, because I knew it was for all the right reasons. When I delivered him I weighed 205 pounds. Three short months later I got pregnant with my second child. This was when my weight really started to weigh heavily on my mind. I dropped 20 pounds in those 3 months, and I was okay with slowly losing the weight I had gained. It takes 10 months to gain that weight, so it will take time to lose the weight as well. I knew that, and I knew it was normal, but I was covered in horrible stretch marks and I carried my pregnancy much different with my daughter than I did with my son. I "felt" pregnant everywhere - my face, my legs, my arms.

When I delivered her I weighed 245 pounds. But it was totally okay! I could lose this weight as easily as I gain it. It would just take time. It took nearly 2 years to gain all of this weight, so it will take time to lose it. I've got this.

I did not lose any of that weight. I steadily gained about 10 pounds each year. But it was okay

because I would lose the weight. I'd eat healthy and exercise and it would be fine.

I got pregnant again. At this point I had resigned myself to the fact that I'd always be a big girl. My children were 3 and 2, and I was going to have another baby. This baby wasn't planned, but we'd deal with it and be fine. Until we weren't fine. My husband told me he wanted a divorce. He wasn't happy. A week later, on Father's Day, I found out it was because he was having an affair. I knew it was because I wasn't pretty anymore. Because I was fat and covered in stretch marks. Of course he'd have an affair. I'd let myself go.

That baby didn't happen. I celebrated my 25th birthday by myself on July 2nd. On July 3rd I got an abortion. On July 5th my husband celebrated our 6th wedding anniversary with his girlfriend because that is her birthday.

I was fat. Ugly. Worthless. Useless. A bad mom. A bad wife. I didn't give my body what it needed. I didn't give my husband what he needed.

I moved home after that. I packed up my two kids and moved in with my dad 3 hours away from my life. I slept on the couch and ate very little. I wasn't trying to lose any weight at this point, I just couldn't eat. All my life I'd been an emotional eater. I'd eat when I was sad. I'd eat when I was angry. I'd eat when I was happy. I'd eat. Until this point in my life food was my comfort. I honestly can't tell

you why this happened. It wasn't an eating disorder. I wasn't purposely not eating to lose weight. I just had no appetite. I'm assuming it was because I was just that depressed.

I remarried the next year to a man that tells me I'm beautiful all the time. He'll get home from work and I'll be in sweat pants and a t-shirt, covered in stuff that I couldn't even name because I'd been taking care of the child that we had together. He'll look at me and say, "You look nice today babe." And I believe him. No make-up, my hair all pulled up on top of my head, weighing in at 270 pounds. My stretch marks do not bother me anymore. They are the softest part of the skin on my body. My breasts sag after nursing 3 children, but that's okay. They sag because they gave my children life. I have acne now that I did not experience as a teenager. The hormonal changes from having children and aging have caused it. But it's okay, because everyone gets pimples. Everyone. Everyone has struggles that make them feel less than beautiful. I have to remind myself every single day.

I was a good wife. I made life with my body. It was my ex-husband's fault that he had an affair. I don't even blame the woman, who he is now married to, for that. She was not married to me. She had made no commitment to stay faithful to me. I used to blame her. After I stopped blaming

myself I blamed her. It was the first step I took to stop blaming myself for the actions of others.

It is a constant struggle for me to be happy with who I am. I have to remind myself daily that my weight and body type doesn't define me. I do not love my body the way it is, but I accept that it is the way it is. There are days I feel beautiful and days I feel ugly. But isn't that normal for everyone, regardless of their size or gender? Nobody is happy all the time. No one is confident all the time. It was easy to make this step in life once I realized that I have easily forgotten what time all of my children were born, but I can remember exactly how much I weighed when they were born. That number was so important to me at the time that it stayed in my memory after all this time.

The hardest thing I've had to do to get where I am now was to stop comparing myself to others. She is a better mom than me. She has nicer clothes than me. She has perkier boobs than me. I wish my feet were a little more like hers. She really has a nice complexion; I must start using the same face cream. I've realized after 30 years of life (I am now nearly 32) that it is so easy to compare yourself to others, and that is where it starts. When we're young we compare ourselves to others because that's what we're taught to do. We aspire to be this famous person, or we want to be smart like this person. We want to be a famous athlete. We want



to be an actor! A model! Because those are the things we value as a society. We value social status based on our outward appearances. It starts at a young age, and then when we're adults it is so hard to change how we think about others, the world, society, and ourselves.

It is hard work raising children, but the one thing I try my hardest to do is teach them that they are all individual and beautiful and smart. Even if they bring home a low grade on a report card it is okay. We are constantly learning. We learn from our mistakes and we grow. How we look on the outside does not define who we are. What grades we make in school does not define our intelligence. Do not let what society taught you to believe be who you are. Be you because you are beautiful.



My relationship with my body is decent I'd say. I don't look at myself in the mirror constantly, I don't compare my body to others and I don't hate myself. So that's a plus. I am not thin. I have a lot of fat, it's not a bad word in my opinion. Fat is something you have, not something you are, plus I am a firm believer that you can have fat and still be beautiful, the two are not antonyms.

I hate having sex though, it's a total crapfest. My husband says he loves my curves but I don't

think I'm sexy. I'm cute, I'm funny and I don't generally think about my body too much. Because I know if I do I will focus on my sagging belly. Everything else I don't really care about, but when you try to wear lingerie and your belly hangs almost low enough to cover your choche (vagina for the folks who don't know my lingo) you don't really feel that great about yourself in the bedroom, know what I mean?

Sex is a big issue in a relationship. It can make or break it.

At any rate, my husband confronted me on it a few months back and we are working on our sex life in a more proactive way. That's really about it. He re-affirms my beauty in the bedroom and I give him more BJ's. It's a win win. ;) It's the little things really.

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I hate my body, No, seriously, I do. And it hates me. I used to be thin, but I was constantly sick because I refused to eat. Then I got pregnant and I had to take care of my baby, so I ate. then after my son was born, I stopped eating, and I got extremely thin again. I STILL hated my body. today, I am overweight, my body hates me, I have multiple neurological diseases, my body is paying me back for not loving it. I try every day to find something good about my body, today, it's that I

can use my arms to hug my babies. And while to some, that may not be enough. Today, its plenty for me.

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I never knew what it was like to hate myself or anything about myself. I was young, hot and sought after. I had men fighting over me and women wishing they were me. I was tall, thin and had long luxurious locks. 5'11, 27 pant, small waist and wide hips. Hell, I wanted me. I didn't think it would ever change. I loved myself. Pure and simple. I giggled at the talks behind my back of people who ridiculed me in high school because I was an ugly duckling. 'Look at me now' is the thought that ran through my head and I snickered at the stares. Look at me now. I can't. I can't even look at me now. 2 kids, 100+ pounds packed on, a book of stressful situations, failed relationships and pure laziness.

I cannot look at me now. I see this person in the mirror that I don't recognize and I HATE myself. Every part of me. I cut all my hair off. I can't run to the store and shop in regular sections. The words people are snickering are 'she's gotten so big', 'she's the bigger one', 'she really needs to exercise'. I smile. I can spout out some snarky responses to make them laugh and take their mind off the fact that I don't look like myself anymore. Or do I? I don't know. I HATE everything about

what I see. I have never hated anything. Except for feet maybe. There isn't a single person out there that has ever been able to make me feel any different. They aren't me. They don't see me like I see me. I have no relationship with myself. It's a mentally abusive dark hole. There is no relationship. I know what to do. I know how to make myself have that 'look at me now' relationship with myself but I don't. I haven't worn a bathing suit without some type of ridiculously long cover up in 8 years.

I don't own a pair of shorts that I leave the house in. I will wear cardigans to hide my arms. I feel like that ugly duckling turned swan has had all her feathers plucked from her. The relationship I had and took for granted with myself is gone. How do I get it back? I am not sure but I've never been a quitter.

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Every job I have ever had, I was hired because of my looks. I am well aware of that. I have kept these jobs because I am intelligent. I know that I am attractive. LOGICALLY I know this. But I haven't always felt that way.

In 2011, I was 27 years old. I was a mother of three fantastic children and wife to an amazing husband. Something wasn't right with me. At 5'3" I weighed 115 lbs., and couldn't stand to look at

myself in the mirror. This is where it started. My life was nothing like I imagined it would be. I didn't go to school; I wasn't passionate about anything other than being Helicopter Mom. It didn't start with me hating my body, it started with me being disappointed in myself. Then thinking that my looks were the only thing I had going for me I started to pick those things apart. Stretch marks, saggy boobs, skeletor arms, pasty white legs, big teeth, monkey feet, weird knees, the list went on, and on. Sadly, this continued for another three years and progressively got worse. My husband noticed, but didn't want to hurt me by saying anything. It started small, I would only wear a bikini with a cover up, which is insane, since I was never modest. Then the next summer, I was wearing jeans to the beach in 100-degree weather. I stopped buying bathing suits all together, which is crazy because we spend more than half the year either on the lake or at the beach. I dressed to go to work, but at home I only wore sweatpants and big t-shirts. I wouldn't wear anything that showed off my figure. I didn't look in the mirror anymore unless I absolutely had to. I was losing my damn mind.

My husband would have to bring me to the store to go clothes shopping, and he would have to pick out the clothes for me to try on. He encouraged me to be sexy, but I didn't feel it. I felt

frumpy, and old, well beyond my 20-something years. Looking back, I see how hard he tried to make me see that I was still beautiful. It wasn't until we were planning a week-long trip to the lake that he had enough. He made the comment that there would be no sweatpants, PJ pants, baggy shirts or anything like that going to the lake with us, and if he had to pack my bag himself, he would. My initial reaction was WTF?! this man has lost his flippin' mind. He had. I had driven him to that point. I ordered bikinis online, but he had to approve them. What he was picking out was insanely small, they barely covered the nips and cracks! This was my turning point. I don't know if it was being away from my kids and house for a week or seeing the lust in my husband's eyes when I put on those tiny scraps called a bikini. That week saved me. I was turning heads of people who didn't know me, men and women both. Most people have no idea that I went through this. I felt like because I am 'skinny' I am not allowed to have body issues. This is the biggest lie I have ever let myself believe. I never told anyone how I felt about myself, my husband only picked up on it because he saw me at home, not in the real world.

I am proud of my body now. I have created life with this body. The stretch marks are proof of the amazing things MY body is capable of. MY boobs nursed those children. MY arms hold my

children when they are scared, or upset. Now that I am not hiding behind pants my legs have a bit more color. My big teeth get me compliments on my smile DAILY. There is nothing I can do about my monkey feet, but I CAN pick up change off the ground without having to bend over, so there's that. My knees are just knees. A woman's body is an amazing thing.

## **That's All for Now.**

Thank you for reading "This Is My Body". I hope it has helped some of you feel less alone in your body struggles.

## **Be A Part of The Project.**

The **This Is My Body Project** is ongoing. With luck this is just the first volume. I am currently collecting for Volumes 2 & 3.

## **Tell Your Story, Help Others.**

If you would like to participate by sharing your story, you can fill out the submission form on my website: <http://juneofallthings.com>

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book has been a labor of love, and I could not have put it together without all of the wonderful women who told their stories. I hope their bravery and honesty will help other women feel less alone in their everyday struggles with their bodies.

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# ABOUT THE EDITOR

JUNE STEVENS WESTERFIELD is a freelance writer, fiction novelist, graphic designer, web designer, greeting card designer, and Computer Science student. She's a true "June of All Things." When not working or doing school work she can be found snuggling on the sofa with her husband and four furbabies binge watching Netflix.

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