

BODY INCLUSIVE FITNESS

Creating Space for Yourself and Others in
Gyms and Other Exercise Settings

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WHAT WE WILL COVER

- Why traditional fitness spaces can feel inaccessible
- What “body inclusive fitness” means
- Practical ways to navigate and reclaim public exercise spaces
- How to create supportive environments for yourself and others



WHY EXERCISE SETTINGS CAN FEEL UNWELCOMING

- Many gyms & studios focus on aesthetics and weight loss
- Narrow ideas of what a “fit” body looks like
- Lack of staff training on health conditions like lipoedema
- Mirrors, tight spaces, judgemental stares → create discomfort and shame

You're not alone in feeling this way and the problem isn't you—it's the space that wasn't designed with you in mind.





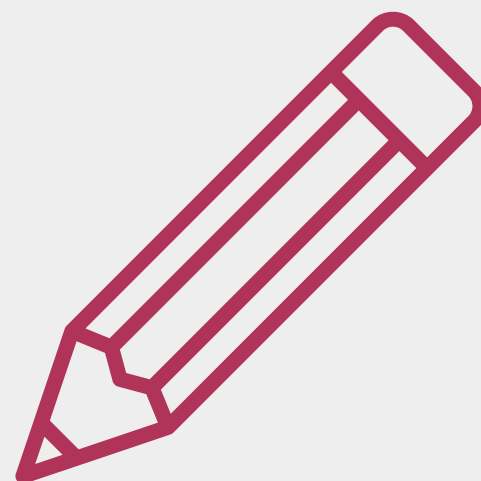
REFRAMING EXERCISE

- Movement is for joy, energy, strength—not punishment or fixing
- Your body is already worthy of being in fitness spaces
- Your experience of movement matters more than anyone's opinion
- Body functionality > body appearance

HOW TO FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE IN PUBLIC EXERCISE SPACES

- Choose exercise you enjoy
- Try different gyms before signing a contract
- Go at off-peak times & avoid the evening rush
- Wear comfortable clothes
- Go at your own pace
- Exercise with a buddy
- Set the mood
- Focus on functionality over appearance

FUNCTIONALITY APPRECIATION



Movement & Strength

One way my body helps me move through the world is...

Connection & Pleasure

One way my body helps me experience joy or connection is...



*See handout for
more Body
Functionality
Reflections!*

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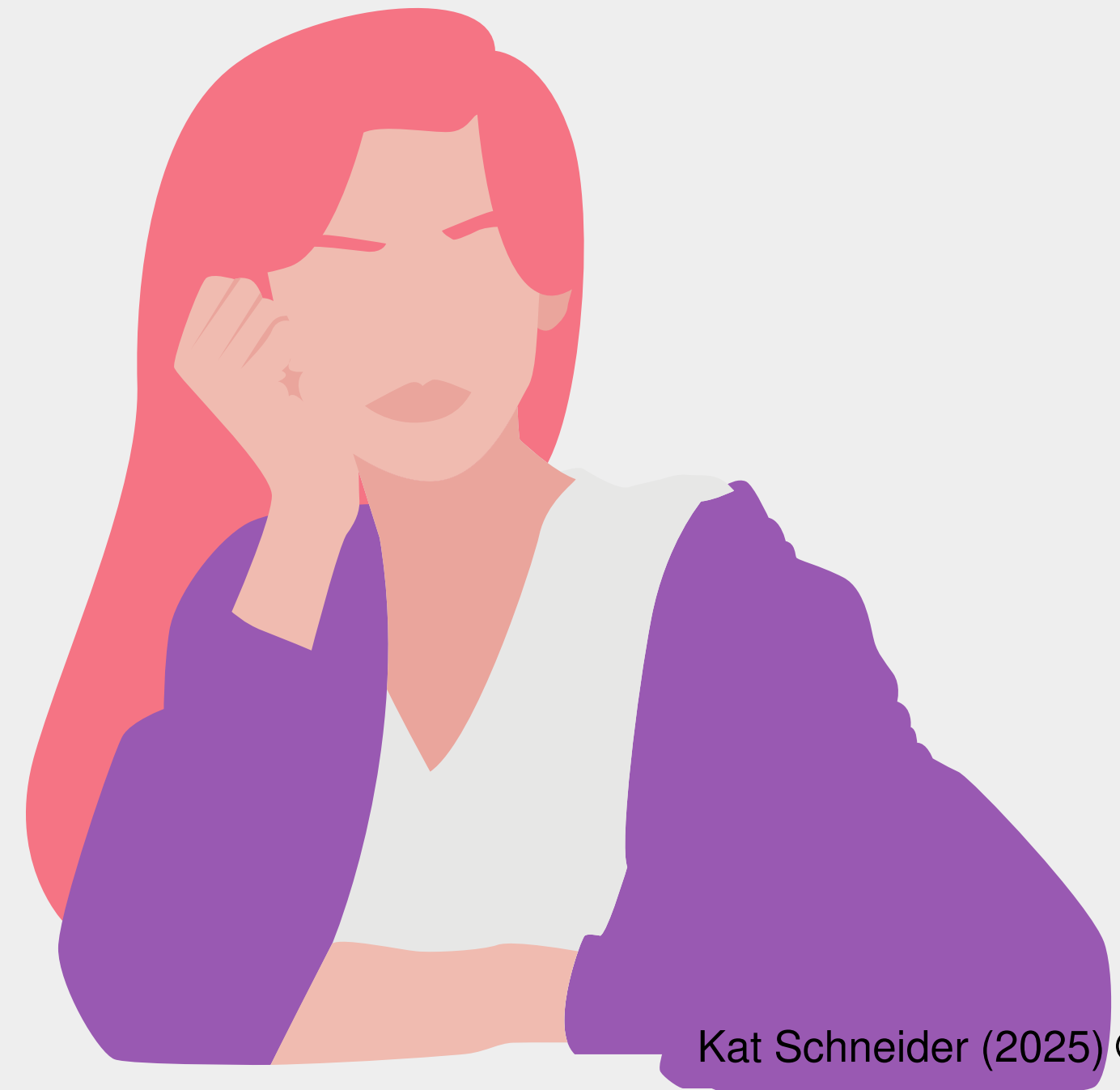
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- Advocate for yourself and others

HOW TO ADVOCATE FOR SPACE



- Talk to gym staff or instructors beforehand:
 - “I’d like to take things at my pace today.”
 - “Do you have experience supporting people with lipoedema?”
- Ask for modifications or alternative exercises that are more comfortable for you.

Feedback helps make spaces more inclusive over time.



***See handout for
more Empowering
Language
Statements!***

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- Focus on functionality over appearance
- Advocate for yourself and others
- Challenge fitness and weight myths
- Choose a space that feels safe and comfortable—remember, gyms are not the only option
- Celebrate your wins—no matter how “small”



REMEMBER...

You don't need to
earn your place in
movement spaces.

You already
belong.

SPORT & EXERCISE

- <https://www.missfitsworkout.co.uk/>
- <https://bodyimagefitness.co.uk/>

WEIGHT-INCLUSIVE FITNESS INFLUENCERS

- @lucybyyoga
- @missfitsworkout
- @theallbodyclub
- @georginacoxpersonaltraining
- @theunderbellyyoga

BODY IMAGE RESOURCES

- @car_uwe
- The Body Is Not an Apology (book by Sonya Renee Taylor)
- What We Don't Talk About When We Talk About Fat (book by Aubrey Gordon)

OTHER

- Body positive fitness finder: <https://superfithero.com/blogs/body-positive-and-size-inclusive-fitness-trainers>
- Body positive yoga teachers: <https://www.lityoga.co.uk/body-positive-yoga-teacher-listing>
- Size-inclusive attire: <https://superfithero.com/>

BODY INCLUSIVE FITNESS RESOURCES

THANK YOU!

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