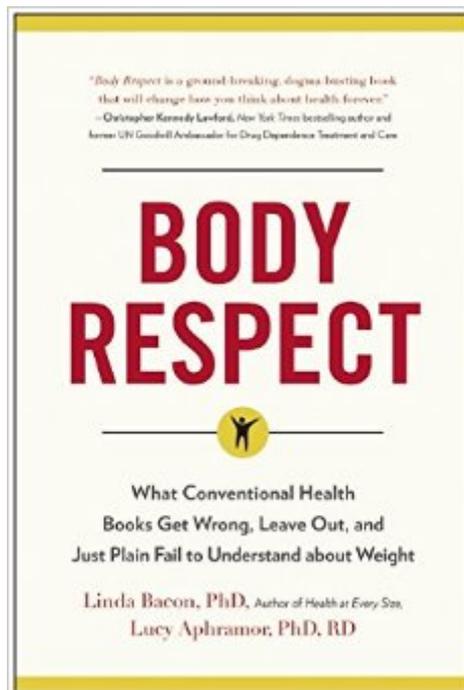


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# Body Respect: What Conventional Health Books Get Wrong, Leave Out, And Just Plain Fail To Understand About Weight



## Synopsis

Mainstream health science has let you down. Weight loss is not the key to health, diet and exercise are not effective weight-loss strategies and fatness is not a death sentence. You've heard it before: there's a global health crisis, and, unless we make some changes, we're in trouble. That much is true—but the epidemic is NOT obesity. The real crisis lies in the toxic stigma placed on certain bodies and the impact of living with inequality—not the numbers on a scale. In a mad dash to shrink our bodies, many of us get so caught up in searching for the perfect diet, exercise program, or surgical technique that we lose sight of our original goal: improved health and well-being. Popular methods for weight loss don't get us there and lead many people to feel like failures when they can't match unattainable body standards. It's time for a cease-fire in the war against obesity. Dr. Linda Bacon and Dr. Lucy Aphramor's *Body Respect* debunks common myths about weight, including the misconceptions that BMI can accurately measure health, that fatness necessarily leads to disease, and that dieting will improve health. They also help make sense of how poverty and oppression—such as racism, homophobia, and classism—affect life opportunity, self-worth, and even influence metabolism. Body insecurity is rampant, and it doesn't have to be. It's time to overcome our culture's shame and distress about weight, to get real about inequalities and health, and to show every body respect.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I purchased this book because I had previously read and enjoyed Linda Bacon's book, *Health at Every Size: The Surprising Truth About Your Weight*. I admit I'm

still a bit of a skeptic when it comes to the idea of completely uncoupling health from weight. But as someone who has struggled with weight issues for decades, I definitely see the value of focusing on personal respect and developing positive lifestyle habits, rather than trying to reach an arbitrary (and perhaps unattainable) number on the scale. With *Body Respect*, I was hoping for new research, more personal stories, and more concrete tips on embracing the HAES lifestyle. Unfortunately, BR is basically just a Cliff's Notes version of HAES: TSTAYW. For someone just wanting to dip a big toe into the HAES waters, this book is a quick read. But if you are looking for detailed research and lifestyle tips, skip BR and dig into HAES: TSTAYW instead. And if you've already read HAES: TSTAYW, I would save your money and skip this one or wait until a library copy is available. The HAES concept is truly important and deserves a wider audience, but I just didn't think "Body Respect" covered enough new ground to justify my time and expense.

This book was a joy to read. There are so many different diets out there and the diet industry is a multi-billion dollar industry (because we all know diets don't work but we all hope we can be in that 5% success rate). If you're done with diets then this book explains why that's actually the best choice of them all. Very easy to read and reassuring that there is nothing wrong with you, society is perversely behind the times. It's time to enjoy life and enjoy your body now! What I most enjoyed and try to share with others is the seven myths of weight stigma: MYTH 1. Fatness leads to decreased longevity. MYTH 2. BMI is a valuable and accurate health measure. MYTH 3. Fat plays a substantive role in causing disease. MYTH 4. Exercise and dietary restriction are effective weight-loss techniques. MYTH 5. We have evidence that weight loss improves health. MYTH 6. Health is largely determined by health behaviors. MYTH 7. Science is value-free. I did read Bacon's book HAES and while I did enjoy it, I found *Body Respect* to be a quicker read and better for mass appeal. There was a very small section on emotional eating in *Body Respect*. For a book that continues to discuss the importance of mindfulness and deals much more with emotional eating, I highly recommend *Women Food and God* by Geneen Roth. Roth also talks about being the size that's right for you but does not go as far as Bacon. Good for those who have disordered eating and can't let go of the idea of dieting. For a book aimed at parents, I recommend *Your Child's Weight* by Ellyn Satter. Satter talks about how restrictive diets causes children to gain weight but by allowing your children to enjoy all foods they will end up with a healthy relationship with food and be the weight nature intended them to be.

Anyone who's ever stepped on a bathroom scale and worried about weight should read this revolutionary and empowering book. Who would oppose body respect? (Other than the \$60 billion/year industry whose business model relies on convincing us to keep losing and inevitably regaining those same 10 or more pounds?)

This is an extremely profound book that is life-changing on many levels...personal, professional, societal. Compassionate and beautifully written in a way that everyone can relate to...whether you are a high school student or a Ph.D. I hope that this book gets the attention and massive readership that it deserves.

I read the book *Body Respect* and found myself highlighting every other page. I enjoyed it so much that I'm buying myself a copy to keep on my nightstand. I should buy several copies for work, home, traveling, and meeting new people so that I can place them in my environment strategically, like emergency exits and fire extinguishers. Quote: "HAES does not claim that everyone is at a healthy weight. What it does do is ask for respect and help people shift their focus away from changing their size to enhancing their self-care behaviors—so they let weight fall where it may naturally. It also keeps the role of lifestyle as a risk factor for disease in perspective. *Body Respect: The Health at Every Size Manifesto* Refuse to fight in an unjust war. Join the new peace movement: *Health at Every Size* (HAES). HAES acknowledges that well-being and healthy habits are more important than any number on the scale. Participating is simple: 1. Accept your size. Love and appreciate the body you have. Self-acceptance empowers you to move on and make positive changes. 2. Trust yourself. We all have internal systems designed to keep us healthy—and at a healthy weight. Support your body in naturally finding its appropriate weight by honoring its signals of hunger, fullness, and appetite. 3. Adopt healthy lifestyle habits. Develop and nurture connections with others and look for purpose and meaning in your life. Fulfilling your social, emotional, and spiritual needs restores food to its rightful place as a source of nourishment and pleasure. Find the joy in moving your body and becoming more physically vital in your everyday life. Eat when you're hungry, stop when you're full, and seek out pleasurable and satisfying foods. Tailor your tastes so that you enjoy more nutritious foods, staying mindful that there is plenty of room for less nutritious choices in the context of an overall healthy diet and lifestyle. 4. Embrace size diversity. Humans come in a variety of sizes and shapes. Open to the beauty found across the spectrum and support others in recognizing their unique attractiveness. It's what I've been working at for years, but I still can't seem

to get it together. It amazes me that I can achieve so much in so many areas of my life but still completely and utterly fail when it comes to my weight and my body. We cannot emphasize enough the value in lightening up around the judgment you may feel about your body and your weight. The judgment evokes despair as you believe there is something wrong with you, meaning you are not entitled to the food that you want, and you need to deprive yourself as punishment or remedy for your "overweight." I have gained 10 pounds since I stopped dieting two years ago. It feels like a million. I'm short, so I'm convinced it looks like a million, too. I sometimes feel so uncomfortable in my own skin, ugly and undesirable. I hate taking pictures of myself or meeting people on a good day. Now, the idea makes me short of breath. Letting go of dieting often feels like the worst mistake I ever made until I read books like this one and am offered hope and validation. It's enough to keep trying, even when I'd rather give up, and to remind me that I am more than the size of my clothing. It can be hard to accept your body and build a coherent sense of identity when you are bombarded with messages that you need to change, so remember to show yourself compassion. The more you differ "and permit yourself to differ" from the social ideal, the more alone you may feel, at least at first. Conforming to media-imposed beauty standards and socially imposed gender norms is a path of least resistance and may seem easier than challenging them. But is it really easier? In the long run, you will more likely find peace in your body and contentment by throwing over those outwardly determined values and setting up your own yardsticks for attractiveness and value.

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