

Nov. 16, 2018

Dear fellow Carolina students and friends,

It has come to our attention that many people living in larger bodies do not feel comfortable coming to Embody meetings because our members typically live in smaller bodies. We deeply wish those of you did feel comfortable and we also respect your feelings. Stigma unfortunately still abounds in the world today, which we fear entails part of the problem.

We believe we work hard to embrace fat positivity, spread awareness of the wide scope of eating disorders in every intersection of identity, encourage the [Health at Every Size Movement](#), and welcome all members, from meetings to events to pit sits to our social media and more. However, we acknowledge we can always do more work in this area, and we respect the experiences and feelings of people who feel we need to do more. We would love to receive your feedback on how we can become a better, more comfortable, and more inclusive space.

We apologize for the discomfort any of you feel and for society's view of what someone with an eating disorder looks like. People of all shapes, sizes, ages, levels of ability, races, religions, genders, and more are affected by eating disorders, both first-hand and second-hand.

Early on next semester, we will excitedly and intentionally host a diversity panel with panelists of many demographics. We hope this event will spread the important message that all kinds of people struggle with eating disorders and body image. We also hope this event will help people feel comfortable coming to our meetings and sharing their valuable insight.

Those of us who are white, cisgender, able-bodied, women with [thin privilege](#) -- among other privileged demographics -- will never fully understand what those who are oppressed go through, but we would like to learn.

At this time, we would also like to address feedback we have received about the use of the word "fat" in our events and conversations, keeping in mind that the body positive movement is rooted in fat acceptance and activism.

For a while now, the word "fat" has had a derogatory connotation. It has contributed to the development of disordered eating in some individuals and is something many people fear. Research that we would be happy to share with you shows that weight stigma has unhealthy impacts on health and that weight does not. By destigmatizing this word and showing that it is a descriptor rather than a bad word, we hope to help prevent eating disorders and emphasize the [Health at Every Size Movement](#). However, we are sensitive to those who are triggered by the word and seek to support you how we can.

We appreciate you vulnerably sharing your experiences and feelings, and for understanding our intentions and hopes. Let us know if we can support you in any way.

Very best and with lots of Embody love,
The Embody Carolina team