

what do you want from

I want them to not talk about themselves being too fat. This is something I've had happen a lot. I want them not to use fat-phobic language. I feel like they ignore the fact that I'm fat, but still make negative comments about other fat people.

Encouraging words about fat, food, etc. I don't want to hear about their fucked-up body image. I mean, I can help and encourage, but I don't want to hear about how they think they're fat. It's insulting. Some fucking respect. I'm not asking for total understanding.

I want thin and medium-sized women to deal with their body-image dysphoria and realize that there is a world of difference between their experiences as women who hate their bodies and my experience of being fat. All women's bodies are hated in our culture, but that doesn't mean all women are fat. Get with the program girls! Start looking at yourselves and looking at me for real. Get on with the business of loving yourselves. It's radical!

Educate yourself. This may include asking me questions (which I'll gladly answer), but goes beyond that. There's info out there (health, social/cultural/psychological and historical perspectives), seek it out, listen with an open mind, apply critical thought to it all (from the "fat is great" stuff to the "fat will kill you" stuff to the "do this and you'll be thin and happy forever" stuff). *Make up your own mind.* I'll try not to be too self-righteous when you agree with me! (And if we don't agree, I need you to respect my position, as I will respect yours. This means we do *not* try to convert each other—EVER.)

as a woman on the small end of fat i want people to stop expecting me to pass. "oh, you're not really fat" is not an acceptable response to my calling myself fat. i don't want them to assume i'm torn up with guilt / self-hatred / whatever about how "horrible" i look. i don't want them to assume i'm trying to lose weight. i don't want to hear how they're not really dieting, they're following a "sensible weight-loss program." Bullshit. i don't want to hear that it's fine for me to be fat but for themselves they've just never been happy at their larger size. what they're saying is they're doing everything in their power to look less like me. i want them to not be surprised when i'm offended by that. if they can't do those things, they're not allies.

More hugs! Folks seem to think we're insulated from all negativity,



but we're just better at hiding it or working it out as rage.

Thank you for recognizing that they exist! Acceptance of themselves as well as of me, an openness to learning the topic, the willingness to be confrontive with anti-fat attitudes in everyone.

Make it clear that fat activism is not simply a defensive reaction, that thin people can also see fat-phobia as irrational.

Don't assume that a fat person has a) no self-esteem; b) no will-power or c) no self-control. I've heard all those things in the past and they've put me on diets. I lose weight on diets but I don't keep it off once the radical diet is finished. And I'm tired of being miserable. I'd also like the support in shopping. It's not a lot of fun going to a mall that has no stores carrying my size.

It would be great if thin people thought about fat people when planning meetings, etc. We went to a McDonalds last night that actually had moveable chairs instead of only booths or fixed chairs. Much more comfortable and I'll remember where it is for the future! On the other hand, I went to a meeting from my 12-step program that was in a diner with nothing but booths and they were marginally comfortable for me. There are coffee shops in NYC that I won't go to because of the booths. I don't like having my breasts sit on top of the table...

What do I want? Respect! When do I want it? YESTERDAY, TODAY and TOMORROW!!!

I want them to *stop* trying to put me on a diet ... I *like* the way I am and don't need to be svelte to be sexy *or* happy!! I can paddle a canoe or hike with the best of

them and I won't have a heart attack from a little or a lot of exertion.

1) Don't tell me how fat you feel, all 130 lbs. of ya. 2) Don't hand me any suggestions on how to cut my fat intake. 3) Don't assume I have a 'hormone' or 'metabolism' problem. I might. But I'm not 'sick' or 'ill', so don't worry so much. 4) Please don't pity me, or say you feel bad for me, because of any issues related to my weight. I LIKE myself. 5) Additionally, don't assume I have personality problems, or self-esteem problems, or if I say, "Geesh, I should get out and walk more" or something to that effect, don't assume I'm slamming myself. Please remember that I do care about myself and my body; being fat doesn't mean that I've stopped. 6) Most importantly, DON'T tiptoe around the fact that I'm fat. I'm not sensitive about it as much as you might think. If you feel uncomfortable about inviting me to participate in what you might think is a strenuous activity or something that you think I might not enjoy, invite me anyway. I have the opportunity to decide for myself. 7) Examine your own internal fat-hatred by yourself. I might love you to pieces, but unless I can actually help you get over your size-acceptance problems, please don't subject me to complaints about your body and your fat intake, etc. I care enough to want to help, but I'm not an emotional dumping ground.

Acceptance. The ability to listen to and value my experiences.

i want them to understand that every time i walk out of my house i am forced to be a fat activist by virtue of society's disrespect for fat people. whether it is too-small booths at a restaurant i would otherwise patronize, size 6 turnstiles at the local cd store that force me to stand on tiptoe and squeeze through, or just the stares and ridicule of those who've either never been fat, or worse yet, have been fat and have starved themselves to thinness and hate me for not doing the same—i have to deal with it and still hold my head up proudly and that makes me a fat activist. i want them to be proud of themselves for breaking the chain of fat prejudice and even if they are quiet allies i want them to know that every step, no matter how small, eventually reaches the ultimate goal of global acceptance for fat folks.

To be seen for who I am, not what I am. And (for them) to SPEAK OUT on my behalf.

acceptance of who i am, not what i look like

your non-fat allies?

Understanding. Not to hear, "if I don't drop 6 lbs., I'm just gonna die."

Love and understanding and acceptance.

I can't stand the way some skinny (also fat) people assume that I *don't want* to be fat or that I think I'm ugly. I don't think I'm ugly (only after I've hit the whiskey and slept all night on my face).

What everyone wants—acceptance. And I am not interested in their diets. If I meet a friend for lunch and she goes on and on about her butt size then only orders salad ... I order what I want, saying "There is more to life than prettiness, I'll choose stamina!"

Acceptance of my identity as a sexual being and to stop assuming that because I'm fat I must be unhealthy and an overeater.

First of all, I want more fat women to be my allies. Not to offer to be my "diet buddy." Or wail in self-hatred. Or invite me to OA or Weight Watchers so I can be like them and think/talk about food/eating all the time. I want non-fat women to either mind their own business or ask me out on a date, if they're so interested in my body. Same for non-fat men. And I want fat men to stand tall, not commiserate.

I want to be able to sit on all my allies who encourage me to sit on their laps and I'm intimidated cus I don't wanna squish them. So I tell 'em I don't sit on women smaller than me.

That they actually fight fat oppression and don't expect me to educate them. That they question the standard of beauty in the dyke community.

1) I want them to get over that medical thing. Even women who are generally hip to the ways ideology can bury itself in "science," the kind of women who are ultra-skeptical of studies that look to daily hormone dosage for a breast cancer "cure," etc... these women too often buy into the assumption that being fat is always, for everyone, less healthy than being thin. I don't want to get that "health" shit anymore. 2) I also want them to understand the

social discomforts of being fat. I want them to think about why I might be a bit testy after a day at the mall. I want them to think about why certain club atmospheres which are all about worshipping skinny bodies might make me uncomfortable. And, above all, I want them to understand that me losing weight is NOT the solution to my discomfort in these situations. 3) I want them to get a clue on "thin privilege" in the same way that straight allies need to get a clue on straight privilege, or in the same way that I've tried to get a clue on my white privilege—I want them to realize the ways in which things they take for granted can be points of real pain for fat people. 4) I want them to do some of the work of objecting to fat-hating places, media, incidents, etc., so that I don't end up feeling like I'm whining or harping on it all the time and that no one else gives a shit. Is it too much to ask?

Acknowledgement that fat is political and personal. Comfortable sofas instead of rickety chairs—taking my size into consideration, the way they do my allergies or my sobriety. Gestures of kindness and consideration. Willingness to discuss fat without embarrassment. Understanding when I talk about being fat and start crying. Advocacy. Help in educating the clueless. Reassurance on those bad days when I feel ugly and unsexy. Public statements of appreciation for and solidarity with fat women. The space to be who I am, as I am, and not have to endure preachy suggestions on how I should live my life unless I ask for input!

It's taken me many years to become

open mind.

acceptance.

appreciation.

somewhat at ease with my size and my only personal issue comes when I am uncomfortable in my body or when some "born again thin" or "thin from birth" person finds it necessary to point out health risks or other such *helpful* info or wonder what caused me to be fat or offer to help.

Drop the stereotypes and get the clue that DIETS DON'T WORK! Accept their own bodies.

- 1) To be seen as a sexual human being.
 - 2) To be seen as a *human being* period.
 - 3) To not have every bite of food placed in my mouth scrutinized.
 - 4) For them to understand just how hard it is to be in this body.
 - 5) For them not to affect a "well, all you have to do is lose weight" look on their faces whenever I bitch about finding good femmy clothes in my size (I guess I should say non-matronly femmy clothes).
 - 6) For them not to be afraid to touch me—fat isn't catching.
- * I want to be able to say the word "fat" aloud in a group—it's the truth, not a put-down or a dirty word
- * I want consideration of my needs, not pity for my "situation/problem"
- * I want to be considered "dateable material" (even though I might not be into non-fat girlz)
- * I want to talk about my size and my life—and not be immediately reassured that I'm "not that fat" or to get "nutrition tips"
- * I want to be able to be ANGRY (and not fat=jolly all the #@&*\$% time!) ★

