

In celebration of full-figured sex

BY MELISSA MANKINS

Surprise! Fat people have sex. Fat people have really good sex and lots of it. If you believe what you see in the media, you would think I was full of beans. I am most assuredly not.

We are portrayed as loud, obnoxious and completely devoid of style. We are never appreciated as sexual beings. We are never the leading lady.

We are never the love interest. Instead, we are the butt of every dumb joke. We are made to look so unfortunate and homely — it's offensive. This is antiquated and extremely problematic and not at all how the world actually works.

I am a 36-year-old fat woman, and I have lots of sex. This isn't anything mind-blowing or interesting, really, except that the messages sent to fat women, and most women, is that we should feel shame about our bodies. Visibility is so important when we are bombarded every day with endless amounts of negativity towards our bodies. We are told we are undesirable and that we should hide our bodies

unless we fit into society's rigid standard of beauty.

I refuse to hide. We are told we should be crying into a bowl of ice cream, not out there flirting with whomever we want — and maybe even going home with them if we choose to. This is all bullshit. I am done feeling limited by my body. It is my body, and I love it for all it can do. I love it for its softness. I love it for its curves. I love it for all its imperfections and jiggles, too.

After ending a 15-year relationship, I went on a quest of self-discovery. What I found is that most people in real life do not actually ascribe to these narrow-minded views about fat women's bodies. Most people I have met have been very complimentary about my body. I honestly found this to be very surprising, which in hindsight is pretty sad.

That just goes to show how much work needs to be done around sex and body positivity. I expected it to be a lot harder to find decent, respectful, attractive people I would want to date or have casual sex with.

When I first started using Tinder, a dating app, I would warn people that I am a fat girl and not just

the kind of fat where I am only a tiny bit chubby. I wear a size 22-24. I am legit fat. I felt being fat was something to disclose, but I no longer feel this way.

I met one of my favorite sex partners on OkCupid, a dating website. He is 120 pounds smaller than me. My favorite and most comfortable position with him is with me on top. I am here to tell you it's OK to have sex with someone smaller than you. Don't be afraid that he will see your double chin when you ride him or her.

Don't be afraid to have sex with the lights on. Don't be afraid of your fat when it jiggles. Don't be afraid to move your belly out of the way if you need to. That's all part of the fun, finding out how your bodies fit together.

My advice is to enjoy your beautiful body and enjoy sex. Say "yes" whenever you feel compelled to. Stop slut-shaming yourself or allowing others to slut-shame you.

Just let go. I promise, you will not crush anyone. ♥

Melissa Mankins is a local artist and writer. Follow her on instagram @judydense. A version of this story originally ran on XO Jane and Huffington Post at bit.ly/1MXmG9I.

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