

A JOURNEY TO REVISIONING FITNESS

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I'm running today because I'm anxious about my body, I haven't gone to the gym in months, my body is changing, my body is aging. I'm not as strong as I was before the pandemic. I've lost my endurance. I've lost muscle tone and definition. What kind of fitness instructor am I?!

I'm running today because I want to feel free in my body, liberated from the body hate and shame. I want to embrace my body and all its changes unapologetically. I want to refuse the expectation that I will engage in bodywork. I want to resist eugenic legacies that underscore many of the hurtful feelings I have towards my body that are not just personal, but deeply political and oppressive.

I want a relationship with fitness that isn't about losing weight, or tightening and sculpting my body shape, or controlling my appearance.

I'm running today because I want the violence in fitness to stop.

We want to be a group that is unique and create something new together. Fitness is about balance between mind and body and a shift to joy and pleasure. We need to know the why of fitness activities, maybe a living library.

Fitness is a deeply relational concept. We are all looking for one thing which is belonging. Fitness is a collective project and community of practice.

Do I know what I'm doing? Am I really the best person to be facilitating this work? Maybe a fitness doula? Fitness doula could get traction, they would have more training than a peer mentor would, but it needs to be a paid position.

Fitness facilitator would be a non-gendered term to use instead of doula. I hope this isn't another research project that suddenly ends without any change.

Connection to land and water is super important! People need to be affirmed and in holistic ways in fitness spaces. Let's not go by the book. Fitness is about accessibility. Everyone should have access to fitness that takes an affirmative orientation to differences. There needs to be access guides in fitness facilities.

I'm deeply entrenched in a history of normative fitness practices. I know I've probably used ableist or fatphobic fitness cues that I learned in my fitness training. How can I be the research lead of a project about Revisioning Fitness when I've been implicated in problematic fitness practices myself? I've administered fitness tests that have probably made people feel badly about their bodies. I've taught really difficult yoga classes that tend to privilege and tailor to only normative bodies.

I'm a puzzle piece entangled in the harm and violence that happens. There's an urgent need for non-dominant voices to be heard and change to be implemented in fitness.

We will get more grant money and implement the changes within for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Fitness will change. Fitness facility owners and staff will be educated about the harms of eugenics, ableism, racism, fatphobia, white supremacy, and colonialism, and how these structures play out in fitness contexts. Access guides will become common practice in fitness, and the idea of a fitness doula or facilitator will come to fruition.

Future of fitness is...