

THE NEW YORK TIMES | COURTNEY RUBIN

# DON'T BE ASHAMED OF THOSE EXTRA POUNDS

We should not feel bad about gaining a bit of weight

The successive periods of lockdown have made many of us worry about our figures - especially with the seasonal holidays coming up. But is the stress about gaining weight justified? Psychologists and nutritionists are clear: a bit of comfort, including comfort eating, should be encouraged.



**W**ith the explosion of lockdown-friendly home exercise programs and advice, it may seem as if it's never been easier to workout at home. But the reality is, it's probably never been harder. For every person posting a sweaty "crushed it" selfie on Instagram, there's another one (or four) just trying to endure pandemic-induced stress. Add in constant access to the refrigerator and a pantry overstuffed with panic buys, and the guilt about what we've eaten — or the exercise we haven't done — piles on faster than you can say "Quarantine 15."

2. "So you've gained weight," said Elyse Resch, a nutrition therapist. "So what? You're alive. We're doing the best we can with the resources we have." You, too, can shrug off minor or moderate weight gain or the loss of your pre-pandemic fitness level. Read on.

1. **lockdown** confinement / **advice** suggestions, recommendations / **to workout** to exercise / **sweaty** perspiring, moist / **crushed it** I executed that brilliantly, I did it! / **to endure** to suffer but survive / **to induce** to provoke, cause / **pantry** small room in a kitchen used for storing food, here, cupboard / **guilt** the feeling of culpability / **to pile on** to accumulate.

2. **to shrug off** not to worry, ignore / **level** amount, degree.

## BREAK THE CYCLE

3. Above all, have compassion. "I don't think most people change their minds by being yelled at or punched in the face, but that's how we talk to ourselves," said Phoenix Jackson, a clinical psychologist. When Jackson is having trouble speaking to herself as kindly as she might a beloved friend, she likes to find a photo of herself as a child and think of how gently she'd like that person to be spoken to.

4. Next, recognize that weight and ambitious exercise regimens may offer the illusion of control in a world that seems out of control, but the anxiety they produce is not helpful. This is part of a larger problem: most of us feel pressure to achieve or maintain a certain body size because we've been taught that it's important. Excess weight has been linked to considerable health risks, though it does not, by definition, mean a person is unhealthy.

3. **above all** most especially / **to change one's mind** to change one's opinion / **to yell** to shout / **to punch** to hit with a fist / **to have trouble (+ ger.)** to have difficulty / **kindly** nicely, agreeably / **beloved** very dear, much loved.

4. **large** here, on a bigger scale / **to achieve** to reach, to arrive at / **size** dimension, here, weight / **to teach, taught, taught** to instruct / **to link** to associate, connect / **health** physical well-being /

Unfortunately, fatphobia promotes just the opposite: fat people are denied health care, earn less money at work and have a harder time finding work in the first place, research has shown.

5. "Break the cycle by asking yourself where you learned that weight gain was something to be ashamed of," Paula Freedman, a clinical psychologist who specializes in eating disorders, wrote in an email. Ask: Does this belief help me be the type of person I want to be? (Freedman added that you may have to break this down further: What type of person do I want to be? How do I want to treat myself and other people?)

6. Christy Harrison, a nutrition therapist who examined the issue of excess weight and the virus in a *Wired* article published in April,

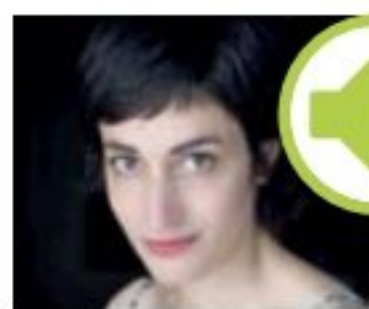
**fatphobia** fear and dislike of obese people and/or obesity / **care** medical treatment / **to earn** to make (money) / **in the first place** to begin with / **research (inv.)** here, study.

5. **disorder** trouble, condition / **belief** conviction, idea / **to break down** here, to analyse / **further** (to do) even more.

6. **issue** problem, question /



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### ADVANCED RECORDING

A little round around the edges? Who cares? Listen to Shelly and her guest, **Bibi Jacob**, talk about how 2020 influenced our physical health. **CD audio ou téléchargement MP3 (sur abonnement)**

ing of diet culture – is that eating for any other reason besides screaming biological hunger is a bad thing. This belief came from the rise of diet clubs in the 1960s, where women went to talk out their feelings so they could avoid emotional eating.

9. “You have to be starving to deserve to eat in this culture,” Harrison said. “But we are designed to get pleasure out of food and connect over food.”

10. Let’s say food really is giving you comfort. “Go with it, love it, be grateful for it,” Resch said. With one caveat: You’ll need to stay present to get the actual comfort and satisfaction. If you’re too busy judging yourself when you eat, you’re not savoring the texture and flavor.

### ASK WHY YOU EXERCISE

11. So you’re not working out enough, or as hard as you did pre-lockdown, and you think this is a problem. This may be because, for you, exercise is about controlling your body or compensating for what you’ve been eating – yet another belief to be discarded.

12. “Exercise is its own pleasurable thing you can do for joy and for mental health benefits,” Harrison said. “It’s hard to tune into that when you have all these voices in your head saying, ‘But if I can’t get my heart rate to this I’m not going to get the benefits.’”

13. Resch prefers the word “movement” to “exercise.” “Exercise connotes something you have to do,” she said. Instead, ask yourself what

to rebrand to change the image of sth / besides apart from / screaming hunger here, a stomach in pain from lack of food, starvation / rise emergence, success / to avoid to escape, to evade.

9. to starve not to have enough food, to die from hunger / to deserve to merit / to be designed to to be made to, to be created to / out of from / to connect to establish a rapport.

10. grateful appreciative, thankful / caveat warning, caution / actual real / flavor taste.

11. to discard to do away with, to reject.

12. own in its own right / benefit advantage, good effect / to tune into here, to comprehend, understand, really believe / rate rhythm (here, cardiac).

makes you feel good in your body. It could just be standing up and stretching.

14. Channel your energy into something more productive than obsessing about weight and exercise – like working to change diet culture, such as calling out thin-promoting or fat-shaming comments on your social networks.

15. Suman Ambwani, an associate professor of psychology at Dickinson College, said people are sometimes reluctant to challenge these sorts of statements. “But we found in one study a couple of years ago that someone who called attention to this issue and rejected appearance-related self-worth and the thin ideal was actually seen as more likable than someone who just colluded with body-shaming,” she said. ●

**“We are designed to get pleasure out of food and connect over food.”**

said in an interview last month that few of the early research studies on the matter controlled for race, socioeconomic status or quality of care – “social determinants of health that we know explain the lion’s share of health disparities between groups of people,” she wrote. Nor did they control for how doctors’ biases influence the way they care for higher-weight patients. But strong evidence exists that obesity puts you at greater risk of dying from COVID-19.

7. “At the end of the day, regardless of what the science does or doesn’t say about COVID and weight, we still don’t have any way for people to lose weight and keep it off,” Harrison said.

### EAT IF YOU WANT TO

8. One tenet of diet culture – or wellness culture, which is really just the rebrand-

matter subject / to control here, to take into consideration / the lion’s share the greatest percentage of, most of / nor not (either) / bias partiality, prejudice / strong here, solid, compelling / evidence (inv.) proof.

7. regardless here irrespective of, no matter what / to keep, kept, kept sth off here, not to put it back on, regain.

8. tenet facet, principle / diet limited variety of food eaten in order to lose weight / wellness health and well being /



### Quelques expressions sur le poids :

**You have gained weight?** *Vous avez pris du poids?*

**You want to lose weight?** *Vous voulez perdre du poids?*

En France vous allez surveiller les kilos, dans les pays anglophones on surveille les 'stones' et 'pounds'.

**1 stone = 14 pounds**

**1 stone = 6,35 kilos**

**1 pound = 0,4536 kilos**