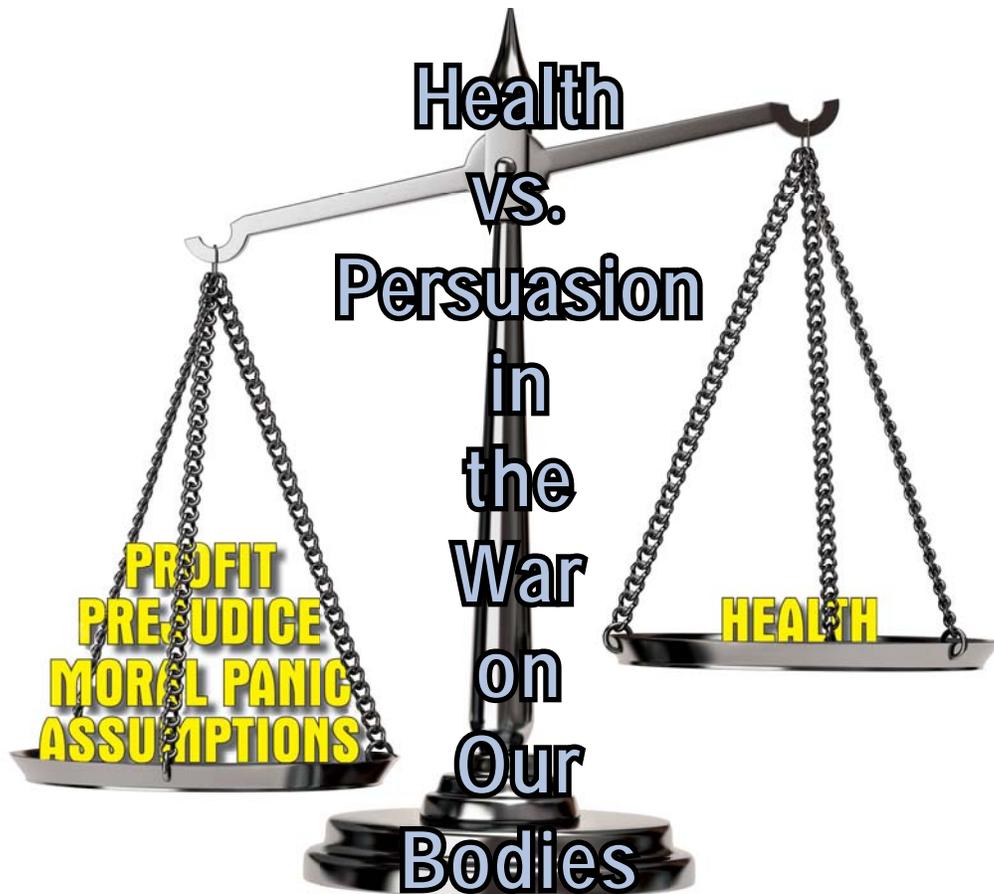


TALKING FAT



BOOK STUDY GUIDE

Lonie McMichael, Ph.D.

TALKING FAT Health vs. Persuasion in the War on our Bodies

STUDY GUIDE

Chapter 1

1. Can you see implications of using the word “fat” instead of “overweight” and “obese” beyond those mentioned in the book?
2. Do you have issues with the word “fat”? What would it take for you to get beyond those issues?
3. What are the implications of the American Medical Association’s and World Health Organization’s definitions of “health”? How would you define “health” for yourself?

Chapter 2

4. We constantly hear that we need to lose weight for our health. What if health has nothing to do with it, and all of this need to reduce fat is actually about aesthetics—about how people look? What does that mean for our society? What does that mean for you personally?
5. When you hear the word “epidemic” what do you imagine? When you think of an “epidemic of obesity” what do you imagine? How do you think that affects your view of fat?

Chapter 3

6. Have you ever been judged for being fat—even if you are on the thin side? Have you ever found yourself judging a fat person on sight? How can you change either of these situations: judging or being judged?
7. What can you do to reduce fat prejudice in our society?

Chapter 4

8. Have you ever dieted? Did you keep the off the weight you lost?
9. If you have dieted repeatedly, graph your weight history (an idea suggested by eating disorders counselors Jane Hirschmann and Carol Munter). Can you find any patterns in your weight history?

10. Consider your body one year after a diet. How did you feel about yourself? How did you feel physically compared to before the diet? How about three years after the diet? Five years?
11. Why is it important to understand that diets fail and not bodies?
12. Why is it important to separate eating disordered behavior from weight?

Chapter 5

13. When it comes to health, can we separate fat bodies from fat stigma?
14. What if weight-loss dieting is actually causing all the health issues we associate with fat? What does that mean for our society? What does that mean to you personally?

Chapter 6

15. How much money have you spent in your lifetime either controlling your weight or trying to lose weight?
16. If you are a repetitive dieter, have you ever reached your goal weight? Or do you find that you always want to lose a little more?

Chapter 7

17. Do you trust research? Why or why not?
18. What does being a “critical consumer of research” mean to you?

Chapter 8

19. Can you see how bio-power surrounding weight might be used to control people, to keep people “in line”? Name some ways. Looking at your own life, can you see how weight control might be used to keep you “in line”?

20. Do you look at fat as an outward sign of addiction? How would your approach to fat change if you no longer associate fat with addiction?
21. Do you judge people as “good” or “bad” based on their health? How might you change such views on health?

Chapter 9

22. What ways could we focus on children’s health instead of emphasizing weight loss?
23. What can you do to reduce prejudice towards fat children?

Chapter 10

24. Have you ever experienced fat prejudice from a health care provider? How did you handle it? Knowing what you do now about fat, would you handle it the same way?
25. What can you do as an individual, whether fat or not, to help eliminate fat prejudice in the health care field?

Chapter 11

26. Do you practice the Health at Every Size® (HAES) way of life? If yes, what kind of benefits have you discovered? If not, how might you implement these ideas into your life?
27. In what ways might HAES improve self-esteem?
28. Are you comfortable with spending time and effort on taking care of yourself? Why or why not?
29. Do you feel like you can trust your own body? Why or why not? If not, what can you do to put more trust into your body today?
30. Do you label foods as “good” and “bad”? If yes, what would it mean for your life if you quit doing that? What would it mean to our society if we quit assigning a moral label to food overall?

31. Have you ever found yourself feeling mentally unbalanced because of trying to control your body size? If you were to put your mental health before your physical health, would your life look the same? What would it mean to you to honor your mental health as much as you honor your physical health?

Chapter 12

32. What can you do to ensure you receive quality medical care?
33. Do you automatically trust all health-care related information you are given, or do you have a way to negotiate health-related information?

Chapter 13

34. Knowing that attempts at weight loss tend to lead to weight gain, what are the moral implications for our society if we continue to insist on weight loss rather than trying to eliminate fat prejudice?
35. Does knowing that you have been lied to about weight loss make you angry? How can you work through that anger?

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Nashville, TN 37205
www.pearlsong.com
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