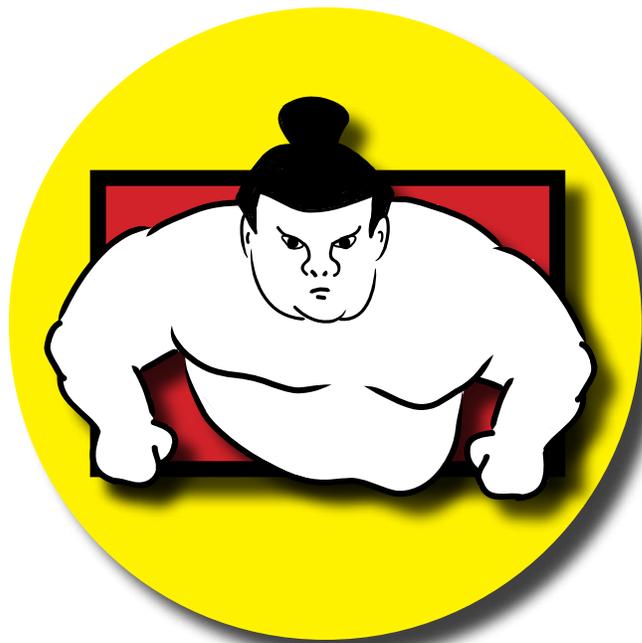


Declaration of Taking Up SPACE

In 1996 the United States government, in a statement issued by C. Everett Koop, declared a “War on Obesity.”



- This so-called war stigmatizes fat people and threatens our well-being, our health and our life chances.
- This so-called war has casualties in the form of extreme dieting, experimental drugs, stomach mutilations, school and workplace bullying and the denial of basic human rights on the basis of how a person looks.
- This so-called war threatens the right of everyone to care for and protect their bodies as they see fit.

We are reluctant warriors in the war on fat people.

Like a Sumo, whose traditional role as a warrior was on the front lines, fat people are the first line of defense against a government and a culture determined to control our bodies.

We believe that:

- Fat is just an adjective and should not be used as a moral indictment or a diagnosis.
- Fat people have always and will always exist as a natural variation of human bodies.
- People of all sizes deserve a chance to prove themselves on the basis of their character and their actions, not on how they look.
- It is time to end the war on fat by celebrating the beauty and diversity of all human beings.
- It is time to build strong bodies of all sizes, shapes and colors by encouraging the **Health At Every Size** model rather than weight loss.

Fat warriors come in all shapes and sizes. **Anyone who understands that freedom to control one's body is a basic part of freedom is invited to join us in ending the war on fat people.**

As reluctant warriors, we will not back down until the war has ended and fatness is no longer considered a disease.

**We will continue defending our bodies.
We will continue strengthening our resolve.
We will continue taking up space.**

Pattie Thomas, Ph.D.
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