

Megan

Welcome to No Body Asked For This: A Diet Culture Takedown, Season Three, Episode Four. Hi, I'm low-key an asshole.

Kendra

And I'm low-key an angel. That Tik Tok made me laugh so hard.

Megan

Oh tell everybody about it. By the way, this is actually Megan

Kendra

And this is Kendra. I'm the actual asshole. I guess it's a little bit of one of these if you know you now, okay, but there's like a sound going around Tik Tok where it's like you and your best friend. And like, usually one best friend everyone thinks is an asshole. And the other one everyone thinks is an Angel. And the reason they get along is because the one everyone thinks is an angel is a little bit of an asshole. And the one everyone thinks is an asshole, is a little bit of an angel. I sent that to Megan and I didn't even have to tell her who was who.

Megan

Oh, it was apparent right away, right away. I loved it. I really made me laugh. Okay, so On this episode, we record a dear friend of mine named Erika Nuñez. And she talks a lot about her journey with PCOS, which is polycystic ovary syndrome. It's something that I also have, it's a chronic illness. And if you want to learn more about that, guess what? You're going to have an opportunity to do so.

Kendra

Just keep on listening.

Megan

Yeah, because the next two episodes are going to be centered around PCOS.

Kendra

Yeah.

Megan

They're interviews with experts. Kimmie Singh and Nicola Salmon. We hope you enjoy them. We learned so much. So so much from them.

Kendra

Yeah. And as somebody who doesn't experience that doesn't deal with that it was really enlightening to like, learn about how weight stigma is so prevalent within that diagnosis.

Megan

Are you listening to our mini series called The Weigh DownTake down?

Kendra

Dear God, please listen to our mini series

Megan

please

we're having the best time doing it. It's a very, very troubling topic. But you know, you got to process this shit with somebody. And that's why we're doing it. And then we want to offer that to you as well by listening.

Kendra

Yeah. Hoo, we learned some interesting information. If you aren't aware. Megan's in Nashville, I used to be in Nashville. This place is in Nashville that's on the docu series, the Remnant Fellowship. And so we've got a lot of kind of connections around what's going on. And we've learned some real interesting things. Some kind of word on the street type stuff that maybe we'll talk about later date. But one thing I had no idea about is that Lipscomb University, which is like, one of the conservative Christian institutions, colleges, or universities in Nashville has, like a building, like I guess called the Shamblin Center, or something

Megan

Theater maybe

Kendra

Is it a theatre where they've, that gets used all the time. It's apparently one of their most, like, I don't know, one of the places that students are in and out of all the time. It's like, I wonder how many students have any idea what that name is associated with?

Megan

Right?

Kendra

Wow.

Megan

Yeah. So yeah, if you haven't heard those episodes, we have two released at this point. And another one coming soon. We're not being super strict about our release schedule on these because we're doing the best we can.

Kendra

It's a lot going on.

Megan

A lot going on. We didn't plan to do this in the middle of a season, but the opportunity presented itself and we said yes

Kendra

how could we have said no?

Megan

now once again, no body asked for this series. But nobody asked for The Weigh Down Workshop either. So you know what I just thought about, I wonder what the Venn diagram is for people that health troll concern trolling about being fat.

Kendra

Yeah

Megan

and people that won't get the vaccine

Kendra

You think it's a Venn diagram? I think it's a Venn diagram.

Megan

I think there's a little overlap.

Kendra

There's a little overlap

Megan

a little bit a little bit

Kendra

Might just be one big circle.

Megan

Enjoy this episode. Thank you for listening. Listen till the end, we've got some fun stuff for you. In this episode, we are discussing some possibly triggering topics like medical weight bias, issues around pregnancy, which I know can be hard for folks. And, you know, as always our bodies, dieting, things like that. So if you find that triggering, please take care of yourself and do what you need to do.

Kendra

As always, this podcast is for education and information purposes only. We are not professionals. Please get your professional advice from the appropriate people.

Megan

Welcome to Shut the Fuck Up where we look at diet culture within pop culture. This episode is releasing on October 27. Right in time for Halloween.

Kendra

Ooooooh!. Maybe we should get a side maybe we should get into sound effect world like I think we could be pretty marketable.

Megan

Ok, Yes!

Kendra

you know, not just like jingles but like, anyway we'll talk that out over episodes.

Megan

I'd love to get into accent work as well. Okay,

Kendra

I know you would.

Megan

Yeah. Okay, parents, if you're a parent, Are you stressed about allowing your child to eat candy on Halloween? Adults? Are you stressed about eating your kids Halloween candy? No, I'm kidding. any adult- children or no- Are you stressed about all the candy that is around on Halloween? Because we want to hold space for that. It must feel really heavy to be a parent and feel in charge of your child's health and to be worried about candy. But guess what? It's okay,

Kendra

what?

Megan

It's okay. Your child can eat candy, and they'll be okay. In fact, if you kind of let them have some independence in this area, and eat as much as they choose to eat, they will probably learn really valuable lessons around body feedback and body wisdom. And oh, if I eat this much, maybe my tummy hurts. If I eat this much, I feel okay. Kind of a situation.

Kendra

Yeah

Megan

let them have that opportunity. Because what's gonna happen is eventually they'll habituate to candy. And it won't be as like, wildly. What's the word? They won't want it as much? Which like, if they do want it, that's also just a neutral fact. That's not good or bad.

Kendra

Right. And then I know, just Megan and I are not people with children.

Megan

yes

Kendra

I also want to say, I know that sometimes my friends with kids are like, it's less about the don't eat too much candy and more about I'm gonna have to deal with the consequences of my child having too much. And for that, we say you make the choices that are best for your family when it comes to Halloween candy.

Megan

Yeah. And maybe there's a lesson there too. You know? Yeah, it's tough, though. It's tough. And like, intersert we're not parents. So

Kendra

yeah

Megan

we barely understand. what we're not okay with is your local neighborhood healthist giving out toothbrushes and raisins for Halloween.

Kendra

who is doing this? Who is doing this?

Megan

The Karens? I don't know.

Kendra

Or like, almonds.

Megan

almonds. Nuts aren't candy unless it's in an Almond Joy.

Kendra

or covered in chocolate?

Megan

Yeah. Or a peanut m&m?

Kendra

Yeah

Megan

yeah. Intern Eric and I wrote a little parody about this whole situation.

Kendra

Oh my god. So good.

Megan

So if you would like to listen, don't worry, it's coming up. We're gonna put the audio in the episode. If you want to see it, go to our Instagram at underscore nobody asked for this. And you can watch the video.

You'e welcome. Kendra, if you

Kendra

Yes, Megan. Yes, yes, yes,

Megan

Low-key Angel. If you were to go trick or treating today this year, what's one candy you'd be looking forward to the most to get in your sweet little Jack-o-lantern bucket?

Kendra

This is such a difficult question to answer. So I'm going to give you more than one answer. My, I need to give you a chocolate answer.

Megan

Okay

Kendra

and then I need to give you a non kind of a pure candy answer.

Megan

I like that. Yeah.

Kendra

Okay, so my pure candy answer is very easy, because I don't love that kind of stuff as much as I love chocolate. so that would be Haribo sour gummy bears.

Megan

Ooh,

Kendra

literally my favorite. Yeah, literally. Okay, yeah, I recently had an airhead for the first time in like like a mini airhead thing for like, ages and I forgot how much I love those too but it's okay. When it comes to chocolate

Megan
okay

Kendra
as long as it doesn't have coconut in it

Megan
Okay,

Kendra
give it to me.

Megan
Okay,

Kendra
I don't care and the better and truly I love I love the Milky Way I don't get or no milky way, I do
love a milky way what I meant to say was a three musketeers

Megan
The nougat `

Kendra
The nougat.

Megan
wait Say that again?

Kendra
Nougat?

Megan
the ways I liked the way you said it the first time

Kendra
How did I say the first time?

Megan
you kind of like "nooget"

Kendra
Nugget. Nyuhget.

Megan

Nyughet.

Kendra

but I but then I'm like oh but Milky Way Oh I love and then oh but like a snicker just so I can't but the bottom line is if it's if there's one of them that is a full size and the rest are mini then the full size wins. like I don't really care but

Megan

correct answer

miss me with anything with coconut any of the coconut ones which isn't that almond joys have coconut?

mounds, mounds

Kendra

mounds.

Megan

mounds do

Kendra

mounds do is that the theme song? the little jingle?.

Megan

[sings] Almond joys have nuts, mounds don't.

Kendra

Oh hilarious. Yeah. miss me with that. Okay.

Unknown Speaker

Well first Hang on. Remind me What's in a milky way.

Kendra

a milky way is a in my opinion. It's a Snickers without the nuts.

Megan

Okay, caramel chocolate.

Kendra

I might not be 100% correct.

Megan

Okay, is there nougat in it?

Kendra

Yeah, there's nougat and caramel.

Megan

Okay, okay, cool.

Kendra

I don't think there's like a cookie cracker in it.

Megan

And I like a cookie cracker. Okay, all right. So for me I like your distinction between chocolate and other. I'm going to go with that. Chocolate wise I want a Tootsie Pop.

Kendra

Oh, Really??

Megan

Yeah!

Kendra

you like Tootsie Pops?

Megan

100% here's why

You're talking about you're talking about the owl

yeah

Kendra

How many licks does it take to get to the center of

Megan

yeah not a blow pop I don't want the gum in the middle I want the tootsie roll in the middle

Kendra

oh my gosh I am the total if my choices only that it's the one with the gum

Megan

but it's chocolate, Kendra!

Kendra

okay but I hate Tootsie Rolls hmm because it's not I don't know what it is about like the flavor of it. Cuz it's not it's like chocolate flavor-y

Megan

Right It's not and that's like what draws what draws me to it and here's where we differ Yeah.

Kendra

Oh my god, but you also like white chocolate?

Unknown Speaker

No, we are very aligned. That's been the basis of our friendship, Kendra! I'm so upset. Okay,

Kendra

who did we talk about white chocolate with who was like all about it then

Megan

someone else? I don't know but it was someone else. Okay, but here's the thing that I really the reason I love tootsie pops is because I love a lasting flavor. Like I love something that's gonna last me a really long time. So the fact that it's a lollipop. You get it for a long time. Long, long, long time. And I love the flavor and then I love the Tootsie Pop reward at the end for getting through it.

Kendra

Okay, so you like the the staying power of the of the candied flavor cause the Tootsie is like gone

Megan

yeah, that's pretty quick. You're right. other candy category. non chocolate

Kendra

Uhuh? Oh, so you put that in the chocolate category. [laughs] You chose a tootsie pop in the chocolate category. Megan, I just don't know if I could take it. Okay, all right, just like give me a second here because now you're gonna tell me the candy. I'm not even sure what to expect from this. Answer. Okay, I'm ready.

Megan

Pink Starburst.

Kendra

Okay, that's classic I can get behind that.

Megan

What is the one candy that you're going to give away?

Kendra

I'm not going to give it away but I'm definitely not going to take it. Okay now and this is because I am I have very much paid attention to the Halloween Horror Story PSA. So any so I will not be accepting any apples that could have razors in them.

Megan

[laughs] Yeah, this is relevant in our times.

Kendra

Do you remember that when we were a kid and they were like, okay, yes, it must be sealed. Don't take anything home because it could have razors in it.

Megan

It could have razor blades in it. Is if you could look at an apple and not see that it's been cut open to put a razor blade in it.

Kendra

I guess they were like, but it could be dipped in caramel and then you wouldn't?

Megan

Ah, yeah. Okay, that makes sense.

Kendra

either way. No, it doesn't make any sense. Your neighbors the people you live on a road with are going to give you an apple with razors in it?

Megan

That's just like the belief that there are sociopaths everywhere.

Kendra

Yeah, but that that is the one thing I will not be accepting. or black licorice.

Megan

Oh, correct. Yeah, I have to change my answer now to also black licorice. But the other Yeah, that would be my like, non chocolate. And then I think this is going to be a pretty unpopular opinion.

Kendra

Oh, gosh, like you think this more than the Tootsie Pop?

Megan

Yes, I had no idea that was gonna be unpopular.

Kendra

You guys tell us. Tell us in the comments when we post this on our feed.

Megan
Yeah, yeah.

Kendra
Tell us. Okay. Yeah.

Megan
It's plain m&ms.

Kendra
Oh, interesting. explain that.

Megan
Yeah, I mean, it's too much chocolate. Like, I need a nut. Or even did they make dark chocolate m&ms? I'd probably like that.

Kendra
Oh my gosh, they they now make every kind of m&m.

Megan
that's right we've talked about this.

Kendra
We have talked Yeah, they definitely make dark chocolate m&ms.

Megan
Yeah. Now a peanut m&m. all day every day.

Kendra
Every day all day. Yeah, caramel m&ms everyday all day. pretzel m&ms with chocolate. Peanut? Peanut butter. m&ms?

Megan
Yes. all day, every day,

Kendra
all day every day. The mint ones.

Megan
No!

Kendra

no, those are like a holiday theme.

Megan
Yeah,

Kendra
yeah.

Megan
Yeah. Okay, so you know, this has been shut the fuck up. Don't hand out toothbrushes or raisins or apples with razor blades.

Kendra
Y'all got that? Cool.

Megan
Shut the fuck up with that.

Kendra
Eat candy and give people candy.

Song by Megan and Intern Eric:
If the candy's gone
In your neighborhood
Who ya gonna call?
Dietbusters!

If there's low-carb treats
And it don't look good
Who ya gonna call?
Dietbusters!

I ain't afraid of no food
I ain't afraid of no food

If a calorie count's
running through your head
Who can you call?
Dietbusters!

Giving raisins out
To the local kids
Who ya gonna call
Dietbusters!

Sour patch kids, Hershey's, skittles, tootsie roll, candy corn, twizzlers

Who ya gonna call?

Dietbusters!

If you've had a dose of that

Freaky keto, baby

You better call

Dietbusters!

Ow!

Mild duds, starburst, snickers, smarties, M&M's

Whoppers, kit kats, Reece's Pieces, pixie sticks,

Lemme tell ya something

Candy makes me feel good!

Megan

Today we have an interview with Erika Nuñez. I've been friends with Erika since 2012. I believe we both lived in Austin, Texas at the same time. And while I was living, there was a period of time that I started to get into Health at Every Size and sort of awakened to the harm of diet culture. And Erika was a huge support in this time in my life and still is. But I don't think I would be here today making this podcast without your influence in my life, Erika, and I love you so much. And I can't wait for this interview.

Erika

Oh, my goodness, I'm not ready for zoom cries yet. back at you, I'm so happy to be here.

Megan

Let's get to the good stuff. Erika, tell us your pronouns and your preferred size descriptor.

Erika

That's a good one, my pronouns are she her hers. And my size descriptor. You know, I really like fat, just because it's so descriptive. And I don't attribute a lot of the meanings that I did throughout my life to the word so it feels really good and comfortable to use it. Now, I also don't mind like a person living in a bigger body. Yeah, I think probably those two.

Kendra

So one of the first things we normally ask our guests is to tell us about their body timeline kind of from growing up. But we would love to hear first about your experience being pregnant because cause you just had a baby and what that was like, in navigating that world.

Erika

Yeah, so the timeline of a pregnancy seems like a long one when you're living it because the days are super long, and your body is going through a lot of obvious and subtle changes. So it felt like a real journey. And I guess to get pregnant, involved a lot of bodily feelings and new adventures in that way, I have PCOS, which is polycystic ovarian syndrome, I think it's still the term. And that presented a unique set of fertility challenges for me. And so a distinct sort of starting point for this feels like a time I went to go see a gynecologist, and we were talking about my PCOS, and talking about looking into possibly down the line having children. And you know, the summary of the visit was she told me likely at your size and your body composition, you can't have children. And so I left that meeting just so I was reeling because someone told me who I thought was just a great authority figure slash knowledge holders that definitely, I wasn't gonna have kids and it just felt so I don't know, it was just, it was really sad. But then I got angry, because plenty of people who want to be pregnant with pcls get pregnant, and plenty of plus size, fat people get pregnant, and this doctor was trying to scare me into losing weight. So that was sort of the journey. And I started to think of about myself as an expert in my own body at that point because I knew that this person who I put all that power into was wrong about my body. So many, many years later, I started to look into getting pregnant and I knew that it was going to likely have to happen through a fertility clinic for several reasons. One, I have PCOS. And two, I have a wife. And so we knew that this was likely the route we were going to take. But then there was also, you know, a lot of research I was doing was saying that if you do have PCOS, you have to make sure that you are ovulating, right? Because you should ovulate to get pregnant. And sometimes people with PCOS don't ovulate regularly. So yeah, my particular fertility doctor was, I would say, as good as you can get in some of these situations where they want to tell you, you have to lose weight, in order for your body to ovulate and then get pregnant. Some people some fertility doctors will say like, I will not work with you. If you are not under this BMI, and BMI, then becomes this huge, central figure and it feels so it feels more suffocating than it already does, like in your everyday life.

Kendra

And we've talked a lot about BMI is bullshit. We won't go all the way into it here, but just reminder. Yeah,

Erika

well, yeah, we don't like the history is so hidden. I think you've talked about that in previous episodes, but it's just like, it's still so touted. And it's still so important to so many people in medical in the medical industry. And so it just became this like, again, really big thing in my life, it's like, I had to reframe it for myself, because I knew my doctor was never going to say something that made sense, or that was outside of this like concept of BMI. So I told her look, I also have needs in this. But I also have a really big desire, my desire is to have a baby. And I know you're trying to help me in this. So we need to find some sort of middle ground. And so what she said was, then we're going to think about it just like more food centric. So what we try to do is think about foods that are going to be really helpful to ovulating and getting getting what I want. So it was, it was a really confusing time, I think for me, because I knew that I really wanted to have a baby. And I really knew what that was going to take for my from my body.

And so what ended up happening is because this is, again, So BMI centered and so weight centered, right? Because they make you come in every couple weeks and get weighed. And there's also this Weird, Gross celebration that happens when you lost weight. And I was like, again, this has to be my experience, too.

Megan

Yeah. You mean while you're trying to get pregnant?

Erika

Right, so this is all the work that happens before. Yeah. Because for them, it was weight loss as the goal for me it was ovulation. So it looked differently and I think that is something that was really unique and new to me, was making my own journey alongside the this whole large, long history of medical, medical industry that's obsessed with weight loss

Megan

Yeah,

Kendra

totally.

Megan

So kind of that reframing was important for you, right? to be able to say my goal isn't this,

Erika

right. It felt too big and exhausting to try to get them to reconceptualize their entire business, and their entire way of seeing their patients. And especially I worked with a doctor who specialized in PCOS, and her patients were so eager to lose weight. So it was kind of this cyclical thing that was happening, she was getting more invested in it, her patients were getting more invested. And so to be an outlier is really hard. Because you're working against this history again, a cool thing that happened is, at one point, I was nowhere near her, you know, weight target, or BMI target and I said, I'm ovulating. I'm doing all the things that you've asked me to. I'm not at the weight that you want me to be but I'm ready.

Megan

Yes.

Erika

And she was like, You know what? You're right. That was a surprise to me. Yeah. Because what I found out later is that their statistics are really important, like fertility clinics get sort of rated and get more patients based on how quickly and frequently they get people pregnant. And so it was almost like fat people are like a risk for them. And that's how they see people in bigger bodies because they don't to them, they don't get pregnant as easily and to them pregnancies don't maybe they they are less viable in their eyes, whatever. I think it's based on the person

and not their body size. So anyways, yeah, long story short, we got pregnant on the very first try y'all. Fertile Myrtle.

Kendra

It's just that even that is like an outlier. I mean, for any one going through from my understanding what I've

Erika

Yeah,

Kendra

friends who've I mean, yeah, the first time, they try and set your expectations really low really low because they the statistics are not in favor of the first time going working out all the way.

Erika

Right. It was a surprise to me that so many nurses and technicians were like, I don't know how anyone gets pregnant. Like it's kind of hard, like even quote unquote, whatever naturally. Like, it's hard.

Megan

The timing is so specific

Erika

it is. But it's also like anatomy. And that was really a fun part for me is to like get to know my body a little more, because it is a really, truly invasive process. But if again, if you're working to sort of like reframe what you want out of it, like I was, like, let's take a look at these ovaries, like I want to see, I want to know, because especially if you have a PCOS like you, you start to think of your body sometime, or I did anyway, I started to think of my body as deficient or different, or like, unable to do things that I wanted to do. And that's not true. Like it was really awesome to get to know, a body that was I don't want to I don't want to say able because I don't want that to be like the goal. But it was

Megan

working with you?

Erika

Yeah, it was on my team. So I got pregnant, and then that's a whole, like, that's a big shift, right? Because then you have to trust your body to keep the thing that you worked so hard to get.

Megan

Yeah

Erika

and that's when I really knew that I had to trust my body in a way I had never, never done before. I know a lot of people have to go through this process where they're like, I trust that the baby's in there. I trust that the baby's doing just fine, but it was this whole other it felt like this whole other thing for me because I had never trusted my body that much and I had never and that's because of things like doctors saying like you're not worthy. Your body can't do this. And you need to make your body better.

Megan
Yeah

Erika
and then you know the ultrasounds come and you're like, Okay, I can start I can start doing the work that I need to because a happy body a body that you trust and you celebrate will do a lot better job than if you're constantly doubting yourself or putting again that anxiety and bad feelings that other people want to put on your body.

Kendra
i mean we've talked a lot about I wouldn't tell my friends some of the things I tell my own self about not just my body but you know all the things my personality my whatever Do you know what I mean?

Megan
Like critical things?

Kendra
Yeah, like we wouldn't

Megan
say what you would say to a friend to your own body.

Kendra
so like treat your body as your friend as your partner as your i mean you know whenever you're in this together and I'm listening to you speak about in some ways I feel like there was a lot of that happening for you on this like other level because it You were carrying that other person that you were you know what I'm does that make sense what I'm saying?

Erika
no absolutely like people say to talk to your inner child and then you like have an inner child and it's like well Okay, next level you took it there? Um, no, truly i and i and i think it's good practice because when your kids external here externally, you want to have set up those good practices. I think like a lot a lot of other ways in which we're exposed to media around how bodies are supposed to be, I think that those same things happened to me right, the ads for maternity clothes or for products to help through pregnancy. You saw the same kinds of bodies which were very white, thin everywhere except for the belly. And also your belly has to look a

certain way it has to be this perfect D and I think that was the coolest first thing I looked up as I was again like I was I didn't show until very late in my pregnancy. And you know, this is all very specific to my experience, but um, I learned about the B belly for pregnancy. So everyone you know sees the perfect little D basketball, low basketball on an already thin body, but your baby depending on depending on their size, and your body and its composition many plus-sized pregnancies. I saw the belly was protruding but also in a B shape, right? So it's not that sloped D. It's two smaller bumps. And yeah, it's just because your body is likely shaped like that before but it it, you know, accentuates, essentially your lines. And so you know, a lot of people feel really disappointed when their body doesn't look like it's quote unquote, supposed to,

Megan

what did that representation do for you?

Erika

I mean, so much, because I think when you spend time looking at bodies that aren't like yours, or just like yours, or just a variety of bodies, you start to break away from this, like, mainstream version of what you think you're supposed to look like. I think it feels really good to see to see things before they happen to you in a way because then it's not a surprise, you're like, Okay, yeah, sure. My belly doesn't my pregnant belly doesn't look the same as all these ones I've seen in mainstream culture, but all of these resources that I've looked into, that's my belly right there.

Megan

that's almost like, the whole what to expect, when you're expecting there needs to be like a fat version

Erika

please somebody

Megan

because it's a different experience.

Kendra

And I'm sitting here going, why are all of the fat bellies on television? The exact same? Yeah, yeah. Like there should be diversity there, too. So Erika, do you feel like any of your identity markers affected the way that you were treated medically by your doctors?

Erika

Yeah, there were several ways. I mean, obviously, the one that we're talking about is definitely my body size. You know, there is a certain amount of weight you're supposed to gain while pregnant.

Megan

Really?

Erika

Yeah. And what I learned again, reading was that it's different for everyone.

Megan

No kidding.

Erika

Yeah. And if you are, what people what the medical industry would call underweight, you're supposed to gain a bunch of weight during pregnancy, and I can't even tell you like how much that is, but it's definitely definitely different, like, levels, right? If you're underweight, you're supposed to gain most, if you're what they would say, like normal, or you also have like a, you know, less pounds that you're allowed to gain. And then if you're overweight, quote unquote, definitely, because what is okay, over what weight but you are not only allowed to gain the least amount of weight, but you are actively, you are actively advised to lose weight.

Megan

I can't, I can't

Erika

while you are adding a whole human to your body.

Kendra

That is like one of the most ludicrous thing, there's a lot in the medical industry around fat people. That is ludicrous. But that is so insane. It's insane. Everybody else is supposed to gain weight because they're growing a human. But if you are what they have deemed overweight? No, no, you got to lose weight that baby's supposed to take the weight from you or something like what in the world,

Erika

right? You know, you guys have talked about in your podcast, like when your body is stressed out, or you're trying to do something that is going against its natural tendencies, it is not going to be good for your health overall. And so when you're trying to consider what's best for your body, and for a new body that you're making, I feel like that's bad medical advice to say, you need to lose weight. I'm just gonna say that not having an MD of any kind. Yeah, no, it's it. It's really bad. And I will say this, something. And again, it's very personal to my experience, but I had a fat doctor who had a baby. And I really feel like that imbued my relationship with her with a certain understanding that weight isn't everything. And so I almost felt like, she started to have this conversation with me about how much weight I'm supposed to gain, right? And then she stopped herself because she knew that it was not good advice. And I think that's because she had a lived experience of being a fat woman. And not everyone's gonna have that, but I felt really lucky, lucky that she was not so persistent about my weight gains, which is, I would say, an atypical experience for people because most pregnant people that I've talked to their doctors are constantly talking to them about weight gain or weight loss. And also they

listened to me when I said when I said like, I didn't want to know, like how much weight I gained, so sometimes it felt really good to know because it meant I was growing my kid well, and I was doing fine. And eating all the things that I needed to do. And then sometimes it felt really off to know. And they were really great about saying like, okay, you don't want to know this week, that's fine. We're gonna, you know, write it down for us. And we don't have to tell you.

Megan

That's good. Yeah.

Erika

And that doesn't work for everyone, some doctors will not take those requests seriously. And it's also very hard to advocate for yourself.

Megan

Yeah, I think a lot of people a fat people who asked not to be weighed, are deemed hostile, and then that affects your care even more. So I'm almost like hesitant to tell people to ask to not be weighed, just because I don't want it to affect their care. So something that I do personally, is get on the scale backwards.

Erika

That's really great advice. And I think that it's really important to note that because oftentimes, if you are a person of color, and you already, have a fraught relationship with the medical industry, where they don't believe your symptoms, where they take your concerns, less seriously to then again, ask to do something against protocol, absolutely does add this new valence of hostility of not following the rules. And also it depends on who's treating you, right, because it's not always your doctor, it's gonna be your nurse who treats you and I had a variety of experiences with nurses, because veteran nurses often have had this experience before where someone says, Please don't, I don't want to know or I don't want to be weighed actively. And they they say, Okay, and then I've worked with new nurses who are like, Oh, I don't, I don't think we can do that. But that's against the rules. And so, you know, I politely say, if you could just ask somebody, I appreciate that. But you're right, that sometimes doesn't work. And so I guess that this is in no way advice. This is just what's worked for me. And I think that's really important. Because, yeah, it depends where you are, who you are. And and then the reception,

Megan

right. I have noticed or I haven't noticed this, because I haven't tried it. But I think if you mentioned anything about disordered eating, even if you haven't been diagnosed with an eating disorder, but you have a history of disordered eating, which a lot of people do, just saying those words, or if they're like, Oh, yeah. Because that's a medical diagnosis that they can recognize.

Erika

And that's sad, to me

Megan
It's terrible!

Erika
that you have to use the tools of the oppressor to get something that you really need, which is medical attention that is, you know, sincere and, and you know, you want to feel that way, too. You want to feel that your doctor cares about you, when you're when you're at your most vulnerable, right? When you need help.

Kendra
you would almost I would just there's like a part of me, that would just hope that if you were asking not to be weighed, or to not see it, or you know, that that would be the bare minimum, that's where they would go, oh, there must be disordered eating. So I will, I will do you know what I mean that you wouldn't have to like claim it out loud.

Megan
My guess is that that happens with thin people. Like if I bet if a thin person says please don't weight me they probably go oh, eating disorder. If a fat person says please don't weight me, I bet it's like, oh, well, they're in denial about the work they need to do

Kendra
weight bias. Yeah, for sure. For sure.

Erika
Yeah. Yeah, speaking of weight bias, Y'all, I had to get my blood pressure taken all the time, which that was important to me, because I knew all of typical things that happen when you had high blood pressure and what that meant for like, delivering early, etc, etc. But let's talk about cuff size. So there's different ways obviously, to get your blood pressure checked. The way I like the least is these like machines. So typical to like go to the grocery store, the pharmacy, and like sticking your arm, which my arm does not fit and half of those to begin with. It's real uncomfortable. But the machines are always off because they have a standard cuff typically, and it's one size and it's really small.

Megan
Yeah.

Erika
So something I learned how to do early on was to say I need the larger cuff size, please,

Megan
because you get an inaccurate reading, right?

Erika

Absolutely. Absolutely. It always reads high. For me if I had a smaller cuff, so I and they expect it to be high. Right? So they're like, again, it's another level of denial.

Megan

Confirmation bias

Erika

when I get a large cuff size and it's done manually. Nine times out of 10 for me my blood pressure was perfectly fine. If you read it on the machine with a small cuff, I am dying Take me to the ER right now like it is not okay like and so that happened to me one time I went to what's called triage because I wasn't feeling the baby kick for a certain amount of hours. And they tell you, you know, go in, get checked, we're gonna look at your blood pressure and do a quick blood test. They were like, this is a medical emergency. And I said, Please just try like a new cuff size. And they did it. And she was like, This is so strange. Your blood pressure is just fine. And we ran all these emergency blood tests, and you can go home now.

Megan

And what was the bill for that, Erika?

Erika

You know, I couldn't even tell you it's um, you know, it's complicated. financial situation, getting pregnant and staying pregnant.

Megan

Yeah, I bet.

Erika

but yeah, that's true. Like, that's not free, right for them to tell you that they messed up. So I learned how to say like you need to do and then like when you're actually having a baby. But when you're in labor, they they put the thing on to like read constantly. And if it's too small, and you have a bigger arm like I do, it cuts into you. It bruises you, and it literally hurts your body. While it's trying to do a pretty hard thing I would say.

Kendra

Maybe maybe the hardest.

Erika

You know, it's it's up there, Kendra, it's up there.

Kendra

It's like babies, gallstones, heart surgery recovering from heart surgery, I don't know.

Erika

It's just another thing where they kind of like, ignore the needs of your body if it's not within this, like standard realm of what they're used to. And y'all it is not bad to have diabetes, it is just fine to have diabetes. But I will tell you what is an interesting experience is for everyone just to assume you have diabetes based on your external factors. What you look like how fat you are. And it's like, even weirder when people want you have diabetes, because what it does is it just further justifies their sort of biases. And so yeah, you get your blood sugar measured all the time, but you do have a bigger blood sugar test called do I know what it's called? It's like a it's a gestation? Yeah, two hour fasting gestational diabetes test.

Sure. I want to say the typical amount of times you get tested, is between one and two times. So they'll have you come in, you get your blood drawn, they test it,

Megan
Are you fasting?

Erika
I believe I was. And then you have to drink what can only be described as flat, orange Fanta and it's, it's real gross. And actually, at one of the tests, I got a choice of like, lemon lime, fruit punch, and orange. In my opinion, Orange is always safest. And so you, yeah, you drink it pretty quickly. It's really gross. And then you wait two hours, and then they test your blood again. And you know that they have ranges for what's, what's fine. And what's reaching levels of gestational diabetes. And so every single time you guys I got tested. The person is actively surprised, and like, not trying to hide it. Yeah.

Megan
And so how many times were you tested?

Erika
I was tested three times, y'all. They really wanted me to have diabetes.

Megan
They sure did.

Erika
I didn't have it.

Kendra
Did they test you? Like, did they have reason? Did they tell you we want to do this again, because of x.

Erika
You know, it's always this hidden language, right? It's the unsaid, we're testing you because you are in this weight category.

Megan

How do you think being fat while pregnant, affected how people treated you.

Erika

The interesting thing about being fat and pregnant to me is that I didn't show for a super long time. And I will say that that was really good for me, because in a lot of ways, I do feel like more of a private person. Even though I'm telling you all my business. I, I err on the side of privacy for a lot of reasons. But it allowed me the time to tell people I was pregnant, and it allowed me to do it on my own timeline. And that felt really good. But it also came with the "you're five months pregnant?" What?, you know,

Megan

Did they say like you're not even showing?

Erika

You're not even showing like I couldn't tell. And a lot of that is wanting to say I didn't realize that you were getting bigger, or that you looked fatter, or that you know, because it comes as part of this stigma of not wanting to mention pregnancy, because you might just be fat. And I will say that like people have asked me if I was pregnant before I was actually pregnant, and I said, No, I'm just fat. And it took a lot of time to get to that point. And so being actually pregnant, and people still being real scared, even when you're when I was pretty actively showing, which again, was just that way later, people didn't know how to act. And they would say, like, really problematic things to you, which I will say is probably something that happens to a lot of pregnant people. Not just fat, but for many people, but just like, calories don't count and you can eat whatever you want, isn't it so great, that you can, you know, have extra calories. And I'm like, I was not worried about that before. And I'm not worried about it. Now. I know how to feed my body. Yeah, but it is really, really interesting. This like dance that happens, because then when you are pretty actively showing if that happens, because some people don't actively show, so that looks different for everyone, but when you are fat, and then you have this, like giant belly, people really have a hard time navigating space around you and, and acknowledging I would I want to say like your humanity, because at that point, you just become this like, carrier like this. This host, it's really it's really weird. And I will say a lot of fat people that I know already have felt that feeling before. Not being pregnant, right? So I just feel like people don't know how to attach your humanity because you're just like, too big for them to understand. I don't know, it's just, it's bizarre, but it's definitely like exacerbated when you're pregnant. Because they're just like, I don't know what language to use with you. So I'm just going to kind of ignore it.

Megan

The way you just said that resonated so deeply about being a fat person and having to claim or fight for your humanity is a whole thing. Yeah.

Kendra

I mean, I've had that experience, but I also have a lot of privilege in my life. So I can't even imagine what that's like, when, with the intersection of other oppressions for people, you know, because I think that's probably true of most oppressions are that idea that you then become kind of an object as opposed to a human, you know, so right?

Erika

something that happens to like POC women is that this motherly characteristic is put on you if you are a fat person, and a brown person or a black person, and they, it feels like this safety thing, almost. And it's really weird that that doesn't happen when you're like, super pregnant and round. It's it changes to this really weird space, at least it did for me, where people didn't know how to deal with a body that was already fat that got like, super extra fat, right? Because there was this human. Yeah.

Megan

That's so interesting.

Erika

Yeah. And also it, it was really helpful. Again, for me to realize that pregnancy doesn't just belong to women. Yeah, that non binary and trans people get pregnant as well. Yeah, that's really think about my language run around that when considering that not all bodies at the same pregnant, that you don't have to compare yourself to other pregnant bodies that this is, like most things, a very personal experience, and that, that comparing can often be harmful to you and other people, when you say this is what pregnancy is supposed to look like. And this is who's supposed to receive this kind of care.

Kendra

Yeah. So Erika, then you have the baby.

Erika

Everything went really well. I'm going to say that, like good. Everything, everyone is happy and healthy and great. Yeah, couldn't have asked for more.

Kendra

And then we're just going to move straight on into postpartum. So what, how was, how do you deal with fatphobia in postpartum?

Erika

It's really strange. Obviously, when you have a baby, your body changes, my body changed the fastest it's ever changed in my entire life. And that, obviously, the baby is outside of you. And so now you're left with this combination of like, postpartum hormones are very specific. They're really different than pregnancy hormones. And so you already have I felt super sensitive to everything. And also then you are exhausted. But then the pressure is almost immediate, from everyone to look very different than you did while you were pregnant. Right? And I want to say that happens to most pregnant people, but I think people almost want to know immediately,

are you smaller? Are you trying to get smaller? What are you doing? And they also want to give you all these compliments. It seemed really obvious to me that I was going to be a smaller person not having a human with me. But people take this as an opportunity to say,

Megan

oh, funny, like, Yeah. Like, why would that be question?

Erika

It's Yeah, but people are so excited to tell you that, that you're smaller. Hey, guess what? You're not pregnant anymore. And you look smaller?

Megan

Because they think that's a compliment.

Erika

Yeah, absolutely. And they want you to know that they think that's better. And that tells you where their values lie. And that is really sad. And so when you're already kind of postpartum sad. And then you add, like, understanding that your friends and family like value thinness so much, it's a weird space to navigate.

Kendra

I have I know of people who have had a baby and thought, oh, and then it's just gone. Like, there's this idea that like, all of it will go away. Like the stomach will go away, you know? And that's not true. Yeah, stomach stays maybe a little, maybe a little, you know, seven pound eight ounces less or whatever. Yeah, it was but yeah, but the stomach still stays. And that often throws people.

Erika

Absolutely. I think we're

Kendra

People who are valuing fitness.

Erika

Right? And, and the coolest thing for me, as someone who's done a lot of work on myself in this way, like, is saying, I was a fat person before and guess what? still gonna be fat after. And I think that took a lot of like, the initial pressure off, but I will say, you guys, no matter how much work I did, it still crept in. Because you are looking at yourself all the time. Because again, you've gone through this radical transition in your life, you've carried this human with you for so long, when they're not there, you're constantly in a way like feeling a certain absence because you get used to it. And then so you're you're looking at your body in different ways. And then these little things come in, where it's like, should I be trying to lose weight? it, you know, obviously knows this expectation, like what am I doing to value myself right now, like, it gets really weird and blurry, because you're not sleeping, you're maybe not eating in the same ways,

you're not caring for yourself, because it is now the need is so external, right? So you have this like, relentless need factory that you love, so so much that you're not putting in the time for yourself. So then those outside pressures they creep in, they really, really do. Because you're not actively again, working on on that part of yourself.

Kendra

And I think there's like this whole, I mean, the whole world of maternity leave. That's not what we call it anymore. But for bodies who have had babies to heal, right? Because it takes longer than you even get off of work to heal. And so there's this but we have kind of collectively decided or I should say the patriarchy, white supremacy has decided that you have to this is how much time you get to heal. And somehow that then becomes Okay, so that's how long I have to get my quote unquote, body back and without a recognition that that can actually be more harmful to try and do things like that in that short amount of time. You would never do that. For other things. We never have that expectation. So yeah,

Megan

it's also interesting to hear all this as someone who hasn't had a child or been pregnant, because the things that I know that I've heard a lot about pregnancy and after pregnancy or weight loss, it's not about how you care for either after aftercare for a C section, or aftercare for an episiotomy, or all those things like I don't hear about that stuff, really I just hear about well I'm breastfeeding, because that'll help speed up my metabolism so I can lose the baby weight. And I'm going to stop even saying those because I can see that in your body, Erika, that triggers you. And that's what happens.

Erika

Yeah. And then also, it is really weird that your body is getting used to again, like just nourishing itself in a certain way. But then also, if you do choose to breastfeed, chestfeed like that, your body might drop an unexpected amount of weight. And if you're not used to that, or if you haven't thought about what that might feel like ahead of time, it could be really jarring. And so yeah, that transition is it was not linear for me at all. And so sort of like getting back to myself and what I valued about myself and like, again, celebrating the awesome things that my buddy just did and is doing, and it's like healing from what a lot of people might consider a pretty big trauma. And it's a is had a lot of joy in it. But it was also very scary. And it's not that way for everyone but like it is a big deal. to not think about somebody's healing and emotional mental health before, what their body looks like, is just a sign of how backwards things are sometimes and how we don't value like pregnant people's actual care, right or health, we value something else.

Megan

Oh, yeah. Do you want to talk at all about responses to that or?

Erika

Yeah, the The one thing I would say is that I would hope if you know a person and any kind of non normative, you know, quote, unquote, non normative body, that is having a baby or has

just had a baby, and you have a lot of privileges in this world is to actively say something to people who are putting pressures on those bodies to align to certain values of thinness of white supremacy of class, especially because like it, not everyone has the same resources. And you know, to make sure that you're actively being an advocate for those people is super important, because these pressures are put on everyone who is pregnant, and then they are exacerbated at exponential levels for people that have different levels of oppression. And so like, be good compassionate listeners and advocates for your friends, because we're watching and listening to how you treat us.

Megan

Well, Erika, I hope that we can have you back and explore more about being a parent and sort of living out body neutrality and how to model that for your sweet little one. Thank you so much for everything.

Erika

You guys. This was really amazing. And thanks for letting me tell my story.

Megan

Yeah, it's I think this has been a really good conversation. And yeah, we haven't had anybody on that that's talked really about pregnancy in this way.

Kendra

Right? Yeah, I'm excited for our listeners to hear it.

Erika

Me too. Thanks for letting me come on. And we'll be talking soon. Oh, hello. Someone's hungry. Yeah, are you listening to your own body cues? good job.

Megan

I want to know what the scariest costume you can think of is

Kendra

Chucky.

Megan

Okay, so I a children's doll.

Kendra

If anyone out there wants to dress their child as Chucky and come to my door for candy. You should skip my house.

Megan

You want to put a sign up that says no chuckies?

Kendra

I don't want Chucky. I don't want the bride of Chucky. I don't want anything in the Chucky franchise ever. And this is like why I hate Halloween.

Megan

What happened? What happened to you with Chucky? I feel like there's a story there

Kendra

is there. There is definitely a story. When I was like I have a brother who's like 10 years older than me. So when I was like an elementary aged child, and he was like a high school about the graduate dude. He said to me, he had a friend over and they were going to watch a movie downstairs. Hey Kendra, we're gonna watch a movie about a doll. Do you want to watch it with us?

Megan

those little assholes.

Kendra

Yeah, no shit. So I'm like yeah, cuz you know I'm like the little sister wants to go hang out with my brother. And within the first I don't even know 5/10 minutes I was running upstairs to my parents room freaking out. Oh my gosh, they were livid as they should have been because guess what that been produced at least a month of me having to sleep in my parents room on their loveseat with the lights on

Megan

not just in their room but with the lights on

Kendra

And then I would and then it was with the lights off. And then in my room. I mean, it was like it was I mean it feels like a really long time. I don't remember exactly the timeline. But then it was moving to my room with the lights on and a parent in the room till I fell asleep. Until eventually it was back to normal

Megan

you know my fears as a child I'm going to get to my scariest costume in a second but my fears this child revolved around two things and that was the devil and sharks and they were everywhere especially at night. Oh yeah, like an ever present threat.

Kendra

threat. Yeah. The Prince of Darkness. Yeah,

Megan

well thank you exactly. Yeah, yeah. And sharks could be in pools they might look like lights that are you know, deep end or maybe a grate or a filter. Sometimes they were in the shower like they were going to come through the faucet. Yeah.

Kendra
Oh my gosh,

Megan
and all that makes sense.

Kendra
Totally. Okay, what is the scariest costume?

Megan
It's either a bariatric surgeon or Jillian Michaels?

Kendra
Yeah, Jillian wins that. I don't care and what's a bariatric

Megan
surgeons that do like the gastric bypasses and stuff. Oh,

Kendra
yeah. is pretty bad. Yeah, I was gonna say I don't actually i'm not i don't think Jillian's very scary.

Megan
Yeah, it was more of a joke than an actual fear.

Kendra
I think it'd be more sad to see that somebody want to dress up like Jillian Michaels?

Megan
Yeah, that's and this is where your angel comes out and my asshole comes out because I just be fucking mad. Be like, get the fuck outta here with that. Unless it was done in like a I don't know if we're villainizing Jillian Michaels then yes, I'm all for it.

Kendra
Yeah, yeah, but if it's someone who's like you're dressing up like imitation aspirationally Yeah, form of flattery. Yeah, it's like yeah, yeah,

Megan
yeah. All right. Thank you for listening. Watch out for those PCOS episodes coming out. They're gonna be real good.

Kendra

And be sure to check into our the next upcoming mini series episode. And then that will be on pause until the next to come out which won't be until 2022 which isn't that far away.

Megan

But gosh, it sure isn't and that's The Weigh Down Take Down miniseries that we're referencing. Also Erika Nuñez. This close out song is just a little gift to you. I love you friend. Bye bye.