



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

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## Fatty – Scrawny – lazy – obsessive – flabby – bony – shrimp –

Thursday, February 14, 2013

A recent article spotlighted some author who suggested “shame” as a method of pushing people to change their habits. I was so angry at the time both at the author and the media who gave him airtime and publicity that I couldn’t even blog about it.

My advice has always been to ignore the sensational headlines, articles and books that only seek to inflame while making money for the author. Sometimes reading beyond the headline to the entire article reveals some validity, but often not.

While you may know someone in a particular weight category who actually exhibits a particular type of behavior, it is not valid or helpful to generalize to an entire group of people.

Applying stereotypes like this is called prejudice whether directed at the obese, those within recommended BMI, the underweight, distance runners or those who are doing seated workouts.

While it is understandable to respond negatively and in kind to verbal abuse directed at ourselves personally, we should not take out our anger on those with similar physical characteristics or fitness practices of our personal abuser.

It’s similar to the reaction of a person who suffered at the hands of someone of a particular racial, religious or ethnic group who responds by attacking an entire group of people with similar characteristics. That never ends well.

What do those hurling the epithets of fatty, scrawny, lazy, obsessive, flabby, bony or shrimp all have in common? Either they are guilty of not considering the effect of their words or they are just plain mean. Mean people come in all sizes, shapes, colors and backgrounds.

We know that physically abused children often become abusers themselves. Is it the same for those who have been verbally abused? In any case, it’s time to stop this behavior.

Not all nasty comments have to do with weight and body type. How about “stupid or retard or geek”

I read a blog recently that contained this thought.

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I would give the original poster credit for finding this, but I don't remember who it was. The only way to stop such abuse is as the old song says "Teach your children well"

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**TINAJANE76**

I completely agree with you that shaming in any form is not acceptable. This fat shaming movement is just so ridiculous that hopefully it will just go away. The person who thought this up obviously has no idea about the complexities of weight management, including the emotional component of being overweight, and is missing both a compassion and sensitivity chip.  
3041 days ago



**CHESAKAT41**

I think abuse of any kind is disgusting - and verbal is even worse. I have a daughter who took verbal abuse (well, she is better now and standing up for herself). I told the abuser that if he ever verbally abused her again, I would get a baseball bat and beat him to death when he was sleeping! He didn't know what to do and cleaned up his act real quick!!! Ya know??? I know with me if I would to be attacked, I would faint on the spot, or go down kicking the cr\*p out of the person abusing me. Great blog...LI, NY sends you a wave...



3041 days ago



**MERRYMARY42**

very good blog, and I always wonder how I can be so mean to ME who I am supposed to love, and try never to be cruel to others  
3041 days ago



**LESLIESENIOR**

Thank you for this! It is not okay to belittle others. As a special education teacher of 36 years, I am passionate about the rights of all human beings.

What then, I have asked myself, made it okay for me to shame myself for making mistakes, having defects, or just being human?

I have learned that the shame I allowed in the past only served to make me feel alienated, inadequate, inferior, helpless, powerless, defeated, and insecure. Recognizing our mistakes and defects, making amends, and correcting our course is the antidote to shame.

Thank you again for a great, and thought provoking blog!  
3042 days ago



**ALIHIKES**

I TOTALLY agree with you! Shame is a disastrous tactic that keeps us from moving forward. Thanks for writing this excellent blog!  
3042 days ago



**CAKEMAKERMOM**

Shame never works, it backfires on the one that shames.  
3042 days ago





**AURORAMILLET**



3042 days ago



**DESERTJULZ**

Hear, Hear! Well written. Although I don't usually generalize, I believe it is true that ALL humans respond better to encouragement and kindness.

3042 days ago



**SOUTH\_FORK**

I just rewatched part of the "A Class Divided" experiement where a elemetary school class was divided by eye color and then one color given preferential treatment over the other as a teaching tool about race. Such powerful stuff- both from the viewpoint of seeing the little light bulbs go on over the kids' heads, but also realizing how easy it is to judge... One of the children called another "brown-eyes" as an insult soon after the experiment stated.

For years I used the word "retarded" without thinking about it. To be clear, NOT in reference to people with developmental disabilities. Not long ago, I caught myself saying it and realized I wouldn't want my son to use that word.... habits are so easy to make! Time for a change to make a more inclusive, thoughtful environment for everyone!



Thanks Bklyn- for another thoughtful and thought-provoking blog!

3042 days ago



**DR1939**

If shame would work there would be no overweight people, no one would bite their nails, and everyone would exercise daily.

3042 days ago



**JAHINTZY**

Love it, I don't believe that shame is ever an effective motivator - it so often causes the opposite to happen instead. Hate only begets hate.

3042 days ago



**SUZYMOBILE**

I couldn't agree more. Name-calling is a big no-no in our house.

3042 days ago



**CD9394210**



3042 days ago



**RASCALRACCOON**

the bootcamp that my personal trainer used to work for employed this tactic to "motivate" their members... its why he left!

3042 days ago



**WILSONWR**

It's hard to believe that anyone would even suggest that causing shame is acceptable -- I thought most folks had moved beyond that. Nothing like encouraging "bullying!"

3042 days ago



**CELIAMINER**

Very thought-provoking, and I would add the GLBT community to those suffering verbal (and physical) abuse.

3042 days ago



**CD13167855**

Considering I remember the awful things said to me by my father and grandmother all these years later and they still effect me as stated in my blog, Petite. I forget the things shouted at me from cars seconds after they are said, but insults from loved ones last a lifetime.

3042 days ago



**SLENDERELLA61**

Very good blog. Much truth here. Mean people come in all sizes. Abused people often learn to abuse (physically or emotionally), and participate in a terribly destructive and unhappy cycle. Shaming people to change behavior hardly ever works; inspiring others to be their best and do their best is most likely to work.





And even approaching my fourth year at goal weight I still feel a great deal of shame regarding my previous eating behaviors and my occasional current slips. No one needs to shame me; I have to fight the shame because it is overwhelming and de-motivating. Shaming would much more likely make me give up. I must focus on my successes and build on them!! I suspect I am not alone. - Marsha  
3042 days ago



**MISCHAKEO** v  
I think bullying and verbal abuse is on the rise. There is so much going on in the schools..and in society in general. The social media can be deadly for hurling insults. Like you say we are all different and deserve to be accepted as we are.  
Great blog.  
3042 days ago



**COCK-ROBIN** v  
A wonderful, informative blog!  
3042 days ago



**CLUMBOY** v  
absolutely true. we are so quick to judge and use hateful language in this modern world. i love the quote you put it. thanks!  
3042 days ago



**CD12337968** v  
I think that verbal abuse is harder to deal with because there are no visible signs of it happening and the victim doesn't often say anything. But the scars remain forever.  
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