

FALL 2023

# WEIGHT INCLUSIVE FITNESS INSTRUCTOR

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Breaking down the barriers to fitness  
to create a greater impact

BREAKING BODY BIASES

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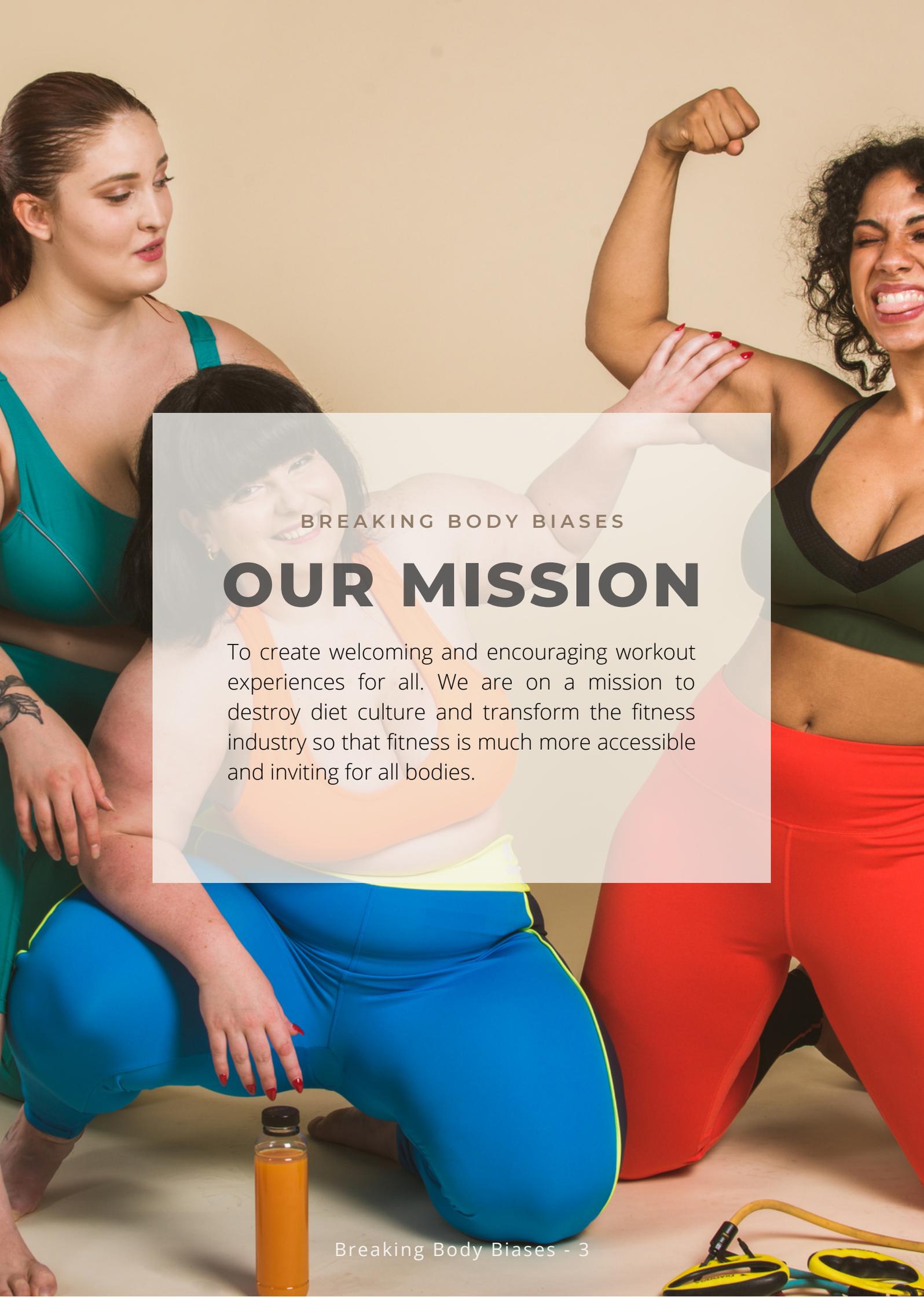
# INSTRUCTOR



## CHRISTINE DEFILIPPIS

Unconventional Fitness Pro

Movement motivator, body liberator, and unconventional fitness professional. Christine is the owner of Pop Fit Studio, a weight neutral fitness studio, and the creator of FitProEd, an online education platform for group fitness instructors that would like to expand their expertise. After struggling with eating disorders, weight cycling, & body dysmorphia, Christine shifted her focus to joyful movement and created the Breaking Body Biases podcast to amplify the voices of fitpros, dietitians, and other wellness practitioners looking to destroy diet culture and create a more inclusive fitness industry.



BREAKING BODY BIASES

# OUR MISSION

To create welcoming and encouraging workout experiences for all. We are on a mission to destroy diet culture and transform the fitness industry so that fitness is much more accessible and inviting for all bodies.

# CHECK YOUR BIAS

*Give yourself 2 points for every yes and 1 point for every maybe answer*

		YES	NO
1	When I see a larger sized person, I think their goal should be to lose weight, get smaller or become thinner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	The path to weight loss is calories in and calories out, eat less move more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	As a fitness professional we should be concerned about the health of individuals that are overweight	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Evaluating someones size, weight or their BMI is a great indicator of a persons health and/or fitness level	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	When I see a larger person I assume that person is out of shape	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	A person that is fat lacks discipline, willpower and/or self control and is probably just lazy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Thinner people have better health and are less likely to have health issues like diabetes and high blood pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	I think its important to maintain a healthy weight a fitness professional so I can be an example to clients	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# CHECK YOUR BIAS

*Add 2 points for every no and 1 point for every maybe answer*

		YES	NO
1	An Individual can be fat and healthy at the same time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	A larger body or a fat body can be just as fit or even more fit than a thin body	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Individuals can improve their health without weight loss	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	A person in a larger body or fat body can be a very successful fitness professional	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	People in larger bodies are sometimes subjected to discrimination based on their size	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Larger-bodied people deserve the same treatment as smaller bodied people in gym and fitness settings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	A person in a larger body does not need to lose weight or be healthy to be loved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	When I see a larger person working out I give them more credit than a smaller person doing the same workout	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

# WEIGHT BIAS

Weight bias is holding negative attitudes about people's weight or harming and shaming someone because of their weight.

Also people internalize weight bias and blame themselves for their weight which can be incredibly damaging.

We all have bias, we all have different lived experiences. Its important to be aware of our biases and make sure we do not treat people differently bases on our biases.

The score from your quiz should help you become aware of the level of weight bias you hold. The higher the number the more bias. But not to worry because that number will shift and you are taking the first step here to change how you view weight and treat others as a result.

For more on weight biases visit <https://stopweightbias.com/>



# 7 AREAS TO SHIFT

## 01 FOCUS ON NON-AESTHETIC GOALS

Rather than focusing on physical changes in the body: weight loss, body shaping etc, focus on getting stronger, increased flexibility and improved energy as the goal for movement.

## 02 SEPARATING FOOD FROM FITNESS

No one needs to earn or burn their food. We are all worthy and deserving of food regardless of if we workout or how hard we work out. If we continue to connect food and workouts we are doing a huge disservice to our clients and could be unintentionally harming them

## 03 VARIATIONS & OPTIONS OVER MODIFICATIONS

Offering a modification for an exercise can be perceived as a less than option. If we shift our language to offer variations & options for exercises everyone will be able to select the one that feels best for them without judgement or fear of doing the less than version.

## 04 OFFERING CHOICES OVER LEVELS

Another great example of how we can create a more inclusive experience where everyone feels welcome is to offer lots of choices during the workout versus saying this is the beginner version, intermediate and advanced levels. Instead offer all levels without labels and allow clients to choose the best one for them

## 05 GO HARD OR GO HOME MENTALITY

We want everyone to feel successful in classes and when we push this all or nothing mentality we might push people beyond what feels good which often leads to injury as well as chips away at a clients confidence

## 06 BEFORE & AFTER PICTURES

Theodore Roosevelt said "Comparison is the thief of joy."

When we compare ourselves to others we are essentially making ourselves feel inadequate and deflated which contributes to a low self esteem. Its challenging to celebrate all bodies when you are essentially holding up a before picture. Instead of celebrating weight loss celebrate behaviors

## 07 WEIGHT LOSS AS THE PRIMARY FOCUS

Explore how a weight neutral approach may help more people enjoy fitness and create more consistent routines with movement.

# WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD



**IF YOU CAN'T DO "X", TRY "Y"**



**Here are some options to explore for this exercise**



**IF THIS IS TOO MUCH, JUST DO THIS**



**If your body wants another option, explore this**



**FOR A MODIFICATION DO THIS....**



**To feel more supported try this**



**INSTEAD OF USING "SHOULD"**



**Ask students to explore a movement and to tune into where they feel it and how they can connect more**

# PROBLEMATIC PRACTICES IN THE FITNESS INDUSTRY

Exploring toxic fitness culture and what we can do to provide a more caring & kind fitness industry

## TOXIC FITNESS CULTURE

- Smaller = healthier
- The idea of Summer bodies & Beach bodies
- Toning, Sculpting and Shredding your body
- No pain no gain
- Go hard or go home
- If you can't do this, do this
- Fitness has a look
- Fitness has to be hard to be effective
- Working out requires sweating
- Workouts need to be a certain length of time
- Your body is your business card as a fitness professional
- Giving meal plans and nutritional guidance
- Celebrating weight loss regardless of how accomplished

## ACCESSIBLE & INCLUSIVE FITNESS

- Health can be achieved in all shapes and sizes
- There is no obligation to be healthy
- Being healthy does not make you morally superior
- Movement can be enjoyable
- Workouts do not require sweat, a set duration or a formal location
- All bodies are valued
- Respect lived experiences
- Explore movement as it suits each individual (there is no one right way to move)
- Tune into how movement feels
- Stay in your lane: refer nutrition questions to an RD

## BREAKING BODY BIASES

# CHECKLIST

As you explore a weight neutral approach focus on these key areas to create more inclusive language, programming and spaces.



I have removed all mention of calories and food in exchange for fitness in my classes and marketing



I will not make people feel guilty about missing workouts. Each day is a new opportunity to explore movement



I will focus my coaching on non-aesthetic cues such as getting stronger, having better balance, increasing duration etc vs body goals



I will be a guide for my students allowing them to find what works best for them vs being policing their movement



I will offer students options, variations and choices and remove any one ideal for movements while still keeping students safe.



I will celebrate behaviors and habits over physical changes to the body like weight loss or body changes.

## Your Ideas:

# KIND-CULTURE FITNESS

Taking a weight neutral approach can be challenging but extremely rewarding. You will connect with more people, have a much greater impact and do much less harm.

**01**

## **CHECKING IN WITH YOUR BIASES**

When a person in a larger body enters your class, what assumptions do you make regarding their ability and fitness level?

**02**

## **KNOW THAT YOUR WORDS HAVE POWER**

How we communicate with our classes is important. The words we use have great power and can not only negatively impact students but can also be triggers for those with a history of eating disorders

**03**

## **RETHINKING PROGRAMMING**

Are you creating workouts that clients can do and feel successful when done? Making sure that all bodies can complete movement without injury is vital for the longevity of your career.

**04**

## **MARKETING MATTERS**

How are you marketing yourself and your classes? Representation matters. We also want to remove all messaging that is centered around shame and judgment.



*Never underestimate  
the impact that you  
may have on someone  
else's life.*

# CREATING KIND CUES



## REMOVING TOXIC CULTURE

- Should's - separate from keeping clients safe we want to avoid pushing the narrative that there is one right way to move - allow clients choices and opportunities to explore
- earning or burning food
- exercise as punishment for what we ate or having not worked out
- talking about anyone's body
- comparison
- making assumption about fitness level based on how someone looks
- "You Lost Weight, You Look Great!"
- "You'll never regret a workout"



## WHAT TO ADD

- positive language and feedback
- an abundance of choices and options
- Feel supported. more connected or more grounded with this option
- Congratulate clients on completing workouts, mastering a movement or learning a new skill
- listening and tuning in to one's body
- movement for FUN
- Give space to allow people to stop or even leave class with out judgement



## THINK ABOUT

- Removing all levels (beg/inter/adv) from your classes and allow people to explore
- Teaching to the positive. Cue to what you want clients to do vs what not to do
- Be curious, ask questions and allow your clients to let you know what is best for their body (they are the experts of their body not us)
- Your marketing: removing all shame, guilt and manipulation

W I F I  
E X P A N D Y O U R R E A C H



BREAKING BODY BIASES

# WEIGHT INCLUSIVE FITNESS INSTRUCTOR

Create a greater impact by taking a weight neutral approach. Learn how you can be a weight inclusive fitness instructor and remove the barriers to fitness. Help create a kinder and more caring industry while reaching more people and helping people not only step in to fitness with less fear but also stay in fitness because they enjoy it.

SIGN UP  
[BREAKINGBODYBIASES.COM/WIFI](https://breakingbodybiases.com/wifi)

“YOU CANNOT GET THROUGH A SINGLE DAY WITHOUT HAVING AN IMPACT ON THE WORLD AROUND YOU. WHAT YOU DO MAKES A DIFFERENCE, AND YOU HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT KIND OF DIFFERENCE YOU WANT TO MAKE.”

-JANE GOODALL

*Our course and community of likeminded fitness professionals is here to support you on your journey as we destroy diet culture and toxic fitness culture and create a greater impact.*

[BREAKINGBODYBIASES.COM](https://breakingbodybiases.com)