

VOL. 2 ISSUE 3 · NOVEMBER 2023

Therapy Thoughts

Official Newsletter of Forward Motion Counseling

Welcome

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Hey there!

It is that time of year again to ease into the colder weather and survive the time change, the weather change, and everything that the holidays might bring along. My wish for you is that you're not just surviving it, you're thriving in it!

I am personally looking forward to colder temps. I love Fall and Winter clothing (woohoo giant cozy sweaters!) and I love moving outside in the cold, whether I am walking, running, hiking, or skiing. I also do not need to be convinced to stay inside with my pups, so the snow is welcomed!

I am wishing you peace over the next three months. Have wonderful holidays if you celebrate. Thank you for reading!

With gratitude,
Maria

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Now Accepting New Clients in Connecticut!

Did you know that your therapist must be licensed in the state you reside in? This licensing law can be a barrier to receiving mental health support for various reasons. For example, it can get in the way of continuing treatment if you move out of your state into a state that your current therapist is not licensed in. It can also be an issue if you can't find the right therapist for your needs in your area or if you are located near the border of another state and would like to expand your search for therapy. With an increasing demand for mental health services and the option for teletherapy, many people are needing to expand their search when trying to find a therapist.

My Brewster office is only 15 minutes away from Connecticut and so I decided to take the leap and obtain my CT license! This means that those living near the Danbury area can easily come into the office or meet me on the trail near the NY/CT border. Teletherapy is also an option for those who do not live or work nearby.



Body Neutrality Boost: Five Ways to Feel Empowered this Holiday Season

Written By Maria Antell, LCSW & Certified Run Coach

It's been a wild year of trending weight loss drugs such as Ozempic and Wegovy. Now, you may be considering these drugs, or already taking one. This blog is not going to demonize you for that. Rather than hating the patient or the dieter, I hate the systems in place that put the pressure on you to be smaller, to weigh less, to be "healthier". The problem is that there will never be a drug or a surgery that improves your relationship with food, movement, and your body. These interventions are riddled with consequences, very often putting people at higher health risk than to begin with. This blog is about ways to feel empowered at a time when thinness is extra trendy and when you are likely feeling pressure around your dinner table during the holidays. Here are five ways to feel empowered with body image issues during the holiday season:

- Remember there are multiple industries profiting off of your wish to be smaller (beauty industries, diet companies, gyms/trainers, wellness people selling all kinds of products, physicians, surgeons, drug companies, and more). I was recently listening to a podcast created by Erica Leon, a Registered Dietitian and eating disorder specialist in Westchester, who talks about her doctor experience and how she found out that there are doctors who receive kickbacks from prescribing Ozempic. These industries are thieves of joy and want you to feel disempowered so they can keep profiting. Simply having this information is empowering!
- Find community. Look into groups or events, and surround yourself with people who might relate to or can empathize with your experiences. The holidays are typically stressful and, unfortunately, a time when family members might make comments about your body or your food choices. My fear is that with weight loss drug availability, family members may be even more pushy about seeking weight loss. Although your family members are impacted by the same systems as you and may be struggling themselves, this can lead to feelings of shame, frustration, or other complex feelings. So creating like-minded support is essential to feeling heard and healing. If you like to get outdoors, the Body Liberation Outdoor Club Hudson Valley Chapter is a safe place to move and is welcoming to all bodies. They have multiple chapter locations throughout the country too!
- Unfollow social media accounts that spread diet information and misinformation about health. You can also turn off instagram ads if you are receiving unwanted ads about weight loss. Here are some of my favorite accounts to follow that will help you feel less isolated and who also share their tips for dealing with our weight stigmatizing culture: @decolonizing_fitness @v_solesmith @fatpositivetherapist @kiraonysko @theantidietplan @drachelmillner @counselingcollectivepeekskill

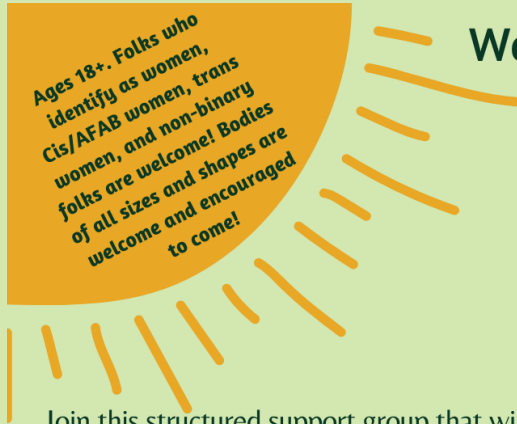
- Move for your mental health, not for weight loss. Aim for body neutrality when moving. Body neutrality is the concept that your body is just a body. Your body size or weight does not define your worth or your health. Sometimes body positivity is too far of a stretch, meaning it is unrealistic to always feel love or positivity about your body, so neutrality may feel more attainable. When you regularly practice body neutral thoughts, you can start to decrease overall stress. An example of a body neutral thought might be “My body functions to keep me alive today” or “Body size is a way to describe people, just like being tall, short or having brown hair. It does not define who they are.”
- Find a Health At Every Size (HAES)[®] provider if you are struggling with body image, self-esteem, and weight loss issues. This would include dietitians, therapists, doctors, and other professionals. Providers on this listing share the mission that health does not need to be weight-centered. HAES[®] also rejects the common belief that health is a moral and individual obligation that you should pursue. Learn more about the HAES[®] approach [here](#).

And if you are local to Putnam, Northern Westchester, Dutchess, or Fairfield Counties, consider joining my upcoming support group in January! Read more about the Women’s Body Liberation Support Group on the next page and register on my [website](#)!

“Concepts like self-acceptance and body neutrality are not without value. When you have spent your entire life at war with your body, these models offer a truce. But you can have more than a cease-fire. You can have radical self-love because you are already radical self-love.” -Sonya Renee Taylor



SUPPORT GROUP COMING IN JANUARY!



Women's Wilderness Body Liberation Support Group

Are you struggling with body image and tired of diet culture?
Do you like walking and being outside in nature?
Do you need help with making peace with your body and food after getting through the holidays?

If yes, then this might be the group for you!

Join this structured support group that will provide a safe space to practice joyful movement in nature followed by discussion about diet culture and its effect on mental health.

What to expect:

- Guided breathing techniques/meditation
- A 20-30 minute mindful walk on a flat wooded trail. The pace is slow and set by the group facilitator. The group intentionally moves quietly to fully experience nature.
- Group discussion during hygge (pronounced hyoo-guh), a Danish practice that involves comfort and coziness. Warm tea will be provided.
- Discussion topics include: introduction to health at every size® concepts, diet culture and impact on self-esteem/body image, post-holiday support, learning how to utilize nature and movement to cope, dismantling diet culture and ways to feel empowered.

When: Saturdays, 10:00 AM-11:30 AM (1/6/24, 1/13/24, 1/20/24, 2/3/24, 2/10/24, & 2/17/24)

*The group has a break and does not meet on 1/27/24.

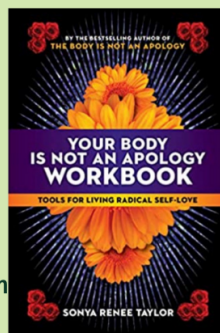
Where: Hubbard Lodge, 2920 US-9, Cold Spring, NY 10516

Fee: \$50 per session (total fee for all sessions to be collected prior to the first group)



Email or call Maria to register:
maria@forwardmotioncounselinglcsw.com
845-458-1301

Workbook included with registration!



Hubbard Trail, Fahnestock State Park

Register Here!

In the Media

Check out my friend and colleague, Chelsea Bolles, who was on the local news in Glens Falls, NY talking about walk and run therapy! Chelsea brings movement into her sessions like me and did an excellent job explaining her work!



Articles:

How I Learned to Love Finishing Last

In a sport that rewards speed, sometimes it's healthier to be the tortoise than to be the hare.

By Danielle Friedman

This Veteran Paddler Says Teenage Girls Need Adventure

By Julie Ellison

Even Short Runs Have Major Health Benefits

By Markham Heid

Diet Culture Is Unhealthy. It's Also Immoral.

By Kate Manne

We Need To Talk About Teens & Weight-Loss Drugs

By Danielle Friedman