

JUST BEING IN THE WORLD A PERSON OF SIZE, YOU ALWAYS GET THAT FIRST IMPRESSION WHERE SOMEONE LOOKS AT YOU, AND THEY SIZE YOU UP. PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE WHAT THE PERSON THEMSELVES ARE DOING. WHAT'S IN THEIR BACKGROUND? WHAT'S IN THEIR HISTORY? IT'S A HURT. IT'S AN UPSET AT TIMES, WHEN YOU'RE THINKING, "REALLY? THIS IS WHAT PERCEIVE?" YOU WANT TO GO OUT, YOU WANT TO HAVE A GOOD TIME, JUST LIKE ANYONE ELSE. ENJOY THE GROUP AND TO HAVE YOURSELF SINGLED OUT, OR OTHERS STARING AT YOU TO THE POINT WHERE YOU ALMOST HAVE TO SAY, "CAN I HELP YOU? IS THERE A REASON THAT YOU'RE STARING AT ME?" IT KIND OF THROWS OFF THE EVENING AND UPSETS YOU IN A WAY.

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I WAS ALWAYS BEEN A PLUS SIZE, A BIG GAL. WHATEVER YOU WANT TO CALL IT. I'M A MEMBER OF THE CLEAN PLATE CLUB. MOM SAID, "IF YOU DIDN'T EAT EVERYTHING IT WAS GOING TO ASIA FOR THE CHILDREN," AND STUFF LIKE THAT. OF COURSE, YOU KNOW, IT BECAME A FUN THING. I ENJOYED MEALS. I WAS ALWAYS OSTRACIZED FOR IT. IF THERE WAS A DAINTY LITTLE THING, LIKE WHEN WE WENT TO DANCE CLASS, OR WHEN WE WERE DOING SOMETHING IN THAT REALM, I WAS ALWAYS PICKED LAST. BUT IF IT WAS SOMETHING THAT WE REALLY HAD TO DO WITH A HEAVY PERSON, DODGE BALL, AND THE GOOD STUFF LIKE THAT. I WAS PICKED FIRST. SO I'VE HAD THIS ALL MY LIFE.

NOW I'VE LOST WEIGHT ON AND OFF. WHAT ALWAYS GALLED ME ABOUT THAT WAS, WHEN I WAS THINNER ALL OF A SUDDEN I WAS A PART OF A DIFFERENT GROUP. I WAS LOOKED AT AS, "OH BESS HAS ALL THE GREAT IDEAS." OR, "BESS IS DOING THIS. BESS IS DOING THAT." I DIDN'T GET ANY SMARTER. I DIDN'T RICHER. ALL OF A SUDDEN I WAS GREAT. THEN I PUT ON A FEW MORE POUNDS. THEN, "OH LET'S PUT BESS BACK ON THE SHELF AGAIN."

OVER THE YEARS I'VE LEARNED TO LIVE WITH IT. BECAUSE I'M LIVING WITH IT I WATCH MYSELF. I TRY TO DO THINGS THAT ARE A LITTLE HEALTHIER. SO IN THE LONG RUN, YOU KNOW I'M 55 NOW, I CAN IMAGINE WHAT 75 IS GOING TO BRING.

IT HAS BEEN HURTFUL THROUGH THE YEARS BUT LIKE I SAID, YOU GET TO A CERTAIN POINT IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU'RE LIKE, "THAT'S IT." I'M THE BEST I'M GOING TO BE. I'M GOING TO ENJOY MYSELF. YOU CAN ALWAYS WAIT FOR THOSE 40 TO 50 POUNDS. YES, WHEN THIS HAPPENS THEN I'LL LIVE. WELL YOU HAVE TO LIVE NOW. YOU HAVE TO ENJOY AND EMBRACE WHAT YOU HAVE. YOU CAN WORK ON IT, BUT MY THING IS TRYING TO PERCEIVE FROM OTHER PEOPLE THAT I MATTER. THAT I'M PART OF THE PLAN, AND THAT I'M THERE FOR THEM.