

My life as a little person

By Cara Reedy

From the moment I was born, people around me were saying, “Oh, God.”

The nurse exclaimed it when I finally arrived, a month late (a habit I have kept). That’s how my parents found out that I was a little person, a dwarf, of short stature. They were shocked and upset, knowing that my life would be hard. My maternal grandfather told my mother, “I don’t care how tall she is, she’s my first granddaughter, and she’s pretty. “

My family cares for me and at the same time has never shielded me from the world. That’s how they raised me. I am Cara. Expectations are not lowered. We can talk about it whenever I need to, but I have not been allowed to hide.

Even so, living as a little person is like being the main attraction at the circus every day of my life.

When I was a child, I used to walk into public places and scan the room to figure out who would be the first to say something. Inevitably, they did. Most of the time it was “Isn’t she cute?” But sometimes it was more cruel. Deeper. Darker.

They hold their hands over their mouths and laugh, trying to look away but also alert their friends. They whisper, “There’s a midget.”

If people use the word “midget,” I say, “It’s called dwarfism. Don’t use that word.”

One of my friends says, “Cara is always trying to prove she’s normal.” I am normal. I have the same thoughts, feelings and desires. The world treats me as if there is something wrong with me.

Life Lessons I Learned in Fitness Classes

By Petula Workman

Some of the best teachers I've had in life have been indoor cycling instructors. They reminded me to be the best version of myself. They gave me a short, psychological boost when I needed it most.

So, what pithy lessons do I now have to share with you?

Life Lesson #1: Success takes patience.

I know that saying that success takes patience may not sound motivating during a cycling class, but when you're seven minutes into a climbing class and your legs start to protest, you need to step back and see the bigger picture. Success takes patience.

Life Lesson #2: You're not the same person every day.

It's easy when you're in a fitness routine to compare one day to the next, but such comparisons must be done in context. We will continue to grow— maybe slowly. We will continue to change and to hopefully be better versions of ourselves, but we must recognize along the way that the path forward isn't always a straightforward path of perfection. We are not the same person every day.

Life lesson #3: Nothing great ever happens in your comfort zone.

The lesson that nothing great ever happens in your comfort zone is one that I repeat to myself quite often. Continue to challenge yourself to try and learn new things. Never eaten sushi? Try it. Never spoken a foreign language? Enroll in lessons. Never cooked for yourself? Take a class. Try at least one new thing every year to keep yourself from settling in your comfort zone.

I have learned many lessons from my fitness instructors. Mostly, they reminded me that not every day is a perfect day, and the goal is progress, not perfection.

Advice That Everyone in a College Relationship Needs to Hear

By Noa Weiner

Loving is easy, but college isn't, and navigating the two can feel like a lot. How do you handle a full academic schedule with tests, projects and studying plus quality time with your partner? It's a delicate balance for sure, but our advice? One of the best parts of having a college relationship is how much you grow side by side.

1. Communicate

Ah yes, the age-old saying: communication is key. When you communicate, you establish trust, ultimately bringing the two of you closer than ever before.

2. Celebrate each other

This is one of the best parts of having a partner. Not only can you completely trust them, but they'll always be in your corner—rain or shine. Knowing that someone genuinely cares about you feels great, so make sure you match that genuine pride and hype them up as well.

3. Make your happiness a priority

Never compromise yourself or what you want for the sake of another person. Your partner cares about you, so be honest with them about your needs, wants and overall happiness.

4. Listen to one another

Make sure you listen to one another when you share your thoughts, feelings and experiences. You wouldn't want your partner to act as if they don't care about what you have to say, so reflect that when listening to them with empathy.

5. Match each other's energy

There will be days when you need to be there for your partner, and some when you can't. However, for every other day, make sure you each put in your best effort to keep things at an even 50/50.