

Assignment Ideas

Short

1. For one day, make a note of the negative comments you make about your body either out loud or to yourself. Provide two examples of comments you caught yourself saying. On a different day, make a note of the positive comments you make about your body either out loud or to yourself. Provide two examples of comments you caught yourself saying. Write a short reflection of what you learned from this activity.
2. For one day, keep a food record that includes hunger and fullness scale numbers before eating and after eating. Also keep track of moods, cravings and distractions vs. mindfulness while eating. Write a short reflection of what you learned from this activity.
3. You're working with a doctor who makes the following comment about an obese patient: "She'd be able to control her diabetes if she just put her fork down and lost weight." Write a brief response to this physician (limit to one paragraph) in a kind, compassionate manner mentioning the scientific evidence to back up your response.
4. Visit the following website and read the pledge: <http://www.haescommunity.org/pledge.php> What was your reaction to the pledge? Could you see yourself taking the Pledge? Why or why not?
5. Write about three barriers to widespread acceptance of the Health At Every Size® paradigm that exist in our culture.

Medium

6. Write an article for the lay public about HAES®. Select a magazine or newspaper publication and develop your article to address the target audience.
7. Take some time to sit and share the main ideas of the HAES paradigm with someone who is unfamiliar with it. This could be a friend, relative, acquaintance, coworker, roommate, etc., but I'd like you to do it in person. With whom did you discuss it? What were their reactions to hearing about HAES? How did you feel explaining it to them and answering their questions about it?
8. Imagine that a friend or family member approaches you expressing interest in the topic of this class. This friend or family member has dieted before and is looking for an alternative approach. In a loving, gentle, and compassionate manner, write a letter to this person that includes a description of the HAES paradigm in a way that doesn't make them feel condemned for choosing to diet. (Optional: Use published, peer-reviewed literature to support your points as to why this approach may be better than a life of yo-yo dieting.)

Long

9. Find an on-line news article or blog written about any of the topics discussed in class (weight loss, body image, size discrimination, etc.). Choose a blog or article in which you agree or disagree with the author. The article must include an area for public comment. Write a ½ to 1-page response to the article explaining your support or contrasting views to the article contents and post your response to the article in the comments section of the article webpage. (For a graduate-level course, can also require that the student include statistics from research articles to back up personal opinion.) Revisit the public comment section a few days following your posting to review comments made by others. Write a 1-page summary that compares and contrasts your opinion to the other opinions posted. Summarize the controversy that ensued. Turn in the following documentation:
 - a. A link to the article
 - b. Your comment to the author
 - c. A one-page paper that summarizes the various comments provided, how your comment related to others who comments and your reflection of the experience as a whole.

10. Select one of the following groups to research on the topic of weight, dieting, and body image:

Hispanic/Latino(a)

Asian

African

Indigenous

Jewish

Muslim

Lesbian women

Gay men

*Other ethnic/cultural group- review with instructor

Research the dieting patterns and/or body image perceptions of the group you chose. Share your findings in a 3-page essay, citing a minimum of five scientific research articles. You may also include personal stories found on the internet (blogs or magazine-like articles) or from personal acquaintances to support your findings.

11. Create a 3-5 minute movie using still images, words and music aimed at teaching others about the Health At Every Size paradigm. Share the video on Facebook® and/or over email with at least 20 friends. Request that a minimum of 10 friends view and then respond to your video, answering the following questions:
 - What were the take-home messages of this video?
 - Do you agree or disagree with these messages? Explain.
 - What are your overall thoughts surrounding the HAES message?
 - What did you think of the overall formatting of the video itself?
 - What's one new thought or action you are walking away with after watching this video?
 Turn in a link to the video, all 10 responses as well as a 1-page paper describing your video and the reactions your friends posted. Sample videos:
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4prOERUQG1c>
 - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xCqwCuo43Y&feature=plcp>