

Transcript for The Who's Dat Phat Girl Podcast - With Brooke Hoover **SEASON 2 EPISODE #16 - Brooke in a Box**

Hey y'all, I'm Brooke Hoover. A Louisiana native, actor, writer and comedian. I've lost 100 pounds through diet and exercise or shall I say "lifestyle changes". My twenty year and counting health journey has taught me that just like taking a diet pill for weight loss, body positivity doesn't magically happen overnight. I'm working on re-gaining my self esteem and re-kindling my love affair with Cajun and Southern comfort food in a healthier way all the while juggling eating as clean as I can, re-establishing myself in the entertainment industry which, as we know, is historically fat phobic all the while showing my inner phat girl some love - that's phat with a PH - pretty hot and tempting. Let me tell y'all a tale or two...

When I originally set out to do this here podcast, my goal was one podcast a week. As a constant overachiever and over-extortor (is that a word?) and a go big or go home person, it's really taking a toll on me emotionally and brain power wise and most especially it's tough when I want to get an episode out and I just don't have time. I'd rather deliver quality over quantity and while it may seem like a podcast is just going up to a mic - or in my case my voiceover studio aka my tiny step-in closet and pouring your heart out to the microphone, it's a lot more involved than that. I heard a radio advertisement the other day - yes, I listen to an old school radio in my car because it's 23 years old - and they were advertising the name of it (I don't remember the name because it wasn't Who's Dat Phat Girl?) and they were saying they do episodes every other Tuesday. And, I'm like DUDE. Light bulb. If some big wig podcast (I ASSume a big wig podcast if they can afford radio ads, golly gee!) can give themselves permission to do a podcast EVERY OTHER WEEK, so can I and then I can be more consistent and I can still work, werk it and keep doing all the other things on my to do list. So, to my loyal and lovely fans out there who tune in, I hope doing this podcast every other week is alright with y'all so I can use that other week to stay sane and also use that other week instead of a generation week as more of a hustle week to figure out how to spread the word about Who's Dat Phat Girl? Y'all feel me on this? I hope so. I really do. I also encourage all of us to do less. Yes, my fellow Americans - because I know it's a big American thing to go big or go home or do more (while Europeans take like a whole MONTH off for vacation in the summer - because they do everything better, well, for the most part) I'm encouraging all of us to figure out how we utilize our time to preserve our sanity a little bit better.

I'm fixing to start a yoga nidra series with my dear friend Amy, a yoga teacher - and if you're interested, I can send you the info to sign up and jump in on her class - she'll be saving all of the episodes so you can always catch up and the theme is 40 days of rest. Yoga nidra is about resting. Regenerating. It isn't like the vinyasa flow that we all know where we flow through movements. These movements can be done in your pajamas and you're holding them for at least three minutes each to really rest and reset your muscles. Amy explains it better than me. But, by doing that for your body, you're also doing it for your mind.

Also, before we jump into this here podcast, I was going to do this week's podcast about SALADS. Yes, Salads. But we'll save that for two weeks. I promise I'll make it worth your while. I love a salad. But, I wanted to let out some thoughts I have here as I've been doing this podcast for a year and a half by this point and as I'm slowly approaching my birthday, here are some thoughts and feels I have.

As a creator, I'm not a natural born marketer. I can generate but the minute I think about marketing and demographics and selling, I cringe because for me it just feels fake and phony and SALESY - my least favorite thing in the world is to get accosted by a salesperson. Actually, my most least favorite thing in the world is to be put in a box and that's essentially what marketing is. You're figuring out your box, wrapping it up, figuring out what kind of wrapping paper - or maybe you're more of a bag with tissue paper or maybe you're like a newsprint or au natural brown bag with raffia bow type of package. It feels stifling but alas, if you say you're for everyone or a little something for everyone, after doing years and years of market research (as a side hustle) I have seen that people - including myself - don't like it when you have something for everyone. Your elevator pitch CAN NOT be, "Well, there's a little something for everyone here." Because a pu pu platter in a Chinese restaurant is one thing but a pu pu platter - a little something for everything outside of a Chinese restaurant is just plain poo poo (with a poo poo) because it's all over the place. And consumers, we don't like that.

So, I started really thinking about Who's Dat Phat Girl - I discuss it a lot in Phat Girl Costumes, my solo show that this podcast was based on which I wrote and performed during my weight loss journey but for intents and purposes of tracking, I was still a good 45 pounds heavier then than I am now (but still a good 50 pounds lighter than when I was at my heaviest.) Y'all following yet?

Here is a quote from my play Phat Girl Costumes which sums up my feelings and it's the theme of today's podcast. While I'm saying this, image that the tune of "Mat Hatter Tea Party" with those teapots is playing in the background. For music license purposes, I can't use them here:

I am in an Alice and Wonderland Mad Hatter Tea Party of fat people crazy. Move down. Plus size - no size - move down - jump up - wait you can't jump you're too fat - - move down - love your curves - don't call them curves they're fat- don't call yourself fat you're plus size - no don't call yourself plus size because you hate that damn term and so does Amy Schumer, move dooooooown.

So, like I said, that was when I was about 50 pounds heavier than I am now but also 50 pounds lighter than when I started. And, now, now that I've lost weight, I dare not say lost "the" weight because it feels so finite and I never know what's going on with my journey, really, I STILL don't know where I really fit in. That's been a running theme in my life. I remember in high school, I was in SO many (too many) clubs: Vice President of Thespian Club, French Club, Art Club, Photography Club, Choir and Troubadour - which brings me to the musical of "Pippin". When I was first

introduced to “Pippin”, it was in a beautiful but un-air-conditioned chapel where we practiced choir. I laughed at the lyrics because they seemed SO damn cheesy. I mean, I was 17, wasn’t that how we all were? I mean, unless you really loved “Pippin” at the age of 17. But, to refresh everyone on “Pippin”, I will sing y’all some of it now. Yes. We are about to get turned UP:

(Brooke Sings:)

*Everything has its season
Everything has its time
Show me a reason and I'll soon show you a rhyme
Cats fit on the windowsill
Children fit in the snow
Why do I feel I don't fit in anywhere I go?*

*Rivers belong where they can ramble
Eagles belong where they can fly
I've got to be where my spirit can run free
Got to find my corner of the sky*

So I heard those lyrics and I was like whaaaaaaaaaat. Cats fit on the windowsill?!?! Really? But, then I kind of felt seen and understood - I interpreted the song to be a mirror of my life : I was trying to fit in this way and that way and every which way that I didn’t fit in anywhere. And, in high school, that’s like what you HAVE to do, right?

Okay in “Mean Girls” for example you have the following groups or cliques:

- Actual Human Beings
- Anti-Plastics
- The Art Freaks
- Asexual Band Geeks
- Asian Nerds
- Burnouts
- Cheerleaders
- Cool Asians
- Desperate Wannabes
- Freshmen
- Girls Who Eat Their Feelings
- J.V. Cheerleaders
- J.V. Jocks
- Junior Plastics
- Preps
- ROTC Guys
- Sexually Active Band Geeks
- The Plastics
- Unfriendly Black Hotties

- Unnamed Girls Who Don't Eat Anything
- Varsity Jocks

Yes, I know we are jumping from the “Alice in Wonderland” section of my solo show “Phat Girl Costumes” to “Pippin” to “Mean Girls” but y’all stay with me, please. Society would have, in high school, of course placed me in “Girls Who Eat Their Feelings”. When I really, honestly, wouldn’t have wanted to fit into any group at all. I didn’t want to be marketed as any of this.

And, now, now that I’ve lost weight but I’m still not a stick figure and I’m still not a muscle Momma, I don’t fit in with the plus size ladies who have a lot of body confidence - in fact when I was in a larger body, I didn’t fit into that club either because I didn’t fully own and accept my body. And, something I’m learning, even though I have lost 100 pounds, it is STILL hard for me to do so. Because, those negative feelings will chase you unless you get rid of them - and you can’t do that simply with a physical change.

There are so many schools of thought here when it comes to our bodies and what I think is, the only school of thought that really matters is what you define to yourself as your own school of thought or motto. Home school if you will. Home schooling, that’s the best way to avoid cliques, by the way. Unless you live in a house of like really clique-y cats who exclude you from their cat activities.

There’s the school of thought that the gym is life. Wellness and eating clean and eating green is the only way. There’s the school of thought that healthy fat such as avocado and almonds are okay but God forbid a fat person enter the store that sells only healthy fat. There’s the school of thought that I’m overweight and I’m happy how I am and I’m owning it. I don’t fit into any of these.

And, then there’s the school of thought that I exercise and eat healthy because I want to feel good not because I want to punish myself to fit into a certain size or be a certain weight to make my doctor happy. And, I think - ding, ding, ding - bingo that does exist, those people do exist and THAT I think, my friends, is where I’ve found my tribe. I wish I had known said tribe when I was younger or even a decade ago. For example, there’s a plus size personal trainer named Morit Summers who weighs over 200 pounds. I will be sharing a wonderful article from Shape magazine about her on my website www.brookehoover.com/podcast She takes a weight neutral approach where we exercise to feel good and be healthy NOT to shame ourselves into losing weight.

Some people won’t get it. It isn’t for everyone. What about people who are naturally super skinny - will they want to take a workout class by someone nearly twice their size? Who knows? That’s their prerogative. Morit knows that isn’t her demographic. She has fans from all walks of life but her primary demographic are larger bodied people.

And, nowadays, now that I've lost weight and I actively talk about it, I worry if I am shunning portions of the community, specifically the plus size community because I'm like hey, I lost weight. I am managing my PCOS (Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome) symptoms better. I'm still a work in progress in multiple ways. I work out and eat healthy to feel good. NOT to punish myself. But, I don't know that I fit into quite the same box that Morit Summers does. Nor do I fit into the same box as Suzanne Somers - well I mean especially back in the 70's and 80's. Y'all know what I mean?

I tried to lose weight at first - not just at first but multiple times by body shaming myself and by letting haters be my motivators. And that simply didn't work. It wasn't until I realized I had a condition that I needed to treat - and that I wanted to treat the natural way that I focused on health that I lost weight - because that weight was not right for my body. My message is NOT if you are a certain size you need to lose weight. Because, I feel like oftentimes that's the story any medical association will tell you. You got heart problems? Lose weight. You're depressed? Lose weight. You have a hangnail? Lose weight. I'm being a bit facetious here against the medical community at large. OH DEAR LORD PUN INTENDED. Does being overweight predispose you to certain conditions? Certainly. Does being skinny and eating three packs of Sour Patch kids a day (but you don't gain weight because that's just your metabolism) predispose you to certain conditions? Most probably. But, I'm not a doctor and I don't play one on TV so I'm not going to tell anyone that being a certain weight is "bad" because the thing is, you can be a certain weight and be healthy overall. Every BODY is literally different. So, why do we have to fit that body into a box?

I think if someone wanted me to wrap up Who's Dat Phat Girl into a box and pitch it on an elevator (and if we didn't have a long enough time for that elevator to get stuck - for elevator pitches, you never have enough time to get stuck on the elevator). We're just taking a few floors up I would say this:

Who's Dat Phat Girl is for people who have ever doubted themselves because society told them to for so long that they started to believe it and they're sick and tired of living their lives according to the BS told to them by others and by their own damn selves and they're working on reclaiming it. Oh, yes and they also love 80's and 90's nostalgia and Louisiana food.

I can't really fit into a box. AH pun intended. For a time, a long time, it was hard for me to fit into even quasi-cute clothes. And I don't want my podcast audience to feel like we fit into a box either. I think we're just people who are trying to be our best selves but who will readily admit that we might not be there yet, and that's okay.

As always, thank y'all for listening. See / hear / talk / vibe with y'all in two weeks.

Thanks so much for listening, y'all. It is my hope to inspire, uplift and entertain you with this Who's Dat Phat Girl podcast. So, if you're HUNGRY for more, you can book me to speak or perform my solo show that inspired this podcast Phat Girl Costumes

written by yours truly and directed by my best bud Brian Lady at your virtual or in person event. Please visit Brookehoover.com/fluffybuttproductions or email me at contactbrookehoover@gmail.com for more information. And, let's follow each other on instagram - I'm @Br00keH00ver and those 0's are not the letter O but they're ZEROS. Not because I want to be a size 0 but because I guess I'm just so clever with my late 90s Yahoo! self

And, if you like this podcast, please give me a five star rating and write a review on Apple Podcasts and, please, most importantly, share with your friends, family and other people you may know who are as phat as we are - that's phat with a PH.

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