



We're All in Sports Bra-Ready Shape

I was on mile six of a long training run, enjoying my new playlist, the hot morning sun and the steady stream of sweat, when an unfamiliar driver slowed down alongside me.

"You know you're too fat to be running without a shirt on," shouted the driver before speeding away.

I stopped myself mid-stride, peering down at my stomach and touching its natural folds and rolls in a moment of self hatred as I felt my hot tears flow. Just like that, I yanked my heavy shirt back over my head and solemnly finished my run, feeling stung, hurt and angry that a complete stranger felt entitled to comment on my body shape and size, especially while I was feeling strong on my run.

When I returned from my run, I picked up my phone to vent to a group of fellow running friends. I was shocked with texts back of similar situations — from both male and female strangers. One friend's comment particularly struck me though. She agreed that while the driver's comment was hurtful, I was giving them power to control my mood and the way I saw my own body.

As I sat with my friends' experiences and my own experiences, as well as my friend's comment, I felt empowered to do something within my own tight-knit community. Thus began an ongoing virtual cheer squad between my friends, where we took back this stolen power and encouraged each other to continue working out in what felt best for us. This simple thread reminded us that we aren't alone in struggling with other people's perceptions of our bodies. This simple thread reminded us that together we can all reclaim our body image and focus on loving ourselves and doing what makes us feel best in what clothing feels best. Finally, this simple thread reminded us that we are all in sports bra shape (and shorts shape, while we're at it).