

it's  
**BIGGER** than **ME**

IT'S BIGGER THAN ME Series Episode 1: My Body Isn't My Identity  
Having a Frank Conversation About Weight

Yvette Nicole Brown and guests are all paid spokespersons for Novo Nordisk Inc.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Welcome to It's Bigger Than Me, our video series. I'm Yvette Nicole Brown. Now, some of you may know me from Disenchanted or Shirley from the sitcom, Community, or as a frequent guest co-host on shows like The Real and The View, and some of you might be meeting me for the first time today. Either way, welcome. Today, we'll be discussing body identity, health and the two sides of body shaming.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: I want to welcome a very special guest to join me in this discussion - Katie Sturino. Katie is an entrepreneur and author through her work on her Instagram @katiesturino. Katie lends her voice and personal style to raise awareness for size inclusivity, empowering women of all sizes to find their confidence and celebrate their style. Her regular content series #SuperSizeTheLook and #MakeMySize have gone viral, and she is the creator of her own beauty brand to help people feel more comfortable and confident in their own skin. Welcome, Katie!

KATIE STURINO: Hi, everyone. I'm so happy to be here.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Oh, we're happy to have you. Okay, so, Katie, I want to say I love how you express yourself through fashion. You show us all the looks that slay, but you're also taking it a step further by letting us see and laugh with you, when something you try on doesn't work or is sized, let's say unexpectedly. Having a sense of humor about fashion is really refreshing to watch when so much about that industry can be fraught for plus-size women.

KATIE STURINO: Oh my god, thank you so much. I'm a big fan of yours, too. I'm very excited to be here, and I love clothes and fashion as much as anybody, but my body type was never represented in models or ad campaigns. I knew that there was a lot of other people out there like me, so I thought I'd share the things I did while finding humor in the things that didn't fit, and it really resonated with so many people over the years.

KATIE STURINO: I will take whatever looks I find in traditional fashion magazines or online and supersize them to show women that they can look good in whatever clothing inspires them.

it's  
**BIGGER** than **ME**

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: I love that. Now you talk about normalizing body changes, and I love this concept because it seems so simple and obvious, but somehow it's still a radical notion in society isn't it?

KATIE STURINO: Totally. I had to learn that like any other part of your life, weight is a journey and it can change - and that's okay. And it's not for anyone to dissect and criticize. It's an intentional practice and message that I cultivate.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Oh, that is such a good way to look at it, you know it creates a real opportunity to be at peace with yourself, first and foremost. And from that place, we can really cultivate the awareness that we are not our bodies. They aren't our identity. We're so much more.

KATIE STURINO: I think that's right. It's bigger than our bodies. We are so much more than our bodies. But that can be difficult to see sometimes. So when we are overwhelmed, living inside of a body that you're constantly judging and hating, it's hard to see a way out or even the forest through the trees.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: If we could all just start to approach living and taking care of our bodies from a place of honesty and without judgment, it would make things so much easier.

KATIE STURINO: A 100% - I agree. I know it's easier said than done. Facing the fear of judgment and focusing on making positive steps toward taking care of ourselves is very important. We don't want to get caught into a "compare-snare" because comparing our journeys with other people mostly just shuts us down and makes us feel bad, and it brings on that big emotional shame. And the more shame we have in our lives, the more we hide, and the harder it is for us to change.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: But also, you know, there seems to be this this pendulum swing that has happened in recent years where you can now get shamed for gaining weight as well as for wanting to lose weight. We see that now with so many celebrities and public personalities. Shouldn't part of this whole thing be that people should be free to make the changes as they see fit for their own health?

KATIE STURINO: Yes, I think it's ridiculous that, first of all, weight isn't news. I don't know why someone shows up on a red carpet and we've got to have a headline about their body. I think

# it's **BIGGER** than **ME**

it's ridiculous. And I think body shaming because a body is too big in someone's eyes or too small in someone's eyes, it's none of our business.

And I think the less we can actually talk about people's bodies, the better we're going to be as a society. But we have to start demanding that, and that starts with not commenting on social media; that starts on looking at what you're saying to your friends, and how you're talking about other people's bodies and yourself.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: You know, it's all about feeling accepted. I think, right? And this is where larger body celebrities come in. They become the evidence of the lovability so many people are absolutely craving. They become our, our role models and our heroes.

KATIE STURINO: Absolutely. And I've heard some people say that they sometimes feel betrayed when they see their heroes losing weight. But with that said, I believe this feeling of betrayal leans a little into reverse body shaming territory, and it's actually quite harmful.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Yeah, because this reaction can really discourage someone from doing something that could be beneficial to their health. I mean, if losing weight can help them improve their health, why would you shame them for that? It's honestly so heartbreaking and it's, you know, not always fans or people online. It can come from friends and family, too, and it feels impossible to meet everyone's expectations and hopes for you and for someone that struggles with pleasing people like me - the weight of that - pun intended, is just too heavy.

KATIE STURINO: Listen up, everybody. It is your body. Changes are between you and your doctor, not some troll on the internet or like some relative at Thanksgiving. This is your body.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Amen. That's right everybody, listen to Katie! And yes, you can and should work with your body while you ebb and flow through life. Everyone should be allowed to make healthy choices to manage their weight without any shame attached and that should be, like you said, within the privacy of the patient and doctor relationship and not for the people in the comment section.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Can you imagine people weighing in on and doing that to people with any other disease besides obesity?

KATIE STURINO: Right? Rather than hashing these things out online, we honestly need to shift these conversations to be between doctors and their patients.

it's  
**BiGGER** than **ME**

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Unfortunately, I think a lot of people living with obesity fear even going to the doctor. Do you have any tips for them?

KATIE STURINO: Well, I was going through my divorce and I actually gained 70 lbs, and I needed a doctor to understand where I was mentally and how it was impacting my weight gain. So it's important for me to find a doctor that would treat me holistically. Finding a doctor that will do that is my number one tip.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Oh, you know, it's amazing how transparent you are about your health journey. You know, I also try to be open because I found that when I was honest, it not only helped others feel less alone - it helped me too. So here we go. When I was doing Community, I was going through a hard time and eating to deal with my sadness and my stress, and you could see me getting fluffier as the seasons go on. I was eating so much sugar on the set that I was diagnosed with diabetes by season three, and I knew it was time to address my health. So I started prioritizing my physical and mental well-being by seeking help from therapists and doctors, which is exactly what I needed.

KATIE STURINO: Yeah, I think that is such a common situation and we've both been there.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: We have. And I'm happy that we are able to shift the conversation from "either or" to more of a "yes and..." mentality where having a loving relationship with our body starts with safeguarding our health.

KATIE STURINO: Yes! That is true freedom and fulfillment, and that's something we can all think about and feel good celebrating. Yes.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Yes. Okay, Katie, there's one last thing before we go. Are you ready for the It's Bigger Than Me Questionnaire? Just a few questions for our viewers to get to know you better and have a little fun.

KATIE STURINO: Let's do it!

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: What do you do for self-care at the end of a long day?

it's  
**BIGGER** than **ME**

KATIE STURINO: Oh, I like to sit on the couch with my husband and my dog and watch TV. No phone. Just chill.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: That sounds lovely. Okay, what is your favorite comfort food?

KATIE STURINO: Ice cream. Always.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: What flavor?

KATIE STURINO: Mint chip.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Oh - say it, say it. What is your go to response for trolls online?

KATIE STURINO: I don't engage with trolls. Who's got the time?

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Well, teach me your ways. Okay, next question. How would you define body identity?

KATIE STURINO: I don't really think that my body is my identity. My body's job is to carry me through life, because the ultimate goal is to live into old age. I really want to meet that version of myself, and that's why I've got to take care of my body now.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: Beautifully said. And there you have it. Thank you so much, Katie. It has been a joy and an honor to spend time with you.

KATIE STURINO: Thank you, Yvette! Thank you so much. You're such an inspiration and a light in this world and conversations like this help people get rid of their shame and it opens them up to the possibilities of what life could be.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN: I love it. Well, you're welcome back anytime. And thank you for taking the time to join us. We'll see you next time on the It's Bigger Than Me Series. In the meantime, you can find us online at [ItsBiggerThan.com](http://ItsBiggerThan.com) and follow us on Instagram @ItsBiggerThan. And if

it's  
**BiGGER** than **ME**

you like what you saw today, share it with your friends or on your socials, then tag us in the comments. We'll see you back here soon.

YVETTE NICOLE BROWN End Credit: It's Bigger Than Me is presented by Novo Nordisk Inc. and has become a movement supported by Queen Latifah and thousands of people and companies such as: the NFL Alumni, the Media Empathy Foundation and the Obesity Action Coalition, aiming to change the way the world understands, talks about, and treats obesity.