



October 6, 2021

A Note from Jenny Pitcher

**Dear Friends,**

As a young girl I was not a “normal” size. I got made fun of. A lot. I was the butt of many jokes from my peers. My friend’s older siblings chided me about my size whenever I would go visit for a sleepover.

Even parents of friends would make comments about my weight. Some would comment that maybe I had a “problem” or, worse yet, that there was something medically “wrong” with me.

As you are reading this, I am wondering what is coming to your mind. Did you picture me as an overweight or obese child?

The answer is that I was not. I was on the opposite end of the weight spectrum, always hanging in the underweight portion of the height and weight chart, sometimes not even making it on the chart.

**See, weight stigma goes both ways.**

I yearned to be in the “normal” category, as many overweight children and adolescents did and do. But, because I was not overweight, my concerns did not feel valid.

“You will be so thankful about being small when you become an adult.”

“At least you are not fat.”

“I wish I had your problem.”

“I would kill to be your size.”

It did not change the fact that I did not feel “normal.” It also did not keep kids from making fun of me or commenting on my body size.

**I could never understand why God gave me a body that hurt my heart so much.**

I became a registered dietitian not because I wanted to help people with their weight struggles but because I was interested in food and how it impacts our health and well-being.

As a dietetics student back in college in the late '80s/early '90s, I was taught to never tell my own story. "Your patients don't need to hear about you and your experiences. That takes away from you as the nutrition expert."

In retrospect, I was never super comfortable with or bought in to that model. I tried to keep the concept in mind as I worked with patients as a young dietitian, but it didn't feel right to me — not in my body or heart.

As I grew as a practitioner and a human being, I understood that to be empathetic and to let my patients decide how to best support their bodies and their health, not only was it important to take off my expert hat, but it was imperative that I share my story in a way that made my patients feel seen, heard, and respected.

It also allowed me to work through my own size struggles and my yearning for acceptance. I was able to reconcile my feelings of inadequacy with the work I do to help others in this space.

The addition of my yoga & meditation practice decades ago enhanced my spirituality and allowed it to blossom and grow, which influenced my work as a nutrition practitioner.

**I now practice nutrition with the support of knowing that God lives within me and that I am grounded in the body that was given to me by God. God gave us the body we were meant to live our lives in, and because of this, I believe that we should take care of our bodies to the best of our ability.**

Part of my calling is to help others accept the bodies they have been given and to help them learn how to take care of their body with respect, love, and joy.

That calling goes well beyond ourselves and our individual bodies, when we think about the fact that we are fueling our bodies with food grown and raised by others who use their bodies to do that work.

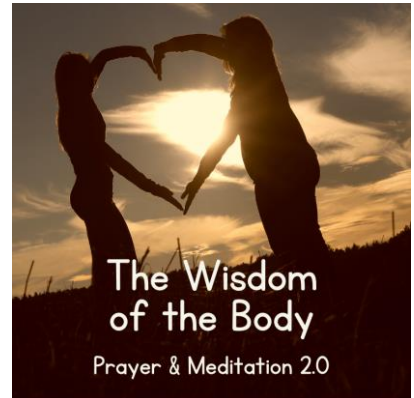
Keeping in mind everyone who plays a role in bringing food to our tables is a spiritual practice based in mindfulness and love. This respect and reverence for others allows us to go beyond ourselves when making decisions about the foods we consume. Making choices about what is right for ourselves becomes a little bit easier when we remember that we affect the lives of others with our proclivities. It is something much bigger than any one of us and our one, God-given body.

**I know I am not alone in having a complicated past relationship with my body.** It requires some deep work and introspection to come to a place of peace.

**I am looking forward to co-leading The Wisdom of the Body (Prayer and Meditation 2.0) with Pastor April.**

In this class we will develop some concrete practices that are built from the basic tenets of Christian contemplation and mindfulness. Starting with our breathing and eating, we will learn to listen more fully to the wisdom of our bodies and the presence of God within us.

I hope you can join us! Click here for more information and a signup link: <https://hilliardumc.org/grow/adults/learning-opportunities/>. **We start next Wednesday evening, October 13, in person at church.**



Jenny



Jennifer Pitcher, RDL D  
jennypitcherrdld@gmail.com



God Loves You  No Matter What

5445 Scioto Darby Road  
Hilliard, Ohio 43026 | 614.876.2403  
info@hilliardumc.org  
www.hilliardumc.org