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### Focus on You

If you don't have the privilege of having your own private gym, you probably are a member of a gym or want to join. Besides the obvious benefits of going to the gym, exercising can be a great way to improve mental health. Ever since I was very young, I have been going to different gyms either with my mom or by myself. I have always loved going to the gym and have been going ever since. On the other hand, by having conversations with other people who also are members of the gym, I can conclude there is a hidden problem. There are many people who do not feel comfortable stepping into a gym. This can be caused by the person not feeling comfortable with their body or not being comfortable using the machines in the gym. I am here today to try to encourage someone who might need it, because I once needed it too.

Gym Anxiety. Many feel it, it is not uncommon. As stated by the website PreCor "Hello, gym anxiety: that self-conscious, confidence-vanishing feeling one experiences when faced with an intimidating, embarrassing, or potentially awkward situation at the gym. It often involves feelings of fear of being judged based on one's fitness level and/or uncertainty involving equipment or classes." This quote shows how someone who has anxiety might feel during exercising at the gym. These feelings can prevent many from pursuing their goal of losing weight, gaining muscle, or just becoming a healthier person. After reading this website, I would like to share the tips they gave to people who are feeling gym anxiety. One of the tips I believe is

helpful is to simply focus one hundred percent on your workout. You should not focus on the people around you in the gym since everyone's body and goals are different. You might feel that the "pros" at the gym might judge you, but they all started somewhere. They have all probably once felt awkward at the gym in the beginning of their fitness journey. Another tip I would want to share is to bring a friend or relative to the gym with you. When I first started going to the gym, I went with my mom. Bringing someone along with you can help you feel more comfortable in doing your workout. This may help you with building confidence so later on you will be able to go on your own. When I started going back to the gym this year, I joined with my friend. We agreed to go about three times a day but that did not happen. We both had different schedules so it only worked out for about a month. After this I was forced to go on my own and learn how to use the machines. Since I had already had some experience at the gym with my friend, it was easier to go on my own. I also noticed that many more women feel uncomfortable working out at the gym since it is usually men that are seen using weight machines. To women that feel like they don't belong in the gym I would suggest starting to go to an all women gym or a smaller gym that doesn't have a large number of members.

I have also found that "Planet Fitness" is a very diverse and inclusive gym. They have implemented a "NO JUDGEMENT ZONE" in all of their gyms. When you go there you see many different kinds of people with different body types. I feel that this would make someone that is feeling unconfident in their body more willing to attend this gym. I am currently enrolled in this gym, and they also have many different locations, so it makes it easier to be able to go work out.

It is important to remember that everyone is at the gym for a reason. Everyone has their own specific goals. When you set your own goals and focus on them you will be less likely to be

worried about others. As stated by the website Routine Excellence, “People don’t like uncertainty, and there’s a link between feeling anxious and being uncertain.” This quote explains how anxiety and going to the gym correlate. One of the suggestions that is provided on this website is to prepare for your workout at the gym. This means to plan out what exercises you will be doing and how long you will do for each. This can help with your confidence at the gym. One tip that has helped me focus on my workout is listening to music or watching one of my favorite shows. This helps me not focus on what others are doing around me and helps time go by faster. At the gym, almost everyone has headphones on and is listening to their music. Everyone is focused on themselves so it is important to know you won’t be judged at the gym.

With this speech I want to be able to reach a good amount of people. I want to let the gym community know that this is an issue that affects many when they first set foot in the gym. I want the people who have felt this feeling before to know that they are not alone. This feeling is very common but with some tips I have shared, I hope you will become more confident in your future workouts. This is an issue that needs to be overcome since exercising is a very important aspect in everyone’s life. It allows for people to be mentally and physically healthy.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Parra

## Works Cited

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