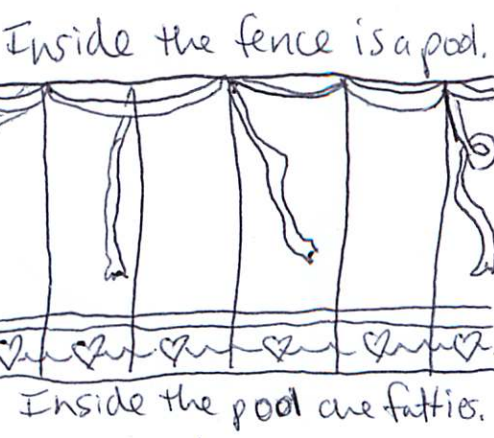




Space and we take up  
 floating, floating above  
 the sea of bullshit, we  
 need one another to  
 float, float, float. We  
 join together, link  
 our bodies and our  
 minds and hearts together,  
 we float and we  
 laugh, we float and we  
 sing, we float and we  
 make everything big  
 and we float through  
 how to reach austin@gmail.com

Outside my door, there  
 is a courtyard. In  
 the courtyard, there's a  
 railing/fence decorated  
 with crepe paper streamers.

Fat people swim all  
 day long. Fat queens,  
 trans\* people, and allies  
 laugh and float and  
 pass beach balls over  
 and under and talk  
 and lounge with books  
 and babies and there  
 is laughter, all of  
 it is laughter. Even  
 the memorial service late  
 one night ends with  
 remembrances, laughter.



I am allergic to chlorine,  
 but I am not allergic  
 to laughter. Nor am I  
 allergic to fat people,  
 which is lucky since  
 I am a fat person. I  
 listen to the laughter,  
 the water, the ripples  
 of wices, flesh, and  
 liquid; I listen to it  
 all day long.  
 I love it. I LOVE IT.

This is not what I  
 want for myself or for  
 my community or for my  
 world: the promise that  
 if I don't lose weight,  
 the class will use me  
 as a floatation device.

I learned to swim when  
 I was three years old,  
 and I was told then,  
 and again when I was  
 seven - relearning how to  
 swim - that swimming  
 was good for fat people  
 because fat floats.  
 This was explained  
 to me as an incentive  
 to get me to swim more  
 and slim down.