Fitter with Twitter

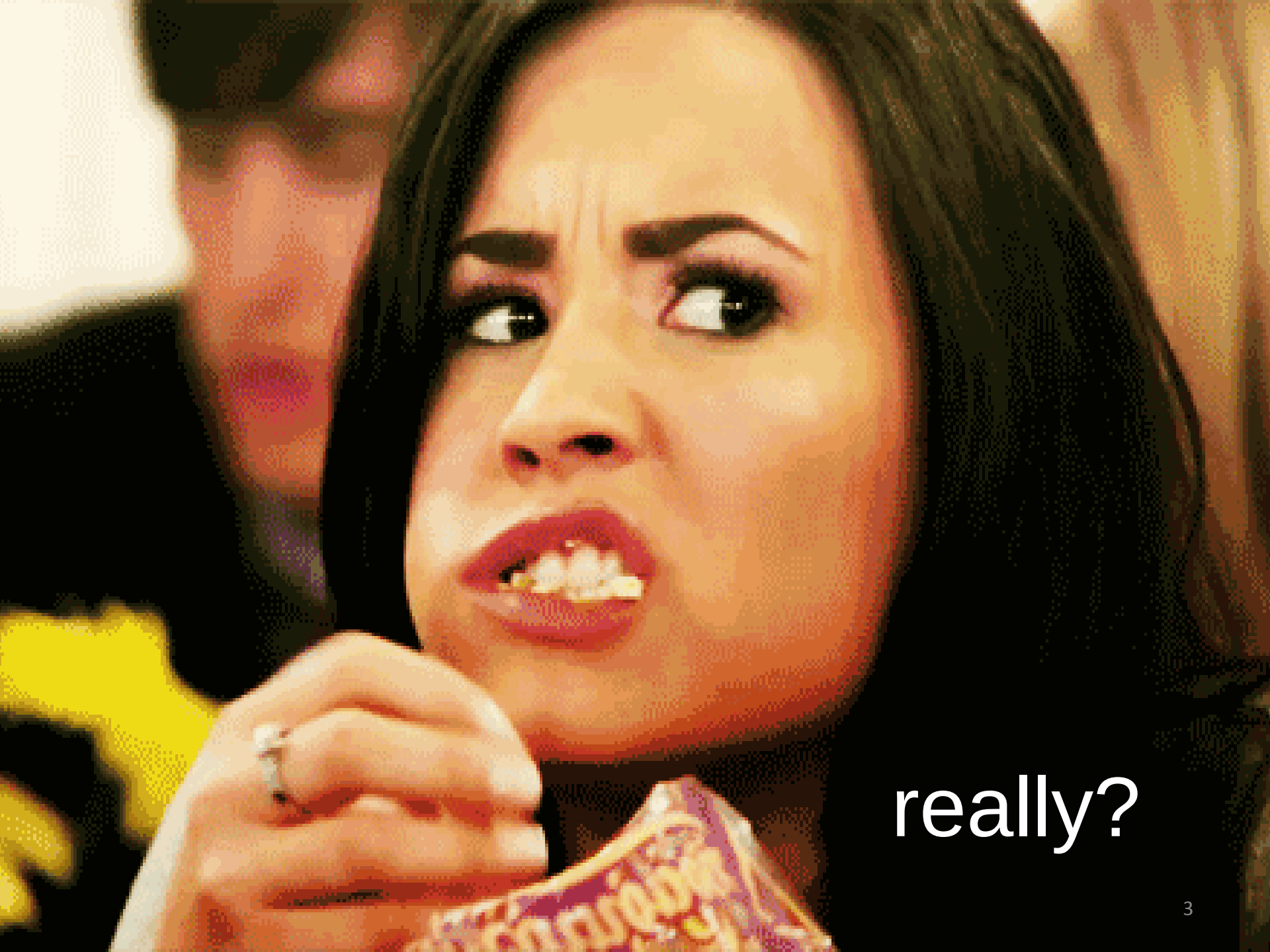
Understanding Personal Health Activity in Social Media

Rannie Teodoro & Mor Naaman
Rutgers University
@rannieteo, @informor

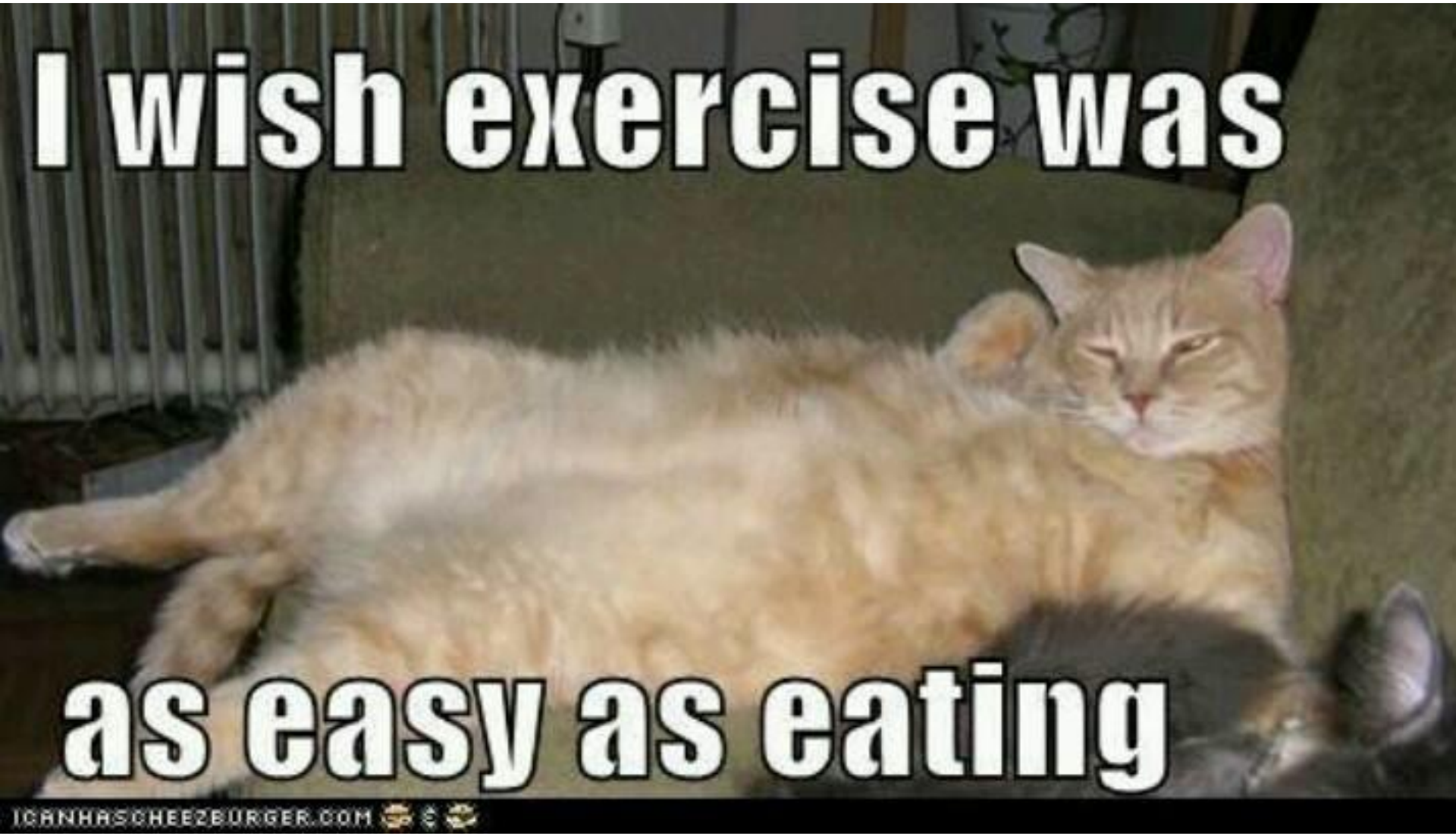
ceiling

???

5’3”


really?

November
January


I wish exercise was
as easy as eating
ICANHASCHEEZBURGER.COM

traditional strategies

Food Diary 21/01/09

0700 - Glass water
0730 - 0830 - Slam 3x 500m
0830 Protein Shake
0930 2x Crumpets w/ Butter
0930 - Tea w/ milk & 2 sugars
1045 - Pint of water
1315 - Sainsbury's chicken & chorizo sandwich
- Fanta (bottle) 500ml)
1400 1 Pint of water
Pick at nuts & raisins
1645 Buttered Screen malt loaf
1600 Cup of tea

Smoothie
Milk
Ripe Banana
Pancake

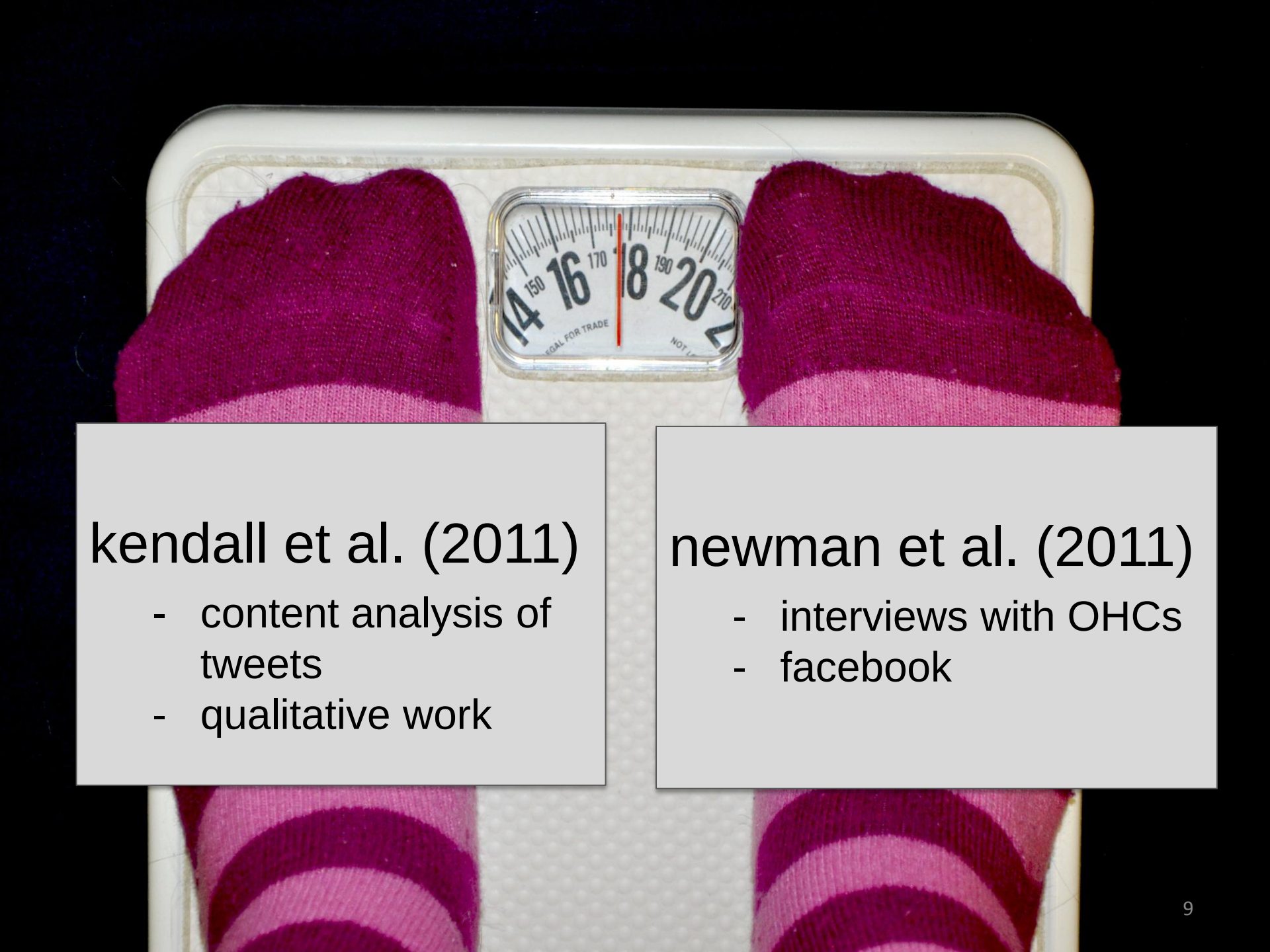
technology

Are there types of health-related posts?

Identify practices and motivations?

What constitutes useful feedback?

research questions



kendall et al. (2011)

- content analysis of tweets
- qualitative work

newman et al. (2011)

- interviews with OHCs
- facebook

transtheoretical model of behavior change

(prochaska & velicer, 1997)

impersonal

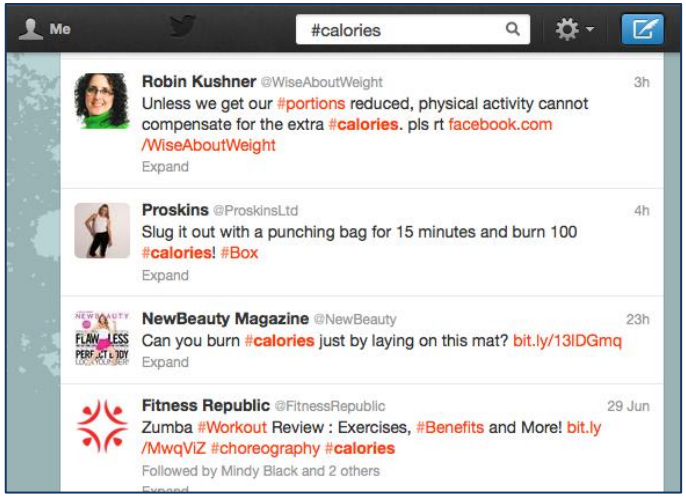
interpersonal

hyperpersonal

hyperpersonal model

(walther, 1996)

two parts

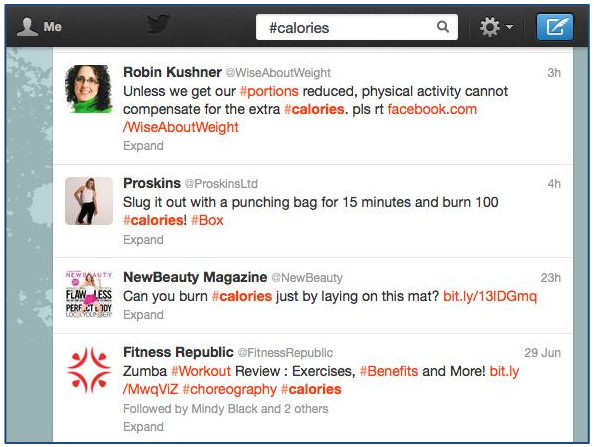


qualitative analysis of tweets

- types of content

interviews

- practices
- motivations
- feedback



- random sample of 1,000 tweets
- *keywords:* gym, workout, calories, diet, weight, healthy
- patterns and themes

qualitative analysis

actualization

plans and goals

“trying to lose weight before my next photo shoot hehe”

achieved

“according to weight watchers I have lost 26 pounds since I first started…go me!”

avoided

“another missed workout this morning”

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content taxonomy

sentiment

positive

“i… am about to go workout. Oh yes!!!! :)”

neutral

“i spent 45 minutes on an elliptical machine. 542 calories burned.”

negative

“broke my diet and had Barry’s lobster, not good!”

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content taxonomy

- twelve interviews
- from hashtag communities
- mostly fitness focus

interviews

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discovery → lurking

“i started finding commuter-related groups on twitter and just came across [a cycling hashtag] and thought this would be a fun challenge.”

filtering for ‘real life’

“to me the best ones are like ‘i just dropped a kettle bell on my toe but i’m still working out’… those are real life tweets.”

practices of…

lifestyle compatibility

“i don’t log in or out. it is ever present on my phone… and it’s kind of eternally logged in.”

accountability

“if you don’t feel good and you don’t end up running, and you can’t post it on facebook or twitter because you didn’t run, you feel like a schmuck.”

motivations

positive

“things like you’re motivational, inspirational, or that’s a great idea, or i want to do what you’re doing. that gives me motivation because i’m out there helping people.”

negative

“i tended to dislike was choosing to eat something and as soon as i tweeted it someone would criticize [me]. it had this feeling of my meal interrupted.”

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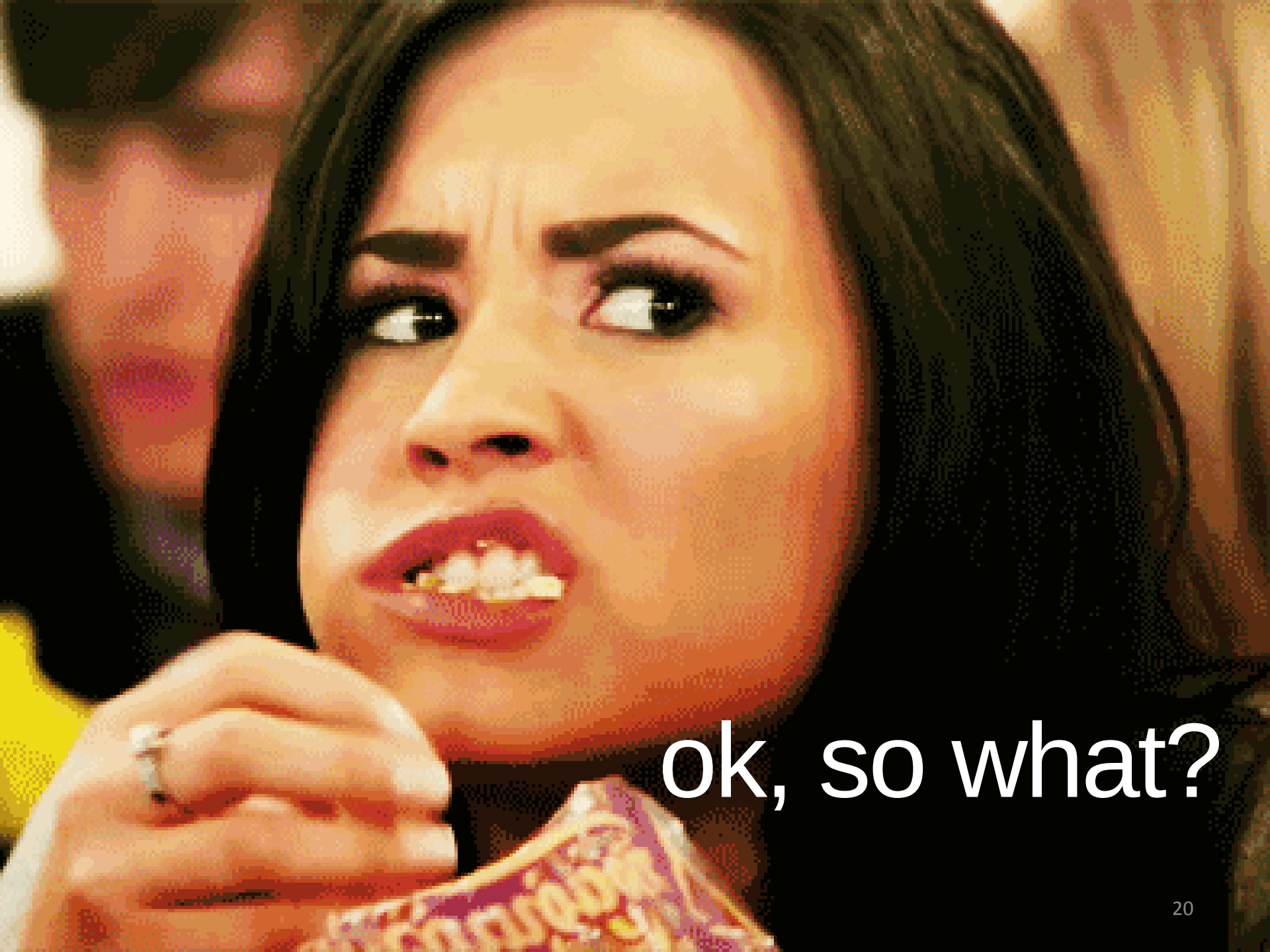
feedback


ok, so what?

goals < upholding motivations
mutual inspiration
implications

individual
autonomy

attentive
audience

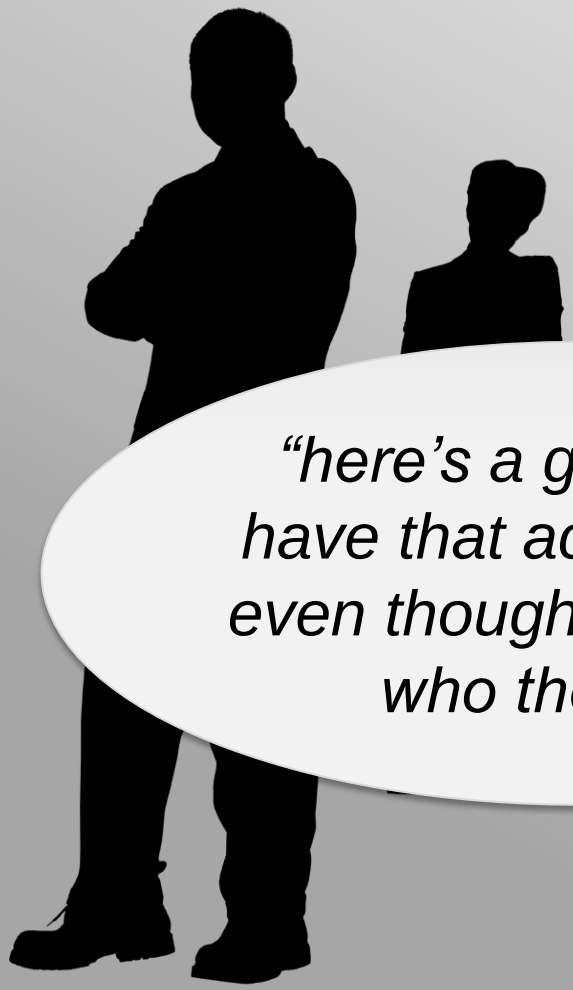
authentic
feedback

“totally authentic. if you don't like it, don't follow.”

attentive audience

authentic feedback

individual autonomy



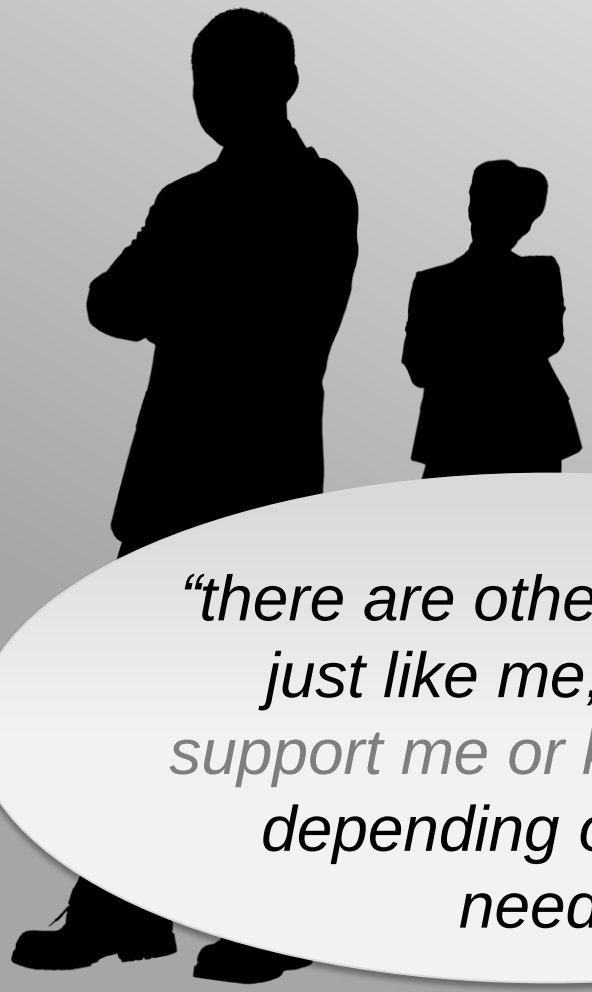
“here’s a good way to have that accountability, even though i don’t know who they are.”

attentive audience

authentic feedback

individual autonomy

attentive audience



“there are others out there just like me, that will support me or kick my ass, depending on what I need.”

individual autonomy

authentic feedback

personal control

motivations

content taxonomy

- actualization
- sentiment

practices

- discovery → lurking
- filtering for ‘real life’

motivations

- lifestyle compatibility
- accountability

feedback

- positive vs. negative
- helpful vs. unhelpful

- crafting messages and feedback
- behavior maintenance over time
- intention + actual outcomes
- process of adopting health practices

future work

for you…

thank you!
Rannie Teodoro & Mor Naaman
Rutgers University
{rteodoro, mor} @rutgers.edu
@rannieteo, @informor