

How DID I Lose 30 Pounds in 4 Months?!!

Carolyn's Story

I have struggled with my weight since 3rd grade when my teacher noted on my report card that I had gained weight. My mom responded to this news through the filter of the culture of the '50's and went out and bought me a girdle. I dutifully wore it (not the same one, of course) throughout my school career, until college. During the late '60's and early '70's, I broke out of this physical constraint and allowed my belly to protrude in my jeans. But my mindset didn't change. I believed that I was not thin enough and because I wasn't thin enough, I wasn't good enough.

During this long struggle, I have realized that I am good enough, but satisfaction with my physical appearance has eluded me...until now. I had tried to look at this issue as "wanting to be healthy," and wanting my body to reflect the person I believed myself to be - an active, adventurous, strong woman who will continue to travel and engage in the world with never-ending energy. But I knew the excess weight would eventually catch up to me in my joints and breathing if I didn't address it before those problems arrived.

And now I have found the health plan that is helping me to take this excess weight off for the last time. I will share this with you now, because this plan has integrated all the pieces that I needed to be successful in this endeavor.

And here are the "How To's" that are working for me.

HEALTH IS THE GOAL: weight loss and body changes come along for the ride, but the core value is the health.

SUPPORT: I have a personal health coach. (I have a personal fitness coach, so why not a personal health coach!) We speak by phone at least once a week, but I can call her anytime I need support or have a question. (No more weekly meetings. YEAH!)

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY: I keep track of my own weight loss and other "non-scale" victories, like losing inches, clothes fitting better, etc. For me this:



a. reduces internal pressure: I'm not standing on a scale in front of someone else waiting for them to pronounce the verdict and feeling like I failed that week if I didn't lose weight.

b. I am more patient with my weight loss: I know if I eat properly the scale will eventually go down

c. my sense of autonomy has become clearer, I feel empowered, and my self-confidence has strengthened

KEEPING MY BLOOD SUGAR LEVEL: If I had to pick one thing that I think is the key that has been missing in all my past dieting programs, I would pick this one. I eat five 100 calorie "meals" every 2-3 hours, and one larger meal of lean protein and greens per day. This has taught me how little I need to eat to keep up my physical strength and energy. And I have finally become friends with feeling light and empty. I know that if I do feel empty, it's OK because I can eat again in 2 hours, and that knowledge helps me to get to the next "feeding time." I no longer play the game of "how much can I eat and still be legal, lose weight, and not feel hungry." Accepting the reality that "feeling empty and light" is normal if you want to take off weight and keep it off is a relief. I notice the feeling.....and let it pass.

WATER: After eating my 100 calorie meal, I drink 16 ounces of water. The benefits of drinking water are too numerous to say, but it helps tremendously in helping to feel less empty.

MEDITATION AND SLEEP: Sometimes my stomach is nervous, which in the past has signaled hunger. Now when I feel that way, I recognize I am really tired. I lie down, sometimes for as little as 5 minutes and rest, and the feeling passes and I realize I don't feel hungry anymore. Meditation also functions to increase this "body relaxation," as well as increase my focus, self-discipline, and not judging myself.

POSITIVE SELF-TALK: I know the brain believes what you tell it. The power of negative messages to your self is huge. Sometimes it's hard to tell your self positive statements if you don't really believe them. But I have learned that if I tell myself that "I would like to" feel or believe a certain statement, pretty soon I do believe it. My favorites are: "I would like to enjoy feeling empty," "I can be hungry," "I like feeling light," "This health plan kicks my body into burning fat," "Water and sleep are amazing!" and "Meditation is so worth it."

EXERCISE/SELF-DISCIPLINE: I saved this one for last, because it's not just exercise, it's "Exercise with Emelina." The benefits of exercise are well known and in my current health plan, it increases my metabolism, helps if I get stuck on a weight loss plateau, keeps my bones strong, etc. But the gift of having a coach who supports an integrative, holistic healthy approach to living is invaluable. I have been weight lifting with Emelina for 7 years. I go 2 times a week, no matter if I didn't sleep well the night before, no matter how busy I am. I do travel, during which time I walk a lot, but by the time I come home, I have lost a little bit of strength each time. But I always go back. And through this process, I have learned that I might lose a little bit of strength,

but I haven't lost much. And it doesn't take long to get back to where I was before and start adding a little more. I stay patient, committed, persistent, and I start over again. I realize I haven't "blown it." Having this confidence that I will not lose all the strength that I have worked for, gives me the confidence and patience to relax and enjoy my travels, knowing that I will go back. I know I will NEVER stop lifting weights. This attitude applies to weight loss too. Before I was either "on a diet" or "off a diet," and when I was "off," I was REALLY off. I'd blow it, thinking I had permission to eat everything in sight. But I now have the self-discipline to eat reasonably, knowing that I will "start over" with my more predictable eating style as soon as I get home. And maybe I will have gained a pound or two, but that is easily addressed.

If my mom had known how to teach me a healthy approach to my body, instead of giving me a girdle, I would have built this self-discipline into my life. I don't blame her: it was the sign of the times. But an awareness of how to keep my body healthy was not present in my formative years. So now I am creating this pattern of living for myself, but not "by myself." I have found support in my fitness coach and in my health coach. And I have been able to recognize all the different pieces that must be present and integrated to allow this process to happen. My sense of confidence and personal power is strong. And I finally know that I know how to do this. For every pound I lose, I know I will NEVER lose this pound again because this time, it is going to STAY OFF.