

The Concern of Obesity

It wasn't that long ago that I was over 30 pounds overweight. I was a new mom, and loved my son, but early complications during the pregnancy left me less mobile than I had been, and the scale crept up as the months passed. I stopped doing yoga, and didn't take care of my diet. I stayed vegetarian, but wasn't making very healthy choices, carrot sticks began being replaced with spoonfuls of Nutella. Most people know the typical story. As my son started walking and talking, and I realized that my marriage was crumbling, no doubt my diet and exercise suffered. I eventually split from my husband and moved back to the states. It was a difficult road, and it took me some time, but I found my path to get "back to myself."

I made a really small change to start. You've probably read the articles that outline the basic small changes to make to jumpstart a healthier lifestyle. Park your car in the parking spot farthest from the store, take stairs over elevators, stop eating after 8 pm. These were little changes for me to make. The bigger commitment came when I bought and started wearing a fitbit step tracker. It was so motivational to me, seeing the steps increase each day. At 9 pm, when I saw that I was at 7-8,000 steps and seeing that I was so close to the recommended 10,000 steps, I found myself walking around my house after my son went to sleep, and then going up and down the basement stairs to make it to 10 floors a day.

The greater changes happened when I started tracking my food intake. There is a sense of accountability when you admit what you are eating, on an online app or in a notebook. Amazingly, I started to eat healthier when I wrote it down. I no longer craved the chocolatey goodness of nut spread, but instead longed for an apple or another fresh, crunchy, and all-natural food choice. Again, the motivation came naturally, which made the choices so obviously easy.

Each day I grew stronger, and each day the weight just slipped away. And years later, the weight is still off.

I'm concerned with the growing rate of obesity in our country. It is disturbing to know that according to The State of Obesity (<https://stateofobesity.org/>), the 2015 national average put high schoolers at a 13.3% obesity rate. Nearly 38% of adults in the United States are obese. This is terrible news. Certain states have higher percentages than others. For example, Colorado has the lowest adult percentages, at 22.3% obese, whereas West Virginia and Mississippi are at a staggering 37%! Let's work to bring these numbers down!

With our hectic lifestyles it can be hard to find time to walk even 3,000 steps. But we have to do all we can to make some movement in our lives. Make walking, or biking, or some light weight lifting a priority in your life. Moving for 10 minutes a day will likely inspire you to add another 5 and then 10 minutes as the weeks progress.

Evolve your health in little steps and see big progress over time. You can do it. Be your own advocate for a healthy lifestyle. Incorporate a healthy habit of movement into your life. I promise you, you'll be very happy with the results!