

## Reflection – Weighty Matters

When I turned 27, I knew that it was time to set some goals. I suddenly realized that I was no longer a child! This realization did take me longer than most because I was afraid to admit that I was responsible for my choices and actions. But when I realized that I had graduated from college and purchased my first home there was no denying that I was a responsible adult. To overcome my fear of the future I wrote a personal constitution.

The entire document can be summarized into one sentence: I want to lead a healthy life. I had set goals to be healthy emotionally, mentally, socially and physically. I was not sure how to improve my physical health and so I did nothing for quite a while. Though this part of my life was standing still, I was making healthy progress in other areas of my life.

Finally I decided it was time to get going on my physical health. Weight loss was not the first area that I started with. About 6 months prior to starting this program, I was able to get some minor healthy issues resolved. These small successes helped motivate me and raised my level of physical health self-efficacy. Even with these added skills, I was still not ready to start a weight loss program.

I took some time to think about what I needed in a program to be successful. I knew that I needed a plan that was very structured and made me accountable to someone. It also had to fit into my very busy schedule. I am a full-time graduate student and work full-time. So finding time to fit another project into my day is challenging. When I found this program I was ecstatic! I read and reread this information on the website. After meeting with Nanette, I was convinced this was the right program for me.

I have been very pleased with how the last 12-14 weeks have gone. I have been able to drop about 5 dress sizes, even over Thanksgiving and my 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. The question that I have been asked most often over the past 12-14 weeks is how do you stay so committed? I have two answers.

1. First, I use a lot of self-talk. I often get cravings or want to revert to unhealthy behaviors, eating fast food after a final for example. But I have a conversation with myself, mentally of course, and I ask myself why am I eating? "Are you hungry? When was the last time you ate? How are you feeling emotionally?" As I answer these questions, I identify if my body needs fuel or my soul needs soothing. I have been able to avoid a lot of overeating with this self-talk patter.
2. Second, I answer – I'm happy. I feel that I am at a point in my life where I am in control of the choices I make and the direction my life is going. Being in control of my own actions has given me direction and meaning in my life. I like being able to work towards a goal that I know that I can accomplish through hard work and effort.

As I have worked towards meeting the goals I set in my personal constitution, I have been able to improve the overall health of my life and weight loss. Hopefully this plan will help me continue on this path and gain greater health and happiness.