

How Small Steps Can Lead to Big Weight Loss

One of my greatest joys is meeting friends on the journey. When I'm blessed to travel for interviews, speaking events or workshops, I like to meet with those going forward with all that is within them towards a goal of total transformation.

Begin With Small Steps

Together we work on celebrating the small steps of success whether they are walking a few more steps each day, getting out of a scooter and walking with just the aid of a cane, losing a pound, running a 5K for the first time or losing 20 pounds in a month. And yes, we have had people in our weight-loss coaching groups do all of those things.

It's so important on any journey toward transformation to recognize when change of any kind begins to happen and celebrate it instead of being afraid we can't sustain it. It's in the embracing of small steps that the real transformation begins to happen.

Starting Exercise

I remember the first week I decided to give up candy and begin exercise. I put firm boundaries around the candy and I focused on exercise. When I came back to my group the next week, what joy I had in being able to report I had survived a week without candy and loved going to the pool to exercise so much I had done in five times instead of my goal of three. I haven't stopped on either of those changes.

I was able to fully embrace both stopping a bad habit and starting a good one because of the sheer pleasure it brought to accomplish something, even something small. Those first small steps many years ago have morphed into losing over 260

pounds and keeping it off.

The Hardest Part Is Starting

Admittedly, the hardest part of any journey is starting. Many times we want to start with a bang. Most declare, "I'm going to do what you did. I'm going to stop eating sugar and gluten." This lofty plan usually ends in disaster no matter how hard a person tries.

I admire the do-or-die attitude. I was once that way as well. All it did for me was push me to go on some kind of extreme regimented diet. I'd lose a lot of weight and then be so excited to go off the diet that I'd watch television all day, with my only exercise getting up to get more junk food. All my boundaries were lifted. I changed nothing.

Change of Vision

To go forward, I had to have a change of vision for myself. I did that by questioning every habit I had. I measured it against the standards I knew God had for my life. Was this a habit that needed to stay or would I be better off if I replaced it with a different habit?

When I began to think of bad habits I wanted to change, I had a list a mile long and kept adding to it. It included every bad food I was eating, when I ate and why, the fact I wasn't exercising, wasn't reading my Bible consistently, wasn't feeding my mind with good preaching and teaching. I wasn't taking times to just be quiet before God and listen to His plans for me. I wasn't allowing Him to pour into my life because I was afraid of what He might tell me.

Too Comfortable

I had gotten pretty comfortable where I was, sitting in my lazy chair watching *Oprah* and eating chips and dip. No matter how much I admire that TV icon, she was definitely not feeding

my spirit. I'm sorry, friends, but if you pit Oprah against Joyce Meyer, Joyce is going to win every time in kingdom rankings.

Here's my point. I knew what to do. I knew what was right to choose, I just got stuck in my comfortable rut.

One day I was blasted out of my rut by a simple statement. "Alcohol is one molecule away from sugar. Alcohol is liquid sugar." With those softly spoken words, my life crumbled at my feet. I realized completely that I was addicted to sugar. When I started my journey, the dangers of sugar were not addressed widely like they are today. But I knew beyond a doubt that I was a sugar addict.

When My Real Life Began

Owning those words began a domino effect of change. As I stepped into each change moment, the next opportunity to transform presented itself. I didn't have to wonder what to work on next. It would always be standing there in the form of a life-altering "chance" meetings.

When I made the decision not to stay in my easy chair eating whatever I pleased, my real life began. It was almost like God had put my life on pause until I stepped into the ownership of who I am in Him and who I can become when fully submitted to Him.

Now as I travel and meet someone with that same kind of let's-do-this attitude, I am encouraged for them and take on their joy for the changes they are embracing no matter how big or small those may be.

I never realized before that joy can be more than just my own. It can be a profound joy for others as they walk similar life paths. If in some small way I have helped them, my joy is even greater.

Today, my joy is multiplying daily. {eoa}

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