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Am I really a “success” story?

Thursday, January 23, 2014

I recently received an email inviting me to fill out a form to be considered a SP “success.” I replied that they couldn’t really mean me.

Compared to the success stories I’ve read, hearing about me might elicit the response “big deal!” The reply was that yes, I should fill out the form and tell my story.

I understand that submitting a form doesn’t mean I will be chosen as a success but I just don’t feel worthy enough to even fill it out.

So I ask those of you who know me from my blogs and those who just want to comment, what would you think if I submitted a form?

Would it seem presumptuous?
Like I’m making a big deal out of nothing?

The short version:
I never dieted. I always thought and was encouraged to think that I was just fine.

I was active, enjoyed exercise, always had a gym membership, and for decades only drank water with meals and snacks.

I was also carrying around an extra 25 pounds since my mid 30s and I had carried it for 25 years.

Sparkpeople, through their resources and community support, helped me get rid of the extra weight.

I had to confront the fact that I was eating enormous amounts of food. It took 11 months to lose the weight since I was already doing all the easy stuff recommended (move more and drink water).

I’ve maintained the loss for 4 years.

I’m a success in my own mind because I admitted and faced my problem, but compared to the amazing stories here on SP, I don’t think so. Yet, I want to give back to SP since this community has given me so much.

About all I can offer is that those “tough” pounds can really be lost and perhaps it can encourage some to pay attention to gradual weight gain and take action before it gets out of hand. (Note, I’m not talking about obsessively watching for a pound or two.)

So, before I go looking for the before and after photos, I’m asking for some honest input.

Is it valuable for anyone to read about me?
If you were me, would you fill out the form?

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MISCHAKEO

You are a great success. Keeping your 25 pound weight loss off for 4 years is an accomplishment that people could learn from. You just need to decide if you want the publicity!
2695 days ago

v



MARYJEANSL

Everyone else has already said what I would. Absolutely I think you should.
2695 days ago

v



BOILHAM

Maintaining weight loss is extremely difficult, and you have been successful. Hence the invitation to tell your story as a Spark People success. It's not about diet, it's about life style choices with which you have been successful. I say go for it and tell your story.
2695 days ago

v



CD14270285

I could go on about how much of an inspiration you are and how you motivate me and a whole lot of other folks, but all these other people have said the same thing and I don't want you to get a



big head.

In short:

Are you a success story? YES.

Should you fill out that paper? YES.

2695 days ago

v



TRAVELGRRL

YES! You've taken off the weight and kept it off. You are active in the Spark community. You help others with your blogs and your story.

It's not about the # of pounds or "how easy" it was. Each of us is different and I know there are people out there who can identify with you, and who are saying, "that's how I want to do it. If she can do it, so can I!"
2697 days ago

v



TINAJANE76

Umm...yes, Yes and YES! I think you absolutely should submit your success story. Although our "Biggest Loser" culture makes us believe that the biggest success is the person who's lost the most weight, I don't buy into that at all. I think we're all here because we want to look and feel our best, regardless of whether that means we want to lose 15 pounds or 150. Role models come from all types of backgrounds and I'm sure there are lots of people who can relate to your story and where you've come from and aspire to be where you are now. Go for it and don't think twice!!!
2697 days ago

v



CD3035359

LOVE your story. That is the success I am looking for!!!!

I have about 20 extra pounds with me...there is an acceptance in society for being a bit overweight. My health is good, I exercise, I drink water....

I OBSESS about food...

I gain a couple pounds every year...

Would LOVE to hear your story!!



Tina
2697 days ago

v

KANSASROSE67

I feel that success stories like yours are important too. Your story is similar to mine...carrying

v



an extra 35-30 pounds for years, even with exercise and attention to healthy living. But losing that weight has been a big deal to me, and has changed my life in many ways. I think those of us who lost smaller amounts of weight also need validation and examples to look up to.

2697 days ago



SLIMBOT

I've been reading your blog for about a year and I've never commented... Until now:

FILL OUT THE FORM!!!

You are absolutely a success and you've been a huge inspiration to me. I love your blogs: well-written, humorous, informative, and thought-provoking. I also appreciate how you thoughtfully tackle topics that are sometimes taboo on this site. So yeah, fill out the form already!

2697 days ago



CD13509833

We all have journeys with different struggles.

I say, GO FOR IT! There are others that may have the same issues as you did. We all need inspiration!

2697 days ago



MWWENSIN

It's up to you. If you feel you have something to add then do it.. If you want more anonymity then don't. You were a success before you lost the weight. You are more of a success now that you have lost the weight and kept it off. Congrats on being nominated either way.

2697 days ago



WATERMELLEN

It IS valuable for people to read about you: we love reading about you for heaven's sake. And: so many people have "not enormous" amounts of weight to lose, but find it tough. I don't think you're "ONLY" a success if you lost 100++.

Maintenance is even tougher than weight loss: 4 years is terrific!!

(Having said all that: totally sympathize with your reluctance and did not myself accept the invite . . . in part because I like anonymity . . . so you need to do what feels right for YOU!!.)

2697 days ago



DOVESEYES

Absolutely, so many people leave when they reach their goals but for us still getting there it is so encouraging to read blogs of maintainence and wow four years!!!!

Tell me more :)...

2697 days ago



ONEKIDSMOM

Absolutely! Success comes in many, many forms. And increasing your healthy habits to the point where 25 unwanted, unneeded pounds just melted off? That's a success! Maintaining over four years? ABSOLUTELY a success!

And yes, we want reinforcement, whether it's a small change or a large one... that we are not alone out here.

I'd say fill it out and trust that those who choose among the stories to highlight will know when yours is "the one".

2697 days ago



BOOKAPHILE

Success is not only losing 100+ pounds. It's also realizing that there are pounds that you want to be rid of, doing the work, and maintaining that loss for years. You ARE a success, and you have a track record to prove it. Your friends already believe that.

2698 days ago



CD12146214

Fill out the form and enjoy the fact that you are an inspiration to others! Obviously you are as someone nominated you.

Your story is great for everyone as it is about life for the average everyday person.

I look forward to reading your form.

2698 days ago



CD13758606

You asked for it!!

Kudos to you for getting selected to an elite group of maintain-ers!!

I dislike the word diet for which it has been associated - EXTREME dieting. So if you think about it, diet is what we all do.

per merriam-webster.com the Definition of DIET

- 1 a : food and drink regularly provided or consumed
- b : habitual nourishment
- c : the kind and amount of food prescribed for a person or animal for a special reason
- d : a regimen of eating and drinking sparingly so as to reduce one's weight. "going on a diet"

That does not sound bad. But I never tell anyone I am dieting. I live a healthy lifestyle, and that mean maintaining a healthy weight (according to published standards mind you:)

YES - 4 years of maintenance is worth sharing with the SP community. Commitment, lifestyle, determination all are challenging and what you have accomplished is motivating, not to mention you are very supportive.

Do you remember the last 2 lbs you had to lose? I expect it was as tough for you as it was for most maintainers. We are all created equal, whether it took you 8 months to lose your weight, or 4 years. We all experienced the same challenges, but now you are a maintain-er. Forever committed. The challenges remain the same, even now that we are maintaining, and that is what is so wonderful about SP.



2698 days ago



CD13758606

Posted 2X. deleting this submission. darn browsers!
2698 days ago



Comment edited on: 1/23/2014 11:57:31 AM



CD13758606

Wow, 3 submissions. That's a new one. And it would have to happen on BB's page. sorry.



2698 days ago



Comment edited on: 1/23/2014 11:58:37 AM



LPRUNWALK

Please do fill out the form and tell your story!! It may not be quite as dramatic as some of the transformation stories we've seen, but what you have been through does represent an important segment of the SP population, and probably comes closer to the majority experience. I know I would love to hear more about what 'clicked' for you after living with those extra 25 lbs. for so long, and how you gradually readied yourself to be rid of them for good. The whole issue of long-term maintenance is a fraught one for many of us, and any advice you can offer could be very valuable. My story is very similar to yours, in that I had some good habits and was just eating too much food overall. I got used to carrying an extra 30 lbs. on my body. It became totally normalized, and even though I hated the feeling of being heavy and out of shape, I had myself convinced that this is how I would live the rest of my life. Something clicked for me, as it did for you, and I am now eating very differently and getting far more exercise than ever before. I'm so hooked on these new habits that I believe I will manage to keep them going. But I do struggle with fears about maintenance. For all of these reasons and more, I believe it would be tremendously helpful for me and others like me to read your story.

2698 days ago



GINIEMIE

Yes! You are a success! You've lost what you started out to lose, you kept it off and you work and encourage others to work towards their goals.

You should fill out the forms. I don't think it's presumptuous. It's why we're here, and your story will help some people who feel like you, that their weight loss needs weren't that great. THE FACT is it was IMPORTANT to you and it is important to others.



2698 days ago



SUZYMOBILE

Of course you should! Realizing there was an issue, acting to solve it, succeeding in removing 25 pounds, and maintaining for 4 years? If all that isn't success, I don't know what is!

2698 days ago



CD13099273

Yes it is !! I know your a success story ! I am sure many others will agree! Good for you !! So



exciting !! Hugs K
2698 days ago



Comment edited on: 1/23/2014 9:55:02 AM



LEWILL1982



Whether you lose 25 lbs or 250 lbs, there is a challenge there, a mentality, a commitment, a promise to yourself, a journey to be had and a learning curve. You offer valuable insights in your blogs, you are always active and you always offer great feedback to others in their blogs. You also took the "bull by the horns" and realized it was time to get that extra 25 lbs off and then you've kept it off. I read a lot of stats where people lose the weight and then can't keep it off. You did, you are absolutely a success! You go girl!

2698 days ago



HAYBURNER1969



Yes, you should fill it out. It's not presumptuous at all. Losing 25 pounds can be just as hard as losing 100 because the underlying causes are just as hard to fix - making a lifestyle change, identifying the reasons a person overeats, etc. You are an excellent writer and very wise. I am not surprised that people look for your blog when they check in daily to SP. In fact, I would like to start linking to some of your blog entries on our church's Health & Holiness blog page.

2698 days ago



MTNMOM5



Yes fill it out! Your blog is the one I always look first for when I check in to SP. I too agree with the others that success is not always the 100+ pounds lost. Maintenance is hard and so is keeping



fit

2698 days ago



CELIAMINER



Absolutely, you're a success story! So you didn't lose a hundred pounds. There are plenty of Sparkers who want to lose less than you did, but I'll bet most of them will either drop out or regain once they reach goal despite what they are learning here. YOU, on the other hand, have kept the weight off for years, and that's a HUGE success.

2698 days ago



TERI-RIFIC



I have found your blogs to be very helpful to me and I have 60 pounds to lose (maybe more). I think the importance is not for you, but for others, so you have to do this. The main thing is not how many pounds, but how people have found the balanced lifestyle and how they maintain it. I hope



to see your story soon!!!

2698 days ago



PHOENIX1949



Go for it!

2698 days ago



DDOORN



FOUR years of maintenance?!?

Heck YES! You are a Spark ROCKSTAR!

Maintenance is the greatest challenge to ALL of us here looking to re-invent our lives! And you are DOING IT!

Don

2698 days ago



SLIMMERJESSE



Yes, fill out the form and own your success. (smiling)

2698 days ago



WUMPASTAR



"I've maintained the loss for 4 years."

You said it. That is success.

Success stories in my mind are not only stories about people who lost 150+ pounds with before-after pictures of incredible results. Yes, those are motivating, but for people in my case - stuck with about 20-25 extra pounds and who've never been more than overweight or slightly obese - they get old after a while. I'd like to read more about success stories like yours, which are closer to my own. And it doesn't sound presumptuous at all. I mean, THEY sent YOU the form for a reason. It's not like you begged to get it! :P

2698 days ago

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Disclaimer: Weight loss results will vary from person to person. No individual result should be seen as a typical result of following the SparkPeople program.