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Managing Fear - Looking it right in the eye

Thursday, August 20, 2015

This is my kitchen.



We renovated it when we retired in 2007. It's well arranged, functional and efficient, but tends to be cluttered most of the time.

DH: "Why put away those plastic containers? We'll use them again tomorrow"

You can't see the tabletop on the right. It's got a pile of mail and assorted papers and my checkbook waiting to be balanced.

House Beautiful will never feature us.

We have one item in the kitchen that I GUARANTEE no one else has. In the lower left hand corner is a scale. Yes, what others call a "bathroom scale" has a place of honor right at the entrance to our kitchen.

It's part of my morning routine. I step on it in my PJs as I walk over to pour my coffee. I don't fear it. It gives me valuable information just like my checkbook.

Both help me record trends - in my weight and in my finances - so I can adjust accordingly.

I don't fear either of these things. If my weight changes suddenly from the day before, I know I didn't eat an extra 7,000 calories in one day. That's a fluke. But if there's a gradual up, up, up trend, I have to

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evaluate my behavior. Am I being honest with myself?

If my bank balance shows a downward trend, I better not ignore it, but evaluate where the money is going.

Everyone has their own set of fears. Some avoid going to the doctor because they don't want to hear bad news. I often avoid listening to the national news when events are depressing.

Neither reaction eliminates the reality.

Some background about the scale.

After my Dad died, Mom moved in with us. As often happens after a loss, she lost interest in most things including eating. I finally insisted that she write down everything she ate during the day. It totaled around 700 calories.

Me: 700 calories? That's what they give comatose patients!

Mom: I'm not hungry.

Me: Do you want to waste away and die?

Mom: No

So we began tracking her calories and weight daily. We moved the scale to the kitchen to make it easier for her to use. She would hold on the banister on the left (out of the picture) for balance.

Then Mom rebelled. Why do I have to track my weight and you don't?

So I joined her. While Mom was surprised to see how much weight she had lost through her grief, I was shocked at how much I had gained over time.

I was always active and fit, loved exercise and drank only water throughout the day. The sizing creep of the clothing industry disguised the reality that my weight and measurements were creeping upward - year by year, decade by decade while still buying the same size.

Together we decided to make some changes. She agreed to eat enough to keep her weight stable and the reality of where I was headed led me to SparkPeople.

Mom died in 2011 at age 88.

So although I still have some personal fears in my life, the scale isn't one of them. I hop on each morning, record the number and think "Thanks Mom."

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TREKPURRSON



2115 days ago



GRACED777



I love the legacy you got from your mom! Mine is 89, and still making hers. I only use the scale once or twice a week or I get obsessive, but it's an important part of things!

2116 days ago



NUMD97



Lovely. Simply lovely. Thanks for sharing.

2117 days ago

PHEBESS



What a wonderful story - thank you!!!!



2120 days ago



GINIEMIE

Wow, your father's death helped you help each other watch your food, weight and lifestyle. So glad you had the good times with your mom. Happy memories are good. My scale is in the "throne" room and I step on it each morning after using the throne-when I'm home. At my sister's there are more people and I'm not regularly on the scale.

Your kitchen table sounds like mine-no House Beautiful here either. And I don't listen to national

news often either-don't like bad news.



2120 days ago



WILSONWR

Your mom was definitely special, and I'm glad the scale helped you both. While I don't keep mine in the kitchen, I do get it on faithfully every morning. I also like to know how I'm doing!

2121 days ago



PRNCSCUP1-2FULL

This is one of the most positive ways I've read about someone using the scale as a tool and not a punishment! Good for you! Like the analogy to your checkbook. Thanks!

2121 days ago



ONEKIDSMOM

What a lovely illustration of the value of the scale as a tool! Glad you had your mom for those



years!

2121 days ago



DOVESEYES

Love this blog thanks for sharing.

2121 days ago



LIVEDAILY

I like your daily routine. It works for you. It has a lovely history. Good memories. I'm the same way with my drain basket. The same things "live" there, get used almost every day, get washed, and air dry to be used again. Love your wood floor!!



2121 days ago



MILLEDGE2

Well said!

2121 days ago



MARYJEANSL

Ouch - I definitely have fears I don't address. The scale isn't actually one of them. I generally know if it is going to make me smile or frown before I even get on. However, after reading this, I think I need to work on some of my other fears. :- (Thanks for making me think.

2121 days ago



SUBMOM2

A great story!

2121 days ago



SEAJESS

Well Said!

A beautiful story, a beautiful legacy from your mother. I like the analogy between scale info and checking account info.



That's a great way to face your fears: transform them into something else!

2121 days ago



1STBUCKETITEM



Such a poignant story about your mom. My mom passed in 2012 at the age of 91 years old. Like you and your mom, we were best friends supporting each other every day. I still miss her but always thank Mom for the joy she always found in living life to the fullest. I weigh-in



everyday too and I know Mom is winking at me.
2121 days ago



PHOENIX1949



Well Said!

2121 days ago



WUMPASTAR



Thank you so much for sharing.
I have a question for you: do you write down the number every morning, or do you just remember and watch for a general increase?
2121 days ago



CD4199227



Nice story - thanks
2121 days ago



BBEAGAN



What a wonderful story! Thank you.
2121 days ago



CD4114015



WAY TO GO

LOVE this!!!

2121 days ago



IFDEEVARUNS2



Love the bargain! Your mother sounds as feisty as mine was.
2121 days ago



MISCHAKEO



What a lovely blog and a great tribute to your mom. I weigh daily and have conquered that fear. I am glad you and your mother helped each other with health.
2121 days ago



GARDENCHRIS



what a nice shared memory.
2121 days ago



CD8113065



What a wonderful blog. Thank you.
2122 days ago



NELLJONES



What a beautiful memory of your mother!
2122 days ago



KRISZTA11



Thank you for sharing this story of loving care and wisdom!



2122 days ago



WATERMELLEN



What a heartwarming story. You were a great daughter to your mother, and she gave you a continuing gift.
2122 days ago



50YEARSAWIFE



The scale has a special place in our bathroom. DH and I weigh faithfully every morning.
2122 days ago



VANILLASKY15

My mum lost a lot of weight due to an autoimmune disease a couple years ago. Keeping records of her food and weight on SP also helps her stay stable. She will be 80 soon.
2122 days ago



NAKIOMA

Sounds like your Mom was a special lady - but it also sounds like you were a delightful daughter.....
.....
2122 days ago



1960CHICK

Congratulations on facing your fears!
2122 days ago



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