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The Last Piece of the Puzzle – on my Table AND in my Spark Journey

Tuesday, November 17, 2020

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I've been working on a 1000 piece puzzle of our lake (A huge lake and a huge puzzle)

I blogged about it on October 19th so I've been working on it for about a month.

Sometimes consistently, sometimes I left it alone for days at a time.

Little by little, step by step – does this piece work here? No? Try something else.



I've been on this Spark Journey for nearly 12 years.

Little by little, step by step, put the pieces of a healthy lifestyle together.

I have had daily login streaks that have lasted for years. I have also been MIA for years.

Does this method or activity work for me? No? Try something else.

The basic Spark principles have produced success, but I needed help beyond the basics

Give up sugar? Good idea! Go cold turkey? I do not have that much will power.

Forget about it? No way.

What if I reduce the amount of sugar gradually, by ¼ teaspoon in my coffee and continue over time?

What if I mix a little plain Greek yogurt into my flavored variety and increase the proportion over time?

What if I increase my strength training 5 minutes at a time?

During my years here I've learned what works for me, but one piece of the puzzle eluded me.

We know that we can measure success not only in pounds and level of fitness but also in INCHES.

Muscle weighs the same as fat but takes up less space, so as we replace fat with muscle we look and feel better.

As I lost the weight, I also lost inches everywhere except not much on my thighs. Even when I was 118 pounds with a 24 inch waist, I had trouble buying pants that didn't make me look like a stuffed sausage. Over time I learned not to care. At least the fat on my thighs was not detrimental to my health.

Still, for over 50 years I have searched for the answer to that puzzle.

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Is my body saving that particular fat for some future famine?

I returned to Spark 2 months ago and just yesterday was trying on some old clothes. My thighs looked smaller. Is it my imagination? No, the tape measure confirms that today at 134.6 pounds the widest part of my thigh is exactly the same as it was when I weighed 118 pounds in college.

I have FOUND IT the final piece of the puzzle FOR ME!

The only difference in the last 2 months is that I have added a new exercise. Something I never considered before – PILATES!

I began with a 10 minute video and was shocked to discover that although I am quite fit, I could not even complete that. Forget it? No way.

I just did as much as I could of each movement.

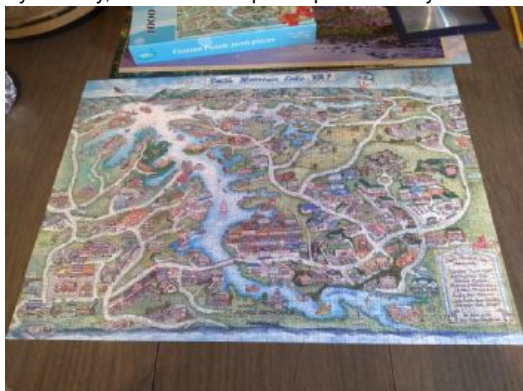
When I could do the whole video, I added a 2nd one, also 10 minutes long.

When doing an experiment, you want to change one variable at a time and observe the result.

The only new variable in my routine has been the addition of Pilates.

OK, I'm convinced. Pilates is the last piece of my Spark puzzle.

By the way, here's the completed puzzle on my table. I added the last piece last night



And my happy, surprised self after confirming the measurements.



Note that I did measure while only in my underwear, but didn't think anyone really wanted to see a picture of that.

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NANANANA

I love the lake puzzle. You look good too. Maybe I should give Pilates a second thought now that I understand it is challenging.
200 days ago



LINDA
Fantastic!







I love jigsaw puzzles but don't have the space to do them. But my day is full of activity anyway. My piece of the puzzle is finding a way to get rid of the belly fat without losing too much weight that would cause bone loss. My insomnia doesn't help, neither does not being able to lift weights (Dr.'s orders to protect artificial joints (one failed after only 3 years and I was a gym rat)

Keep up the great work, you look fabulous!
200 days ago



SENIORSAXLADY

What a great blog. Congratulations on finding the last piece of the puzzle and finding the piece of exercise that works for you. Love your picture. You look cute. I have a friend who loves doing those puzzles and I just ordered a 1000 piece puzzle of a conservatory for her for Christmas. I

 would love to try one, (not that large to start)  , but I have no place to keep one up where my feline Max wouldn't try and help me with it. My Dad loved to put puzzles together as well.




201 days ago



SPEDED2

What a blessing to find that missing piece. That attitude only proves the old adage...never, ever give up. Never quit!


Stay safe. Be well.
201 days ago



NANCYPAULINE

I'm so glad you're back at Spark and blogging. You have a gift to brighten someone else's day. I hope you realize how many people you help by being here. I also hope you receive as much support as you give.
201 days ago



MANGO1960


201 days ago



PWILLOW1

Nice comparison. I just finished another 1,000 pc. puzzle too. It said extreme difficulty on the box. It was a bit challenging. Took me almost 2 weeks. You can check it out on my banner or in my photos if you are interested.
201 days ago



NAVYMOM133

Good for you!!!! Oh boy, Pilates!
201 days ago



OHMEMEME

Awesome blog! Thanks for sharing!
201 days ago



GETULLY

Awesome Sauce!!! The final piece, on both fronts!
201 days ago





PRIMEOFMYLIFE

Wonderful!



202 days ago

v



BONIFIANT

What a great puzzle but it looks tricky with too many colors too similar. My primary care doctor always has one out on a table in the waiting room that are fairly tricky, I like to try to find a place for piece while waiting for my appointment.



You look wonderful. Thank you for being clothed for the picture,

202 days ago

v



ANNIEONLI

Great blog! I totally get the small pieces of the puzzle. My added piece has been meditation. I'm still working on the exercise portion...maybe I should try the Pilates route like you did! LoL And you're looking great! Inspirational!

202 days ago

v



FRITZYS_MAMA

love Pilates

202 days ago

v



MTN_KITTEN



Thanks for sharing the picture ... of you dressed.

202 days ago

v



ALICIA363



Is the first Pilates video one I could easily find and try?

202 days ago

v



AZMOMXTWO

what an inspiration you are

congratulations on finishing the puzzle

202 days ago

v



CD4114015

Beautiful, love puzzles too but it's been a long time since I did one!

202 days ago



v



SUSIEMT

I appreciate this blog. On my father's side of the family including him they all have large thighs. I inherited his DNA to a fault! I have thunder thighs! I believe I will try out a Pilates tape! From your picture I think your thighs look great! I am envious. After losing 186 lbs I still have those thunder thighs, so this may be something I need to pursue. What was the name of the video if you don't mind my asking?



202 days ago

v



MARTHA324

The story of your journey is so inspiring and I love the vision of fitting the puzzle pieces together. You look fantastic and it pilates is doing that, seems like it's something I should try.

I was always "hippy" and not in the 60's way! Even as a kid and skinny my hips and thighs were larger than I wanted and when I lost the weigh this last time, I figured that was just the way it was. Well I started in at cardiac rehab and with all the machines including the elliptical the weight started to literally melt off and my hips and thighs just went away! Still startles to hear someone say "well you have no hips!"

Now trying t figure out why my weight has crept up to 144 when it was around 140 for years! Eating the same, working out the same, back to strength work, and not drinking most nights. Figuring it out and not using sleep...enough to keep me awake!


202 days ago

v

v



WNCGIRL

Would you look at those thighs. Very nice. I like  puzzles too

202 days ago



JPPERSELL

You look great! It is awesome that you finished a huge puzzle. With my luck the last piece would be lost!

202 days ago



THINCPL2004

What an awesome blog! You look terrific!

202 days ago



DRDIVA28



You look great! I tried Pilates once and swore it was not for me but because of you I

will try it again :) Hats off to you for that amazing puzzle

202 days ago



SPARKLINGME176

THX for the email invite! I DID get it! You look fabulous! Our Pilates team, is very limited in people posting. The leader is an amazing Pilates instructor. She has her own videos. I haven't seen them, though. GREAT blog! We have similar experiences with SP. I've been here, DAILY for 3,169 days



11-18-2020 My experience with Pilates: (I am on the SP Pilates Lovers Team): A friend of mine, Risa, has a studio in CA & a Sheppard Pilates DVD. She physically showed me how to do it, then I took the DVD home & used it for years!. I'm talking about the floor mat exercises. I also dance Zumba. Several years ago I tore my knee, dancing. (It is all good now). So I had to stop everything, even walking, till it healed. (it took almost a year) THAT DVD, changed my life. The inches just pour off of me! I will restart taking it 10 minutes a day, & add on till I can do the whole hour, again. I am still nervous getting up off the floor, so for core strength, I use SP Nicole's 12 minute seated core work out. 2 or 3 times a week. (I WAS doing an hour of Sheppard Pilates, 3 times a week) I am blessed to have a pool & temps went up enough for me to continue swimming, 45 minutes a day. I do a lot of Pilates moves & stretching & yoga positions, in the pool. REALLY feels great! Also, restarting Zumba DVD, at home, but NO leaping! I hike in nature preserve, 1 time a week, for about 3 hours & walk daily with our dog, LUCY. She just turned 16 so she is pretty slow, I don't push her. I also am reading & implementing Marie Kondo's SPARK JOY, method of bringing our life into order. I am starting on my side of the closet. It is helping me SO much. Doing it only when I feel like it. (I woke up after 5 hours of sleep, played in the closet & then went back to sleep for 3 more hours. I get 8 hours of sleep, daily. I am taking VERY good care of myself. Don't want to injure myself again! THX for reading! I'm going to post this in my current JOURNAL blog!



202 days ago



WATERMELLEN

What a great blog!!

So nice to find the "piece in the puzzle" -- literally and metaphorically.

So often it's a slow and incremental process -- persevering calmly!!

And my goodness you look terrific.

203 days ago



1DAY-ATA-TIME

Congratulation on finding the last piece of the health and wellness puzzle! I started doing Pilates while rehabbing a back injury, now it is part of my weekly routine. I combine Pilates with yoga to keep sciatica at bay.

203 days ago



RAZZOOZLE



203 days ago



RACHNACH



203 days ago



THOMS1

Good job on the puzzle. My sister does puzzles on her computer and some of them take her more than one sitting to complete. I'm more of a seek and find person. As for Pilates, I can't bring



myself to try but never say never. Have a good day.
203 days ago



YELLOW09RED

Good morning Eileen,



I am so happy for you. Congrats on finishing the puzzle too. Yeah!
I hope you keep enjoying Pilates videos. Wonderful news.

Enjoy your Wednesday.
Take care,
Hugs and Joy,
Debbie



203 days ago



4EVERDIETER

Might just have to try pilates as I do have thick thighs! Gotta love it when you figure out the last of the puzzle ! Congrats!



203 days ago



NASFKAB

Enjoyed your last sentence & must look up those Pilates videos, unsure how much I can do but will try
203 days ago



MSLZZY



203 days ago



PLCHAPPELL

It 8s about what works.
203 days ago



GODSBEST

Good job on both endeavors.
203 days ago



RHOOK20047

Good job with the puzzle on the table and on your life! I know you are proud, and you are an inspiration to us all.
203 days ago



SHAKERATTLEROLL



203 days ago



KATTHOMAS2

So happy that you found that last piece of both puzzles....and your last sentence left me chuckling!
203 days ago



LIS193



203 days ago



KITTYHAWK1949



203 days ago





KOHINOOR2

Congratulations!
203 days ago



ALIHIKES

Congratulations! I am very impressed with your achievements, and your approach to gradually incorporating healthy lifestyle changes. You look great! And that is a pretty amazing puzzle.
203 days ago



QUARTERMASTER3

203 days ago



MARYJEANSL

The puzzle looks fantastic - and so do you!
203 days ago



MJREIMERS

I am glad you figured out what works for you!
203 days ago



CD18090386

Your missing piece might just be the one I am looking for. I need to develop some better core strength, but something that works all the parts might even be better! Did you find the workouts on

Spark? That's where I think I'll begin my search. Thanks. BTW you look superb
203 days ago



DARLENEK04

Oh wow, you look terrific....I am amazed what Pilates could do...
203 days ago



ALEXSGIRL1

wow you look fantastic and i love all the tips to get you were you are
203 days ago



HAYBURNER1969

Great job, Mom!
203 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.

