

*One***HOW I MADE MYSELF FAT AND WHAT I LEARNED**

**F**ew struggles frustrate as much as those with weight loss. I know. I'm a recovering compulsive overeater and have struggled with food cravings since childhood. I am the child of two alcoholics, who themselves came from generations of addicts (specifically, but not limited to alcoholism). Looking back at my life now, I feel I was born physically damaged which left me anxious, prone to depression and faulty thinking. Most importantly, spiritually void. When I think of those very early years I remember three things very clearly; the loneliness, feeling unloved, and unsafe. As an adult, I can see that my poor parents struggled so badly with their own addictions, just trying to stay alive, that they had nothing left to give me. Subsequently, as a child, I was left to parent myself. Growing up with an alcoholic father meant I always had to compete with the bottle, leaving me to feel like I wasn't good enough or worthy of his love. To this day I still struggle with not feeling good enough.



It could have been worse however. At least I had a roof over my head and no unexplainable bruises, but it was bad. The emotional lessons I took from my childhood were more devastating than I ever realized at the time. I became the *good* survivor, the "I'll do it

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myself” girl from an early age. Even when I didn’t know how to take care of myself, I managed. I hid the fear and my feelings of unworthiness. I learned how to smile all the time, even when dying on the inside, and kept this up well into adulthood.

It was only thanks to my Mom’s decision to get sober (over 40 years ago) following a 12-step program that I had my first inkling of hope. With her new found sobriety she decided to send me to a private Christian school. This was no easy feat as we were just about flat broke. It was there that for the first time I truly felt God’s love. I felt safe, fulfilled, and whole.

As a child, food became my reward, my comfort, and my savior. I made the seemingly innocent decision to eat to appease my feelings of anger, frustration, and longing to cover up how uncomfortable physically, emotionally and spiritually I was inside. My childhood quick fix of overeating created a long-term problem where I became overly self-reliant and did not trust God’s love and healing. I had food and I had myself. I learned how to feed the hungry heart to numb painful feelings instead of dealing with them head on. Food was my drug of choice.

As an adult, I look back on those painful memories and realize that those childhood experiences, as horrible as they were at the time, shaped me into who I am today. It is only through experiences from which you grow and become the awesome spiritual being God intends you to be. This process, this realization, takes time. With God’s help you can overcome anything no matter how big it may seem at the time. Nothing is bigger than our God. God was not the center of my life initially and He certainly wasn’t the center of my parents’ lives during their alcoholic days. If food, alcohol, exercise – any addiction, becomes the center of your world you are in trouble. In my own spiritual healing I’ve learned to forgive myself and others, as well as have faith. There is a direct correlation between physical fitness and spiritual fitness.

My father died a horrific death from lung cancer two years ago as an active alcoholic

and compulsive smoker. He left behind a legacy of alcoholism and addiction that still affects our family to this day. At the end, he was scared to die. Despite how badly he was suffering he was afraid he wasn't forgiven. How well I remember our last conversation; "Daddy, you don't have to be brave for us and you don't need to suffer anymore. Not only do we love you, but God loves you and your sins have already been forgiven through His son Jesus. You can rest knowing that you are His child and as long as you believe on Him and ask for forgiveness your earthly suffering can transform into a heavenly celebration." The chaplain gave him his last rights and he died the next morning, peacefully.

While tragic and painful, this experience will always be one of my fondest memories with my dad. How joyful to know that I was able to bring him to the Lord in such a peaceful way. And to this day know that even through a lifetime of alcoholism, smoking, and all the ungodliness that follows, God still loved him, just as he does all of us today. He is constantly teaching us that every health and life issue we face; including weight loss, is physically, mentally and spiritually rooted and that we must address all three aspects for true healing to take place. Through that pain, through that blackness, through that tragedy, God loves us.

How can my struggles and mistakes, mentally and spiritually, help you? Well, thanks to my own experiences and struggles with weight, I have learned what the most successful method for fast and guaranteed weight loss is. I have studied and tried just about every weight loss program out there. None of them worked for me. I became vegetarian, meticulously counted calories, religiously kept a food journal, and exercised until I couldn't raise my arm to hold a book—but I only gained weight. If you are one of the lucky ones who have a fast metabolism and never crave the wrong food, stop reading now. If you're like me and struggle with a dead metabolism and have to work at losing weight, then this book will change your life forever.

If you want to lose weight by tomorrow, forget everything you've ever learned and start this