



FIRSTplace

FOR HEALTH



GOOD NEWS—INFORMATION YOU CAN USE

GIVING UP TOO SOON

By Vicki Heath

A man meets a guru on the road. The man asks the guru, “which way is success?”

The bearded sage does not speak but points to a place off in the distance.

The man, thrilled by the prospect of quick and easy success, rushes off in the appropriate direction. Suddenly, there comes a loud “SPLAT.” Eventually, the man limps back, tattered and stunned, assuming he must have misinterpreted the message. He repeats his question to the guru, who again points silently in the same direction.

The man obediently walks off once more. This time the splat is deafening, and when the man crawls back, he is bloody, broken, tattered, and irate. “I asked you which way is success,” he screams at the guru. “I followed the direction you indicated. And all I got was splatted! No more of this pointing! Talk!”

Only then does the guru speak, and what he says is this: “Success IS that way. Just a little PAST splat.”

It’s the first of March, and we are still at it. Quitting is not an option. God says we are more than conquerors. We win at losing when we realize a delay does not mean it is not going to happen. Winners move past comparing themselves to others, run their own race, seek out the battle and are exhilarated and fortified by each hit they take because they know it leads to victory along the way. A winner is one who overcomes and learns from past failure and, perseveres beyond the splats of life. The Word of God is our training manual for life and health, and we use it and believe it.



Philippians 3:14 – “Nothing is beyond my power in the strength of the one who makes me strong.”

I Timothy 1: 12 – “And I thank Christ Jesus my Lord who has made me equal to the task.”

Romans 8:37 – “In all these we are more than conquerors.”

I pray for you my dear First Place friends that you will know your weaknesses, trust in God’s Word, and move beyond your self-imposed limitations to the true heart and spirit of the champions God intends you to be!

Still at it!

Vicki is the First Place 4 Health National Director, an American Council on Exercise, Certified Fitness Instructor, Certified Life Coach and the Wellness Coordinator for her church in Edisto Beach, SC. Vicki is the author of Don’t Quit Get Fit and Wellness Journey of a Lifetime. She has led a successful First Place 4 Health ministry in her church for twenty years.

MARCH 2019

Giving Up Too Soon

~Page 1

Sisters in Christ

~Page 2

Upcoming Events

~Page 2

It’s Time to Stop

~Page 3

Success Story

~Page 4

Healthy Hacks

~ Page 5

Recipes

~ Page 5-6

Featured Events

~Page 7

Contact First Place For Health

~ Page 7





FIRSTplace

FOR HEALTH



SISTERS IN CHRIST

I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another.
ROMANS 15:14

When I found myself sitting on my couch watching television, not answering the phone and wondering what I could eat next, I realized that step by step, I had become isolated, disconnected and overweight. Every once in a while, I would remember that there is a better way to live, and I would seek weight loss but ultimately fail.



First Place 4 Health was just my next weight-loss choice. Carole Lewis was in my first meeting, and she said that the good thing about First Place 4 Health was that if you didn't quit, you would succeed, because success is in the process. When the going gets tough, I still remember those words, and they encourage me.

Somehow, I became a First Place 4 Health leader. I began to watch the reality of others' successes and grew close to the ladies in my group. One by one they inspired me to be better and to do more. One member began to exercise. She started walking in a church program and soon was walking 11 miles and accomplished a half-marathon. I thought, Wow! If she can do that, I can start somewhere. Another member showed me what faithfulness looks like. She volunteered to lead accountability for the group and has been there every session. I saw compassion demonstrated when another member hugged someone who needed a hug. Others have taken the time to pray together privately. We were all encouraged when someone sent each of us an anonymous letter reminding us how much God loves us.

Each member has special gifts, and they volunteer to share them—music, bringing food, remembering birthdays, leading Bible studies, memorizing Scripture; hospitality, conversations, smiles, laughter, taking pictures, preparing wellness topics and sharing from the heart. Each week I am encouraged by their efforts, successes, and fellowship. I have come to realize these sisters in Christ are valuable, and I treasure them. I am still in the race for balance, and as I take each step, I am thankful that because of my involvement with First Place 4 Health, I am no longer disconnected and I see much less of my couch!

Action Item: Write a note of encouragement to someone. Write in your prayer journal why you are thankful for her, and then tell her the next time you see her!

Claudia Korff, Houston, Texas

UPCOMING EVENTS

Webinar – Metabolic Syndrome

March 11, 2019

Online

Trip to the Holy Land

March 22-30, 2019

Departures from Houston and New York

View the Live Q&A on our YouTube Channel

Nacogdoches Texas Wellness Workshop

April 27, 2019

Nacogdoches, Texas

Restore: Experiencing Freedom from Food Strongholds

May 5-7, 2019

North East, MD

Northeast Wellness Workshop

May 19, 2019

Wakefield, MA

Summit 2019 – Save the Date!

August 16-17, 2019

Houston, Texas



FIRSTplace

FOR HEALTH



IT'S TIME TO STOP

By Helen Baratta

Lately, the Lord has been showing me it is time for me to stop talking and listen for understanding. Stephen Covey says, "Most people do not listen to understand; they listen to answer. While the other is talking, they are preparing their reply." The scripture says, "Spouting off before listening to the facts is both shameful and foolish." (Proverbs 18:13, NLT)

The more a leader talks, the more we concentrate on thinking about what we are going to say next. We are more likely to miss important information or clues or promptings of the Holy Spirit if we are doing all the talking. When we take time to listen and ask the Holy Spirit to guide us in leading our group, we are gaining a complete understanding before we speak.



The 80/20 rule of active listening says that we should spend 80% of the time listening and only 20% of the time talking. I work hard at being quiet and listening when leading my First Place for Health group. My first tendency is to share all my knowledge and understanding. However, I find the best meetings are when my group members have done most of the sharing.

Group members look forward to the meeting so they can share how they feel, what they've learned, and what they need. Most of our time during the meetings should be filled with discussion and learning from each other. If the leader or any one member does most of the talking, then we miss out on the wealth of information from all the group members.

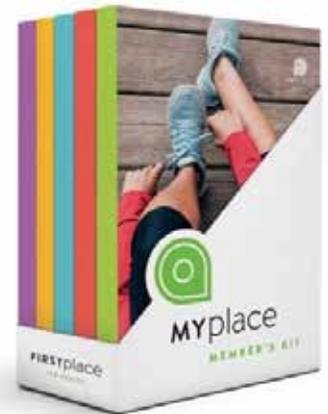
When someone shares in my group, instead of me interjecting my perspective, I say "Who else has something to share?" Depending on the subject, I might need to wait through what is called the pregnant pause. The uncomfortable time needed for some group members to enter the conversation. I smile through the quiet and encourage people with my eyes to share. I'll count to 30 to myself if needed.

Another way to engage the quieter members is to say, "Let's hear from someone who hasn't shared yet." My goal is to hear from everyone during a meeting. I only add to the discussion, if I have something new to contribute after everyone else has had time to share and only if we have time before we move on to the next topic. I work hard at this concept to stop talking. It's not easy.

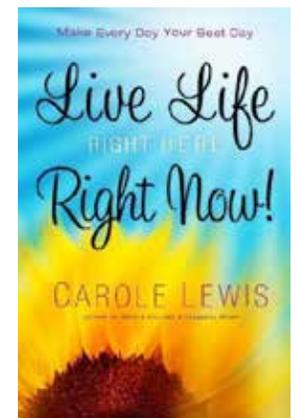
Ultimately, Jesus is the leader of our group. In John 10:27 He said, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." When we place him in first place, listen to His voice, we have a greater ability to follow Him. Stop, listen and embrace all God has planned.

Helen Baratta, Director of Development for First Place for Health. She is the author of My Place for Leadership included in the My Place Leader's Kit and Restored! Embracing Weight Loss God's way available in our online bookstore.

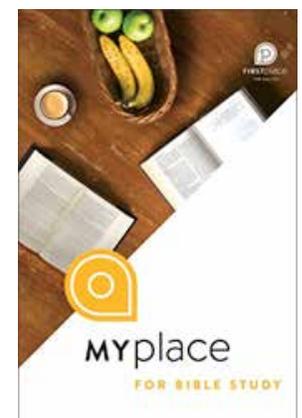
SHOP ONLINE!



[My Place Member's Kit](#)



[Live Life Right Here Right Now!](#)



[My Place For Bible Study](#)



FIRSTplace

FOR HEALTH



SUCCESS STORY

By Becky Stephenson

I would like to thank the First Place for Health staff for allowing me to share my success story. My story really isn't about me it's about God's transformation in my life through the First Place for Health program.

When people see me, they automatically think I have been in shape and exercised all my life, but that is so far from the truth. The truth is that I loved to eat and was a couch potato. I knew every number on the fast food menus and had such a sweet tooth dessert was part of each meal. I was so out of shape and overweight that my arms used to flap every time I moved them.

My eating and non-exercise habits lead me to years of yo-yo dieting. I tried so many diets: the high carb diet, weight watcher, and the low carb diet. All these diets worked I would lose 20lbs and but then I would go back to my old eating habits and gain it all back again. I lost the same 20lbs at least 4 x in my life.



By the time I was 44, I was overweight by 30 + lbs, spiritually dry, and depressed. I knew I needed to change my life but didn't know what direction to go in. I was on high blood pressure meds and wasn't able to walk up a flight of steps without being short of breath. My church was offering a First Place for Health class, and I felt the Lords leading, so I signed up.

The class changed my life. Through the study, I realized how much God loved me and that he had plans for my life. I knew he wanted me to be free of the obsession I had for food and my obstinance for exercise. I used to pray, "Lord if you want me to exercise then you need to give me one that I can sit on my butt and do" because I was so great at being a couch potato.

*God has such a sense of humor—He gave me a love and a passion for biking. He also released me from my food obsession by helping me identify where it started. I realized after reading a book called *Half the Mother twice the Love*, by Mather Love, that my obsession for food came from my childhood. As I identified with her stories of food with family reunions, Sunday breakfasts, and holiday gatherings, I realized that's where my food obsession started, and as I read the last page I was released me from my obsession! It was unbelievable.*

God is so amazing, and the Bible study changed me so much that I started my own group a year later which ran for a couple of years.

God says he will restore what the Locusts have eaten and that is what he has done in my life. I feel better now than I did in my 20's and am doing things that I never dreamed of doing. I can now run up a flight of steps without getting sort of breath, and every time I hit the top I always praise God. I also went from a size 10 to a size 2.

I am now preparing for an Ironman triathlon for my 50th birthday. I went from a couch potato to getting a second place last year in a duathlon which was a 56mile bike ride climbing over 6 thousand feet, then a 13.1-mile run named Savageman. Savageman its billed to be one of the toughest Ironman in the world. God is so amazing.

I want to encourage you it's never too late and your never too old or out of shape to get started. When I started biking, I had to walk up every hill in my neighborhood and when I began to run I started a few feet at a time. Swimming has been very challenging for me. The first triathlon I did, I realized the day before that I wasn't able to swim more than 100 yards but knew God had called me to do this triathlon. I kept questioning God not believing it would be possible and worrying about drowning. The next day, before I went to the triathlon I turned on the radio, and the song that was playing was a Mandisa song, Stronger, with the lyrics, "if the waves are taken you under hold on a little bit longer this is going to make you stronger." I knew God had a plan and could make impossible things happen, so I went. In the water I made it to the first buoy then I panicked. I flipped on my back and finished the swim. I don't know to this day what happened, or how I got from the first buoy to the end that's all I know was I made it. I felt like the blind man in the parable I was blind, but now I see. God made the impossible possible and I have learned so may lesson on my journey.

I was never an athlete, so I started from the beginning, one step at a time. I remember reading in one of Carol's Lewis's books about an old Chinese proverb the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.

My step started was taking the First Place for Health Bible study. Then God did the rest as I put him first, and He balanced the rest of my life. His word tells us "Apart from Him we can do nothing." It's amazing to see where God has brought me, and I give all the glory to Him. I pray that through this week God will take first place in your life as well.

Becky Stephenson



FIRSTplace

FOR HEALTH



HEALTHY HACKS!

By Lisa Lewis

We're all looking for tricks and tips to eat, cook and serve healthy meals. Try these five Healthy Hacks for the kitchen, for the table, and for the grocery store.

Portion Size Healthy Hack. The bigger the plate, the more you eat. Invest in smaller plates and bowls, or serve dinner on salad plates and use a mug for your cereal or ice cream. Another trick: Spread food, rather than mound it. It looks like a lot when it's not.



Vegetable Prep Healthy Hack. Freshen up your limp kale or other vegetables by dropping them into ice water. Plants wilt due to water loss. Ice water restores their crispness.

Grocery Bag Healthy Hack. In a recent study, researchers found that 64 percent of the 25 used reusable grocery bags tested were contaminated with bacteria. Make sure to wash your cloth bags weekly and use single-use bags (e.g., plastic) for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.

Cooking Healthy Hack. Zap lemons, limes, or oranges for 15 seconds in the microwave before squeezing. The fruit will yield twice as much juice.

Mindful Healthy Hack. Signal that mealtime is over by turning off the light and closing the door (if you have one).

Lisa Lewis is the author of Healthy Happy Cooking. Her cooking skills have been a part of First Place for Health wellness weeks and other events for many years. She provided recipes for 13 of the First Place for Health Bible studies and is a contributing author in Better Together and Healthy Holiday Living. She partners with community networks, including the Real Food Project, to provide free healthy cooking classes.

HEALTHY RECIPES

RASPBERRY FUDGE BROWNIES

Serves 16

1 10-oz. package of frozen raspberries in light syrup, thawed but not drained

1/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp., margarine

1/4 cup plus 2 Tbsp. unsweetened cocoa

1/2 cup sugar

2 eggs, beaten

1/2 tsp. vanilla

1 1/2 cups flour

1/8 tsp. salt, Nonstick vegetable cooking spray



Drain raspberries, reserving 3 Tbsp. juice. Set raspberries and juice aside. Combine margarine and cocoa in a large saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring constantly, until margarine melts and mixture becomes smooth. Remove from heat and let cool slightly.

Add sugar, eggs, and vanilla to cocoa mixture, stirring well. Combine flour and salt and add to cocoa mixture, folding in gently. Gently fold raspberries into cocoa mixture.

Spoon batter into an 8-inch square baking dish that has been coated with nonstick vegetable cooking spray. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Cut into 20 squares.

Nutritional Information (per brownie): 97 Calories; 3g Fat (27.4% calories from fat); 2g Protein; 16g Carbohydrate; 1g Dietary Fiber; 21mg Cholesterol; 48mg Sodium.



FIRSTplace

FOR HEALTH



HEALTHY RECIPES

SALMON & KALE SALAD

Serves 1

- 2 tbsp. Tahini
- 1/2 tsp. Minced Garlic
- 2 tsp. Lemon Juice
- 2 cups Kale, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup Purple Cabbage, shredded
- 1/4 cup Red Onion, minced
- 1 cup Apple, chopped
- 3 oz. canned Salmon
- 1/2 cup cooked Quinoa



Whisk garlic, lemon juice into the tahini. Place finely chopped kale in your bowl, top with purple cabbage, red onion, and apple. Add the salmon and quinoa and drizzle with the seasoned tahini.

“FRIED” GREEN TOMATO BLT

Serves 2

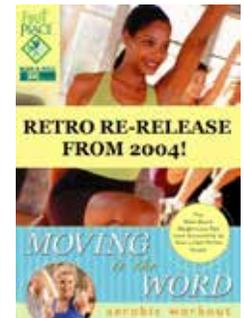
- 1 medium-size green tomato, cut into 1/4” slices
- 1/8 teaspoon hot sauce (optional)
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 1 1/2 tablespoons, cornmeal
- Vegetable cooking spray
- 2 leaves romaine lettuce
- 2 1-ounce slices reduced-fat mozzarella cheese
- 2 slices turkey bacon, cooked, drained, and halved
- 4 1-ounce slices sandwich bread, toasted



Sprinkle tomato slices with hot sauce, if desired, and dip in egg white, and dredge in cornmeal. Place slices in a single layer on a large baking sheet coated with cooking spray. Lightly coat slices with cooking spray. Broil 3 inches from heat 3 minutes on each side or until tender and golden. Layer lettuce, cheese, turkey bacon and tomato slices on 2 slices of toast. Top with remaining toast. Serve immediately.

Nutritional Information: 309 calories, 8.7g fat, 18.4g protein, 37g carbohydrates, 2.4g fiber, 33mg cholesterol, 741mg sodium.

SHOP ONLINE!



DVD-Moving to the Word-Retro Re-release

[SHOP NOW>>](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA



WEBINAR

**MAR
11TH**

METABOLIC SYNDROME

FITNESS – WHY YOU NEED TO START



Join Us!

Trip to
ISRAEL



March 21-30, 2019

Restore



Experiencing Freedom from Food Strongholds

May 5-7, 2019
Sandy Cove Retreat
North East, MD



Featuring Jennifer Kennedy Dean, author, speaker and Executive Director of The Praying Life Foundation

FirstPlaceForHealth.com

The First Place For Health ENewsletter is published monthly by First Place For Health.

PHONE: (800) 727-5223 OR (713) 688-6788

TO PLACE AN ORDER: (800) 727-5223, x1002

ADDRESS: First Place For Health, 622 22nd St., Suite 100, Galveston, Texas 77550