

# I Understand

“I am overwhelmed” is the most frequent statement I hear from new members and leaders. I remember how comforting it was to hear another leader tell me, “I understand, I was overwhelmed too.” I find any time I take a step into a new area of ministry the enemy steps in and attempts to intimidate and overwhelm me.

Our enemy will do whatever he can to stop you and me from moving forward towards God’s plan. The best advice I ever received was a friend, pointing out that if the enemy was going to spend time trying to stop me, I must be on the right path. Because she understood, I surged forward with courage and confidence.

I was recently asked, “Helen, back when you first began First Place For Health (FP4H), what changed in you, that made you more obedient to starting a group?” I could sense they wanted to start a group yet were hesitant in moving forward. I smiled and said,

“I understand.”

I shared how, when I first heard of FP4H, I felt hopeless and disqualified, weighing 274 pounds. Even though I knew deep down inside, I was supposed to start a group. I pushed the idea away. I procrastinated for a year. Thankfully, no matter where I turned, I kept sensing a need to start a group at my church. I finally found freedom saying, “Yes.”

Looking back now, it is clear God had a plan to transform me inside and out. I could never have lost over 100 pounds and maintained a healthy weight alone. Placing Jesus first is my “Why” for a healthy lifestyle. FP4H is my “How.” I need the accountability and encouragement of my group.

I love the FP4H community in our groups, in our leader

networks, and now in our Membership Levels. It is a place to share ideas, victories, challenges, struggles, and, most importantly, our failures. We are in it together. We are not alone. We walk next to each other on the journey and encourage one another, with two simple words,

“I understand.”

If you are looking for a daily infusion of motivation and understanding of your wellness journey, Level 3 Membership is for you. Embrace Change and say “Yes” to all God has planned.

Helen Baratta, Director of Development for First Place for Health. She facilitates the Level 3 Membership Level. 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 at our online bookstore. Helen encourages everyone to embrace Change and say “Yes” to all God has planned.