

# Patrick S. Thayer

My main stumbling block in life has always been my excess weight. I started a diet many times in the past and I did lose weight. Within a short time, I would gain all of it back, plus more. All of the yo-yo dieting took a toll on my health. I had high blood pressure, a hiatal hernia, sleep apnea and high cholesterol, and took five prescription medications a day.

In January 2006, at age 50, I joined First Place 4 Health through my church. I soon found that it was not a diet plan but a Live IT<sup>®</sup> plan. We put Christ first in our lives, including what we eat. We also trust in Him to help us with our physical activity. In the first year, with God's help, I lost more than 100 pounds.

When I began exercising, I had a hard time walking up the stairs without losing my breath. I started attending the YMCA to walk on a treadmill. My goal—one mile—turned into a 20-minute struggle. My knees hurt, mostly because of being overweight and having past knee surgeries that removed all the cartilage from my left knee and half from my right knee. Within the first year of beginning my exercise routine, I slowly increased to four miles in less than an hour on the treadmill. I worked out with various exercise machines four to five days a week. Losing weight and exercising changed my attitude. Getting up early to exercise was a struggle I battled with prayer. To this day, I pray each morning for Christ's strength as I rise from bed and drive to the YMCA at five o'clock.

I also pray every day that God will help me in my food choices. I am a foodaholic. I need God's help every day to choose the best food for meals and snacks. It's not possible to avoid food; we need it daily to survive. The temptation to overeat and choose the right foods is a constant battle.

In December 2006, about a year into my FP4H journey, a friend challenged me to complete a marathon. *Impossible!* I thought to myself. I bought and read the book *Marathoning for Mortals*. With God's help and the book's training plan, I began my plan to run in the Cincinnati Flying Pig Marathon in May 2007. It was amazing! With prayer and God's help in training, I completed my first marathon. In 2017, 10 years later, I completed my 22<sup>nd</sup>.

I thank God, my friends and family, the First Place 4 Health program and the YMCA for helping me change my life. Thank you Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. He continues helping me daily.

*Story taken from Live Life, Right Here Right Now!*

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