

Teresa Grebeldinger

I am celebrating because even though my early childhood through now has been a story of needing to lose weight – I have now lost over 135lbs from my top weight in 2019.

I first attended First Place for Health decades ago and at that time I remember learning that I had an unhealthy relationship with food. Many distractions crowded out the commitment to fully embrace the changes necessary.

I returned to a First Place for Health event at Sandy Cove in 2018 with my best friend. When I saw this video on the website, I did not recognize myself and I was devastated. I remember leaving that weekend in disbelief that my life could be different. I was working as hard as I could, trying to be as healthy as possible – even while working in the healthcare field.



I had been living life in what I call the 'icks'. Panicked, hectic, frantic. Even though I had success in my career and education, receiving a bachelors, masters, and doctorate in nursing while single parenting, I worked in a career that cared for others, when my health began to deteriorate I realized I was not caring for myself well.

In 2019 when I had started to experience new health challenges, I heard the same message I had heard all of my life – Lose weight. I had tried so many times, so many ways. Previously I was an exercise equipment collector, a personal trainer accumulator, and gym membership user, a First Place member, a nutritionist utilizer, and I had tried so many

eating plans. There is hope!

In January 2020 I returned to First Place with my best friend in a virtual group – Thank you – Jen. Through First Place for Health I learned how to live differently.

During this time I have had job losses, and family relationship stresses, financial struggles, and health concerns. Through each one – God is faithful. When I choose gratitude instead of grumpiness, and praise instead of pity I am able to see the good that is happening. My delay in finding the next job has led to new skills and an active lifestyle on our homestead. Bargains at the local grocer of day old lettuce was just what I needed to eat more salads. The pain of family relationship challenges has increased my commitment to prayer and my health concerns that I thought would be life ending have led to a life altering commitment to wellness. The Lord created us and knows what is good for us. What is/has happened is not surprising to Him. He knows the answers and He will guide us.

I am still on the journey, at times afraid I will return to my previous weight and ways, oh so thankful for those around me and for the reminders in the word of God that I am not the same as I was.

In order to live differently I have to believe differently. I have learned it is not how to get to a certain weight it is who is my guide and Savior in whom I trust to live a healthier life. My quiet time, prayer and praise, Bible studies, and scripture memory are life sustaining.

I have to eat differently. I have learned that there are foods that are delicious and healthy for me. Tracking has allowed me to see what foods work best for me and helps me to choose foods that make me feel healthier instead of choosing to eat for comfort, or to celebrate, or because it is time. Recently I had an 'aha' moment when I continued to struggle with

wanting ice cream most every day. I had made substitutions and was able to eat smaller amounts. Although, I had made progress, I was not free. Then I remembered having my tonsils out as a child and the promise of as much ice cream as I could eat. I was in so much pain that it made it difficult to enjoy it, I wondered if surrendering this idea of 'as much ice cream as I wanted' would help me to let go of ice cream. I am breaking free!

I exercise differently. I am excited to be able to exercise outdoors each day and work outdoors – it has been so healthy for me. I love that I am now able to horseback ride!

I have learned that I need to think differently. Instead of berating myself for past choices, I choose to rely on God's grace and forgiveness. I choose to sing songs of praise, and paint, and knit and express my emotions healthfully.

I see God working in my life – giving me opportunities to praise Him.

I find joy in encouraging others that God is able to make possible what seems impossible to us. Be encouraged – there is hope- do not give up and keep showing up!

I am surrounded with a support team. Everyone in my First Place for Health groups are so kind. They have great ideas. Look and listen – find what works for you.

Let's keep sharing our victory story. Even if you too have had losses and gains- you have a victory story. You are here, you are listening, share what you have learned. You have no idea if it will be what someone else needs to hear to keep going.

Start your own Success Story