

Learning To Think Differently: WITH MOVE![®], VETERAN MONTY SUTTON CONQUERS THE CHALLENGES OF MAINTAINING A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Veteran Monty Sutton readily admits that he never really tried that hard to lose weight. He'd done everything to get thinner, but never really made the commitment to changing his lifestyle. "For a time, I was successful at losing weight," he recalls. "But the weight I lost—and a few more pounds—would always creep back on." What Monty needed was a program that could help him change his mind set about food.

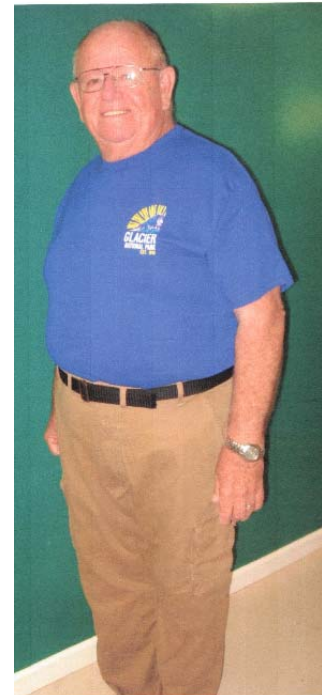
New Commitment

In the winter of 2014, Monty was being considered for bariatric surgery at the Dayton (OH) VAMC. "To show that I was committed to weight loss, I had to do medical tests, a psychological evaluation, and a MOVE![®] class," he recalls. "Because I'd already attended a class the year before, I was reluctant to do it again."

But he decided with his wife that it was time for a real change, and started MOVE![®] in February 2014, weighing 330 pounds and sporting a 62-inch waist. "Because my wife cooked our meals, I realized that she had to be part of the process, too," Monty says. "So we both went to the classes with a fresh commitment to change our food habits." In the classes, he and his wife were all ears, focusing seriously on what the instructors said. Then they began to put those ideas into practice.

30 Pounds, 6 Inches

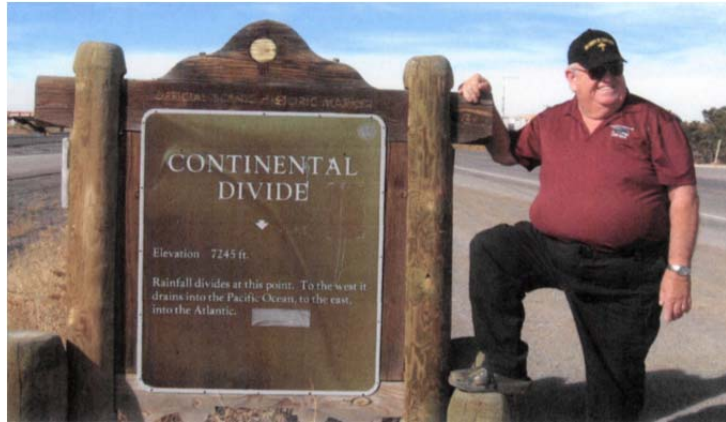
"It was easier making small changes in our diet," Monty explains, "like baking and broiling more, reducing salt and soda, and eating more vegetables. But the real challenge was thinking differently about food." He and his wife had to learn that foods weren't necessarily "bad", but could be enjoyed in smaller portions. They had to learn to pay attention to their meals, and not eat mindlessly. And they had to learn to keep a food log to better track their caloric intake and portion sizes.



Monty and his wife also made exercise a regular part of living. “During the winter, we put the exercise bike to good use,” he says. “In the spring, we began walking outside and bought bikes to ride.” By the time Monty and his wife finished the MOVE!® Program in April, he’d lost 30 pounds and 6 inches from his waist, and his wife had been equally successful!

Summer Test

In the summer of 2014 while at Scout Camp, Monty faced the first test of his new-found resolve and commitment. “I was away from home and my wife, and faced with unwise food options daily,” he recalls. “Camp food—hamburgers, hotdogs, French fries—didn’t really fit with my new, healthy lifestyle.”



So Monty and his wife used what they learned in the MOVE!® nutrition class: they planned ahead and made healthier, frozen meals that he could eat instead of the camp fare. “I’m proud to say that I continued to lose weight that summer,” he reports. “I finished camp at 275 pounds!”

Setting Examples

Monty says that although his weight loss is important and he’s proud of his accomplishments, but there’s more to it than that. “My diabetes medication has been reduced and I feel like doing so much more—like yard work, camping, hiking, biking, walking,” he explains. Monty and his wife are also aiding others in their quests for better health. “We encourage people who are trying to lose weight—we’ve become the ‘low-calorie experts’ at our church dinners, for example,” he says. “We’ve also been asked to be MOVE!® Buddies to other Veterans who are just starting their journeys to better health!”

With bariatric surgery no longer necessary, Monty continues to work with his wife towards their weight goals. “We’re not yet at the weight we want to be, but MOVE!® has put us on the right path, with support to ensure our success,” he says. “I tell people that if you don’t at first succeed...MOVE!®!”