

On A Mission:

DOWN 90 POUNDS, VETERAN MICHAEL GILBERT HAS EXCEEDED HIS HEALTH GOALS WITH MOVE![®]

How long did you struggle with your weight?

Michael: “Before 2001, I exercised a lot, but was still heavy. But up through 2012, I didn’t have time to exercise, ate out a lot, and gained more weight—I got up to 250 pounds!”

What motivated you to join the MOVE![®] Program?

“My weight was causing high blood pressure, as well as borderline high blood sugar and cholesterol. My orthopedist also thought I might need a hip replacement because I was so heavy. My doctors had been warning me about the excess weight, and saying that losing weight could improve some of my other medical issues. Dr. Reed at VA Central Western Massachusetts HCS told me about MOVE![®] and said it might help.”

What about MOVE![®] was most helpful?

“Learning to eat better and exercise, attending the group classes, and weighing myself really motivated me to succeed. I worked harder because I had to weigh in every 2 weeks—just seeing progress on the scale drove me to lose more!”

How much weight have you lost through MOVE![®]?

“I’ve been doing MOVE![®] at the Worcester (MA) OPC for about 18 months now. I’ve lost about 90 pounds—from a 44-inch to about a 40-inch waist—and exceeded my initial weight loss goal of 50 pounds! This weight loss has helped with my hip issues. I’ve set a new goal of 155 pounds, and I’d like to lose 5 more pounds to reach it.”

How’s your life different now?

“I’m stronger, and more alert, confident, and positive. I spend many hours exercising now—on the bike, treadmill, and working in the woods. The program keeps me busy, and I like that it’s almost a ‘job.’ I’m still taking the same medications as before, but my



blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar are good. My clothes are loose, and I can tie my shoes easily now!”

What do you do now to stay healthy?

“I ride my bike between 8 and 26 miles, 3 times a week. I also burn a lot of calories on the treadmill three times a week. I get even more physical activity by doing yard work. I eat a lot of fruit, but no fruit juice, and I do one big meal at night with an earlier snack. I try to weigh less every time I weigh myself, and that motivates me to work hard.”

What would you like other Veterans to know about MOVE!®?

“It could save your life! They will get as much out of the program as they put in. In my case, I set a weight goal and had the drive to reach it, despite suffering from costochondritis, and a bad hip and knee. But my mission is to keep it off, so I will find ways to do that!”