

Overcoming Obstacles: VETERAN WALTER PIETRUK FINDS WEIGHT LOSS TO BE EASIER THAN EXPECTED WITH MOVE![®]

Veteran Walter Pietruk says that he knew he was overweight, but it took some “introspection and self-analysis” to realize that he needed to make changes. “I was almost 100 pounds over my ideal weight and the stress on my knees was increasing,” he says. “So I knew I had to make losing the excess weight my priority.”

Getting Started

But Walter was still facing a big obstacle to weight loss: getting started. And although he’d lost significant weight in the past—as much as 60 pounds one time—he never learned how to maintain weight loss over the long term. “So I had to convince myself of the benefits versus the consequences—like higher blood pressure and diabetes,” he explains. “After that, the challenges seemed to diminish.”



Walter started out determined to lose at least 50 pounds, but in his first 11-week MOVE![®] program at the Viera (FL) VA OPC, he lost 45 pounds! That early success helped Walter realize that losing weight was not the “insurmountable obstacle” he’d imagined.

‘Missing Tools’

Basically, MOVE![®] gave Walter the “missing tools” he needed to lose weight, then maintain it. “I started reading food labels, eating breakfast every day, and limiting empty calories,” he says, “and these lifestyle modifications helped me to choose

healthier foods, monitor and lower the calories I consumed, and reduce my sodium intake.” Walter believes the daily food log was probably the most beneficial thing about the program. “Now instead of processed foods, I eat lots of fresh fruits and vegetables at each meal,” he reports. “That’s not only made weight loss easier, but made me feel much healthier!”

And MOVE!® staff have been there to help every step of the way. “I really have to thank dietitians Lisa Haggar and Christina Bartlett, as well as nurse Beverly Lancaster,” he says. “They gave me the ‘gentle persuasion’ I needed to help make the dietary and behavioral changes to succeed.”

Words Cannot Express

Walter started the program at 288.8 pounds in late June 2012. As of April 2013, after two 11-week MOVE!® sessions, he weighs 205.4 pounds! “I’ve lost over 80 pounds and dropped my BMI from 43.4 to 29.9,” he reports. “My A1C went from 6.1 to 5.7, and my waist from 52 to 36 inches.” Now sleeping better and brimming with newfound energy, Walter feels much better and is looking forward to losing an additional 20 pounds!

“Words cannot express how important the MOVE!® program information was to me,” he explains. “I would encourage anybody—especially my fellow Veterans—to be honest with themselves and give MOVE!® an honest try.”

