

Not Looking Back:

MOVE![®] HELPS DIABETIC VETERAN RONALD WILLIAMS MAKE DRAMATIC CHANGES AND LOSE 101 POUNDS

Retired Navy Master Chief Ronald Williams recently shared this MOVE![®] success story with Krista Kazembe, MOVE![®] Coordinator at the Iowa City VA HCS:

“I joined the MOVE![®] Telephone program at 328 pounds because I was facing insulin if I didn’t get my A1c—7.7 at the time—under control. I have diabetes, and my doctor wanted me to go on insulin. I decided to change my lifestyle instead because I knew I was looking at losing toes and feet. My doctor said I had 3 months.



I’ve always been a man of strong will. I was in Vietnam. If there’s something wrong, I take action. So I started changing my lifestyle drastically right away. When I met with my doctor I weighed 343 pounds. By the time I started MOVE![®] 6 weeks later, I was at 328. I was able to lose 15 pounds even before I started the program!

I was in the MOVE![®] Telephone program for 1 year, receiving scheduled monthly calls from Krista, my MOVE![®] telephone provider. I also met with the MOVE![®] Dietitian Connie Olson and MOVE![®] Physical Therapist Lindsey Carey to help change my perspective on how much I should eat and exercise.

I’ve lost 101 pounds total, and my waist size went from a 54 to 40. I now weigh around 240 and monitor my weight closely. I take action if I get near 250 pounds. It only took 30 pounds of weight loss to get off my heart medications. My A1c went down to 4.5, so my doctor took me off my diabetes medication, too.

Not only did I change how and when I eat, I also greatly increased my activity level, starting slowly by exercising just a few minutes a day. Eventually, I built up to walking a 5 percent grade on a treadmill at 2.8 mph for 75 minutes—that’s 3 miles! I also do 45 sit-

ups on my Bowflex machine. I did this routine 5 to 6 days a week while I was losing the 101 pounds. To maintain this weight loss, I continue to eat healthy and stay active through VA volunteer work and working out.

If I could tell other Veterans how to get started, I'd say:

- *Ask yourself what you want.*
- *Ask yourself what kind of life you want.*
- *Motivate yourself. Don't count on anyone else.*
- *Go to a MOVE!® class, especially if you're diabetic.*
- *Learn how to read a food label.*
- *Learn what's good and not good for you.*
- *Serve yourself so you are in control of your portions.*
- *Measure what you eat, don't just eat out of the carton.*
- *Write down what you eat every day, and use food logs.*
- *Treat yourself in healthy ways.*
- *Eat less and make the most of what you eat.*
- *Weigh yourself every morning.*
- *Slow down while eating and relax.*
- *Don't go back for seconds, and don't eat after 6 pm.*
- *Eat breakfast!*



When I'm asked what I can share with fellow Veterans about physical activity, I say passionately, 'if you are not exercising, either you don't have time to do it or you don't want to do it.' When you're increasing your activity, ask yourself if you *have* to quit or if you *want* to quit. If it's 'I want to quit', just suck it up and keep going. Despite being 67 years old and having diabetes, two artificial knees, and arthritis, I challenged my body slowly over time. My endurance and strength improved and my weight decreased. A year later and 101 pounds lighter, I've changed my quality of life drastically. And I'm not planning on looking back!"