

“You Look Marvelous!”: MOVE![®] HELPS VETERAN ALMER JACKSON GAIN CONTROL OF HIS LIFE AND LOSE OVER 40 POUNDS

Almer Jackson wants other overweight or obese Veterans to know just how much MOVE![®] can change their lives for the better. “If you allow the program to help you like I did, it will encourage and motivate you to look at and improve your physical health,” says the disabled Vietnam combat Veteran. “And improving your health will help you improve your overall attitude about yourself.”



Almer speaks from the personal experience of a multi-year struggle with excess weight and its consequences. “I had been on psychotropic and sleep medications for 40 years. About 7 or 8 years ago, I started gaining weight, and 3 years ago it really started coming on,” he says. “It took only 2 years for me to gain nearly 40 pounds—I went from 160 to 198.” Almer was in a “cycle” of medications, depression, insomnia,

and inactivity that made him feel bad and burdened by his weight. “I wanted to be there for my 10 children and 20 grandkids, be strong in their lives, and support and hug them. And I didn’t want them to see me sick,” he explains. “But I felt so tired at family functions, it just pulled on my heart.”

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One Thing Leads to Another

Then he found out about the MOVE![®] Program at the Gene Taylor CBOC in Mt. Vernon, Missouri. Almer initially spoke with dietitian Wendy Wolber, who gave him an honest assessment of his lifestyle. “She told me that my diet—which included a lot of sweets, mayonnaise, and salad dressing—was pretty bad,” he says, “and I was really out of shape—I couldn’t walk a block without being winded.”

So with Wendy's help, Almer started eating better and getting more active, and one thing led to another. "I've lost 41 pounds, going from 198 down to 157 pounds," he explains. "And I've maintained that weight for almost a year now."

Re-Start

In fact, MOVE!® has helped Almer improve a lot of things about his life. "I've been able to get off the medications I'd been taking for 4 decades—I don't take those drugs anymore," he says. "I'm happier now and so much more motivated."



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Losing weight and getting healthier through MOVE!® helped Almer let go of his issues and start his life all over again. "I'm very productive now," he reports. "I'm busy writing my memoirs—several books and short stories—and I've been taking classes and getting more active in local ministry. Life is so wonderful!"

Now, Almer is living his life with an important new ability: self-control. "Having control over my physical health has given me control over my entire life," he explains. "And I've found that having good physical health contributes to good mental and spiritual health."

Family Affair

Almer says that MOVE!® also has helped him improve his family life and relationships. "We went through a terribly turbulent situation, but we've come through it much stronger," he says. "I'm happier now than I've ever been in my life." Almer's family has encouraged him to succeed in MOVE!®, and now they have a new partner in healthy living. "I'm outdoors with them a lot, always moving around. My younger kids and grandkids keep me active," he says. "They give me pats on the back, and as a family we eat healthy and try to stay fit together." Almer says that a recent event made him realize just how supportive and proud his family is of his successes with MOVE!®. "I was in my son's wedding back in the fall," he explains, "and my great-grandson came up to me and said, 'Papaw, you look marvelous!'."