

## **Adapt, Overcome, and Improvise:**

### **MOVE!<sup>®</sup> HELPS VETERAN WILLIAM COLLINS MEET AND EXCEED HIS HEALTH GOALS**

Veteran William A. Collins says that his eating was “off the charts” when he finally realized how negligent he had become with his health. “I was eating too much unhealthy food, drinking too much soda, going out for late night meals, and not exercising,” he explains. “I was abusing myself.”

Weighing 260 pounds in August 2010, the 62-year-old started MOVE!<sup>®</sup> group classes after receiving information from the Causeway Street CBOC of the Boston VA Healthcare System. A poor diet was one of the key causes of his weight gain, so William focused first on relearning how to eat by making healthier choices and controlling his portions. “Before MOVE!<sup>®</sup>, I used to eat a daily breakfast of sausage or bacon, eggs, home fries, a muffin, and coffee with lots of sugar,” he recounts. “I’d drink 2 liters of Coke each day, and at dinner, I’d eat a large plate of pork chops and mashed potatoes with gravy.” But with the right information from MOVE!<sup>®</sup>, William has radically changed how he approaches food.

*“My eating was ‘off the charts’ and I was abusing myself...MOVE!<sup>®</sup> has helped me adapt, improvise, and overcome.”*

#### **Information Is Power**

Now, he reads all the program information and works hard to apply it daily when he eats. “It’s really important to read the handouts over and over, so that you learn and retain

the information,” William says. He’s switched to light, healthy meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and he’s made several other changes to his diet and lifestyle. “I cook with ‘heart healthy’ oils, eat on smaller plates, read food labels, and limit the amount of food I eat after 6:00 PM,” William reports. “To improve my sleep, I turn off the TV at 9:30.”

These changes have paid off handsomely for William, whose initial goal was to lose 35 pounds and weigh in at 225 pounds. At the beginning of May 2012, he'd already surpassed that goal by 12 pounds, reducing his weight to a healthier 212 pounds!

### Walking the Dogs

William believes that physical activity also has been important to his weight loss. He was not very active prior to joining MOVE!®, so he's added daily exercise to his new routine. After working through a knee injury with his physical therapist, William is now slowly increasing his morning dog walks.

"I typically log 7,000-8,000 steps each day, but I want to get to 10,000," William says. "It's not hard once you get the hang of it, and I'm always looking for ways to get in those extra steps."



### Goals, Advice

Losing weight has helped William get more active and feel better, and he has his sights set on getting down to 200 pounds. He hopes that his progress will inspire other Veterans join the MOVE!® Program and get healthier, and he has some advice for them. "Set your mind to it, then just do it," he says. "To successfully lose weight, you have to adapt, overcome, and improvise."