

Good To Great:

VETERAN ED MIKULSKI DISCUSSES HOW MOVE![®] HELPED HIM SHED 40 POUNDS

“Over the years, Dr. Bruce Crewe, my primary care provider at the Daytona Beach (FL) VA Outpatient Clinic, had on more than one occasion asked if I wanted to join the MOVE![®] Program. I finally—and reluctantly—agreed to attend MOVE![®] in March 2012. At that time, I weighed 237 pounds and had also just increased my blood pressure medication again.



During the first class, MOVE![®] dietitian Pat Leapley started by teaching us the specifics of healthy eating. When she told us that 1,800 calories was a reasonable daily intake goal, it wasn't hard to see that a 700-calorie, 8-ounce steak burger and bun, with cheese and mayo, plus a 500-calorie side of fries was *not* an appropriate lunch. In fact, it was just about the maximum daily allowance of calories! We were also shown images to help us visualize the concepts of calorie and portion control. We saw what a 190-calorie, 3-ounce piece of broiled chicken looked like, as well as what a 5-pound chunk of human body fat looked like—much larger than you'd expect.

For 10 weeks, our wonderful group leaders, nurses Becky Shelley and Terry Janiola, entertained, informed, and encouraged us. They really clicked together—going to their class for the ten weekly sessions was fun and rewarding. They encouraged us to get some exercise—then get some *more* exercise—and that's what it took to start losing weight. Just reading a book or wishing that I was thinner clearly wouldn't have worked.

Eight months after starting MOVE![®], I weigh 197 pounds. That's just about the same as when I completed the 10-week course, so it feels great to be able to maintain a lower weight for the first time in decades. It's also a huge benefit to know that I can continue to attend the monthly follow-up MOVE![®] classes. Hearing other Veterans' stories about their successes—lower weight, less medications, and improved health— has been inspiring, as has seeing Pat, Becky, and Terry again.



People look at me differently now, and I have more pride in myself. For exercise, I play short rounds of golf three times a week. But I don't ride, I walk. And I carry my Sunday golf bag for over an hour each time I play to get some aerobic exercise. Yeah, I sneak a treat at a fast food place maybe twice a week, but it's the 170-calorie ice cream cone, not the high-calorie burger meal I used to get. Now, I'm happy to go right past the 'good' stuff to the 'great' stuff!

After seeing the benefits of MOVE!® firsthand, I really hope that all overweight Veterans say 'yes' to this program sooner rather than later in their treatment. MOVE!® gives them—and their primary care providers—the best, most timely shot at weight management and better health.”