

In It For Life:

MOVE![®] VETERAN CLIFFORD TUBBS DISCUSSES HIS “SHARED JOURNEY” TO BETTER HEALTH

Veteran Cliff Tubbs openly admits to having no interest in MOVE![®] when it was first suggested to him. “A surgery had left me discouraged, and I’d decided that losing weight was hopeless,” he says. “At that point, eating gave me pleasure and made me feel good.” But something his VA provider said finally struck a chord with him.



You Will Feel Better

“My doctor told me, ‘you *could* feel better...you *will* feel better if you join MOVE![®] and lose some weight’,” Cliff explains. “I didn’t give in right away, but instead went home and told her that I’d decide and let her know.” By the time he’d driven home, Cliff had concluded that MOVE![®] was a good thing. He knew that the program could provide him the encouragement and knowledge he needed to manage his weight and become healthier.

Before committing to MOVE![®], however, he tried dieting for 2 weeks on his own to see if he could do it. “I lost about 10 pounds,” Cliff says. “Then I gave VA a call and began MOVE![®] at the Albany Stratton (NY) VAMC in June of 2011.”

Shared Journey

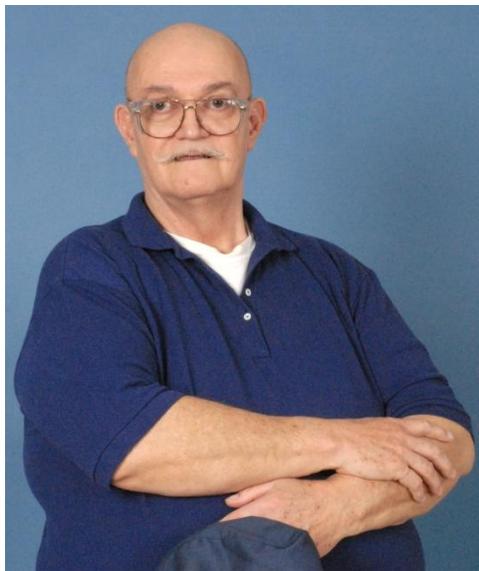
“Almost instantly, I began to feel better,” says Cliff. “My medical condition improved, my insulin was cut in half, and my blood pressure came down.” He still struggles a little with focusing more on what he *needs to lose* rather than what he’s *already lost*, but he’s got great support from close friends and his medical team.

Because they serve as a reminder for him to focus on his goals, MOVE![®] groups have been particularly beneficial to Cliff, even when he feels that he isn’t as fully engaged. “The groups help affirm that I’m on a healthy path, even if I get stalled at times,” he says. “MOVE![®] groups are a ‘shared journey’—just knowing that others are trying to reach

their own goals really helps me.” In fact, now that Cliff has experienced the benefits of MOVE!®, he doesn’t understand why more people aren’t in it. “I’d really like to see more Veterans get involved in the program,” he says.

Awareness

Cliff says that the biggest thing he’s gained from MOVE!® was an awareness of his diet, and he now uses that knowledge as a guide in the grocery store. “I’m better able to plan for healthy eating and keep the refrigerator from accumulating food,” he explains. “It feels good to be in control of the refrigerator and not feel guilty about having extra food, or feel that I need to eat food so it won’t go to waste.”



Now Cliff buys what he needs, knows what he will eat, and doesn’t see the refrigerator as an overflowing temptation. “I realized that eating—which I thought was making me feel better—was actually what was making me feel worse,” he says, “and I just got sick of feeling sorry for myself!”

Continued Work

Cliff adds vegetables and fruits to his meals every day and is not only feeling better, but living better. “I’ve lost 59 pounds over the past year, and I’m a great example of how you can greatly improve your health without reaching an ideal body,” he says.

“I’ve realized that I’m in this for life, and that I have to continue to work towards losing weight, be diligent, and stay committed to health. Then I can lose more weight and see even more health benefits!”