

## 16 Months of Slimming World.

Can not believe it's been 16 months since walking through the doors of Slimming World back in December 2008. 16 months and one wonderful journey.

I'm writing this just as March has drawn to a close and just in those first 3 months of 2010 I have lost 19.5lbs, out of my total 12stone12.5lb total loss to date. Been an interesting last few months though. Had a few gains on the scales, but they can nearly always be attributed to something and anyhow these little blips just helps to keep me focused. Had a few good losses too but overall – averaging out quite nicely, and I think that is the key – looking at everything accumulatively rather than on a week by week basis. If I had taken any of the small gains to heart – I could have so easily undone a large chunk of the work I've already achieved. But when I look over three, or four weeks and still see I'm averaging 2lb a week, regardless of the little blips on the way, then everything is OK and everything is manageable.

Back in January/February 2009 I set myself my “sit back and re-assess” target – the weight I thought I wanted to be, and which I wanted to get to by the end of March 2010. Although at times I thought I wasn't going to make it – I proved myself wrong. I got there by middle of March and have already “sat back and re-assessed” and decided to carry on going. Have given myself two “targets” to work towards, but no time scales. With the 12stone12.5lb I've lost to date, the first one of those is now 13lbs away. The second, just to round things up is the next half stone after that, which is 17lbs. I say no time scales – but secretly hoping to get that first one by the end of May – but no pressure.

The changes though continue to astound me. The confidence continues to grow and my energy levels are still increasing. I'm walking more and more – averaging up to 15 miles over a weekend and it's wonderful just to be able to get out there and see the countryside – especially now that spring is upon us. I'm even going out from time to time with an informal walking group. I started swimming again after so long and loving the time I get to spend in the pool – although sometimes limited due to some recent recurring medical problems, which are also preventing me from getting into the gym that I signed up for at the same time – but I'm ready and raring to go once those problems are resolved. And I've finally got the bike I brought last August out of the shed again and looking forward to using that a lot more.

With the renewed energy has come a sense of actually being alive. Though not sure my cleaning bill appreciated my recent attempt to prove that, not after slipping over clambering up a muddy bank – just because it was there and I felt like a short cut. I got to the top though, covered in mud, and where by I would have died in shame and absolutely out of breath before the weight loss, I just stood there, smiled and laughed, having never felt so good in a long time.

My clothes bill has shot up. Having been a 54inch waist before Slimming World, I have recently had to start buying 36inch waists. I've never brought a 36inch waist trouser in my entire adult life. In fact – I don't think I've ever been as light as this in my adult life – I probably last weighed the weight I do (and wore a 36inch waist trouser) when I was 14 or 15 years old – and I've just turned 36. But the sheer joy of now being able to go and buy from any shop on the high street is just unbelievable

and no shame anymore of working for a fashion retailer and not being able to fit into our own clothing ranges.

I have also been afforded, what in my eyes, is a great honour. A week or so ago, I received an invite to the Slimming World “Greatest Loser 2010” award ceremony in London at the end of April as one of the top 10 “Greatest Losers” in the country. Even now I start to tear up even thinking about that. I was always aware that the loss was – shall I say – large. But never really gave the size of the loss much consideration – the loss was more a way of keeping “score” of how well I was doing then a major concern – so long as the total loss was going up – I was happy. The day after receiving the invite – something suddenly dawned on me and I literally had to go lay down as the sheer size of my loss struck home for the first time. It is, in anyone’s eyes, a fantastic weight loss. When I tell others what I’ve lost they always seem to be blown away, but now when I sit back and think about it – I’m even blown away by it myself and find it unbelievable to have gotten so far in this journey.

I’d never have made it this far along a weight-loss journey without Slimming World, and food optimising. More so, without the wonderful support of everyone I know, family, friends, and other members and of course Alison – my consultant. Without Alison – and the members of her group’s, my friends and my family support – I’d have buckled a long time ago.

That’s the first quarter of 2010 done. A new target to achieve in the next quarter, an awards ceremony too. The journey just keeps on getting better and I can’t wait to see where it leads me next.