

8 Months of Food Optimising...

Or A Tale of Two Weddings...

8 short months ago (it seems like only yesterday sometimes) – I walked into the changing room at a tennis club near work and signed onto Slimming World.

A move, prompted after seeing a particularly horrible set of pictures of me at the wedding of one of my brothers near the end of August 2008. Then my other brother asked me to be an usher at his wedding at the start of August 2009.



Food Optimising is now, practically a way of life for me. The defining moment in that process for me occurred at my second brother's wedding when I went out to look at the buffet and as much as I liked the food put out (pizza, potato wedges, chicken skewers), and after saying I'd have the day as flexible syns – I simply was not interested in any of it. Away from the weekend – I can walk through a supermarket and not be bothered by the ready meals and cakes, etc.. Chocolate is only ever a minor temptation and I've not even thought about ordering food in for a while.

Food optimising has lead in the 8 months since walking into the changing room, to me loosing 8 stone and 3lbs. I'd never have believed it possible myself – but I guess I'm proof that it can be done.

The list of what being 8stone (and then some) lighter to me just continues to grow. I'm now able to buy shirts from the high-street; I'm not that far off being able to buy trousers from the high-street to. I've dropped from a 52inch waist to wearing a 45inch suit trouser at my brothers wedding. Last years wedding, I wore a 64inch chest jacket. This wedding just gone – I had to buy a 50inch jacket – putting on the old jacket and pulling it out from my body by over a foot was a sign I needed a new suit. And I'm still shrinking.

I walk in and out of town every Saturday for my shopping, and walk to the local shops when I can rather than getting in the car. If I'm not working or have managed to leave work early on a Monday – I've been known to walk to weigh-in (3 and a bit miles each way), and have recently brought myself a bike to ride when I can, and at

weekends and hopefully to and from weigh-in each week. I can bend over and tie my laces. I can get into spaces I couldn't do before. Would I have had this energy 8 months ago? No. A walk to the end of the road would have me out of breath.

Fresh food rules in my house now. I've become known in my local greengrocers. 8 months ago – I'd have had to ask for directions to the grocery stores. I have also started enjoying vegetables I'd never have even tried 8 months ago and sometimes have never tried before. Beats ordering in a Chinese or a kebab three or four times a week. With a little thought, pre-planning and preparation – I've not even had need to go to a take-away – my old excuse of "it's too late to cook" or "it's too much hassle" have gone out of the window – with planning and preparation – I can cook a meal from fresh in 20minutes. It took 25/30minutes for a take-away to be delivered.

I go for a brisk cross-country walk or get on the bike, and I have to ask myself "Why did I ever stop this?" Of course – carrying around a spare person certainly never helped.

Slimming World and Food Optimising has changed my life – there can be no doubt about that. There is a chance even that it has possibly helped save my life too. I was dangerously close to becoming another obesity statistic. It's given me such a new lease of life that I only desire for it to continue.

Thanks to Food Optimising, I could go to a long weekend of wedding celebrations – 2 BBQ's, a wedding breakfast, a buffet, and two cooked breakfasts – and thanks again to planning, the Extra Easy plan, and flexible syns – I went to my next weigh in and fully expecting a gain – I was shocked and surprise to have a 2.5lb loss.

Best thing about being 8stone less – people don't recognise me... (including myself at times and for a moment at the church for the wedding – my own mother).



My Slimming World journey is still continuing. I have at least another 4stone5lb to loose before I can sit back and assess what I want to have as a target. Yes, at times it's been hard work, but it's not all down to me. It wouldn't be possible if I didn't

have the support of my group behind me – both at Lucy’s original group in Shirley (nr Solihull) or Alison’s group in Warwick that I’ve since moved to. It’s the groups that really do help make this an easier journey.