



I Beat Food Addiction and Lost 240 Pounds on a Plant-Based Diet

By Heather Goodwin
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My relationship with food has never been easy. My first diet was when I was 11 years old. In my teens, my weight in pounds was in the 100s. In my 20s, it was in the 200s. In my 30s, it was in the 300s. And in my 40s, it was in the 400s, which is when I reached my heaviest weight of 436 pounds.

I stand at 5 feet 2 inches, but there was a time when I was wider around than I was tall. I'm 62 inches tall and back then I measured 90 inches around my hips and belly.

As a child, my parents were completely baffled by my weight. Unaware of how to help me, they put me on a strict diet, but all this did was isolate me more. They made a mistake that a lot of parents do: They singled out the child as opposed to committing to a healthier lifestyle together as a family.

When I reached 436 pounds in my 40s, I vowed to lose the weight and, this time, to keep it off. I had lost over 100 pounds three different times and had taken off more than 40 pounds at least 20 times, but whenever a crisis occurred, the stress would drive me back to comfort foods. That's when I decided to try a whole-food, plant-based diet. And it worked.

I've now lost over 240 pounds. Whereas I used to be in constant pain in my back and joints, even while sleeping, I now sleep easily and walk pain-free. My sleep apnea, migraines, and need for medication have disappeared. I attribute my success to focusing on the behavior I need to maintain to achieve my goals rather than the outcomes.

The truth is these are the behaviors I need to do for the rest of my life so this weight stays off. I believe I have a brain that's especially sensitive to sugars and simple carbohydrates. Now I avoid those things. I eat very simply. I avoid sugar, oil, flour, and salt. I eat a strictly plant-based diet. No meat, dairy, or eggs.

When I see someone struggling with obesity, I have nothing but empathy for them. We judge fat people so much and it's an anguished life. But I want others to know it's possible to break out of the vicious cycle.

My Tips & Tricks for Success

- I keep healthy foods in my pantry and close at hand.
- I prepare food ahead of time and often plan my meals.
- I eat simply.
- I don't eat at restaurants often, which helps keeps me on track and also saves money.
- If I'm feeling vulnerable, I don't feel the need to attend every social engagement or party.
- If I slip up, I don't beat myself up. I get back on track.
- The longer I'm on my plant-based path, the more bulletproof I feel. So stick with it!