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Anita Finkelstein



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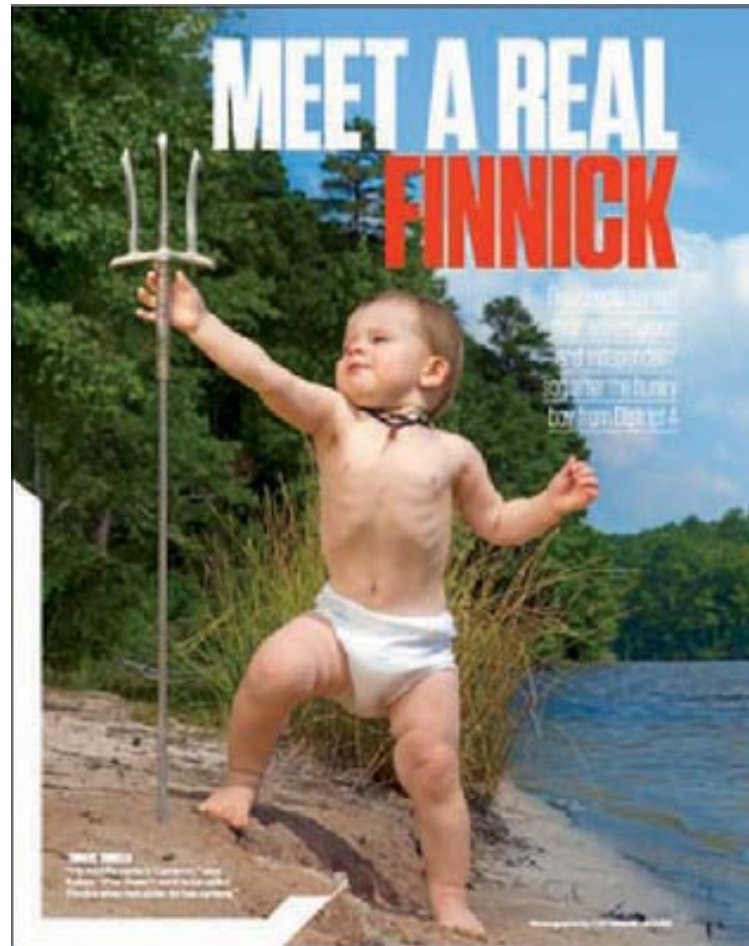


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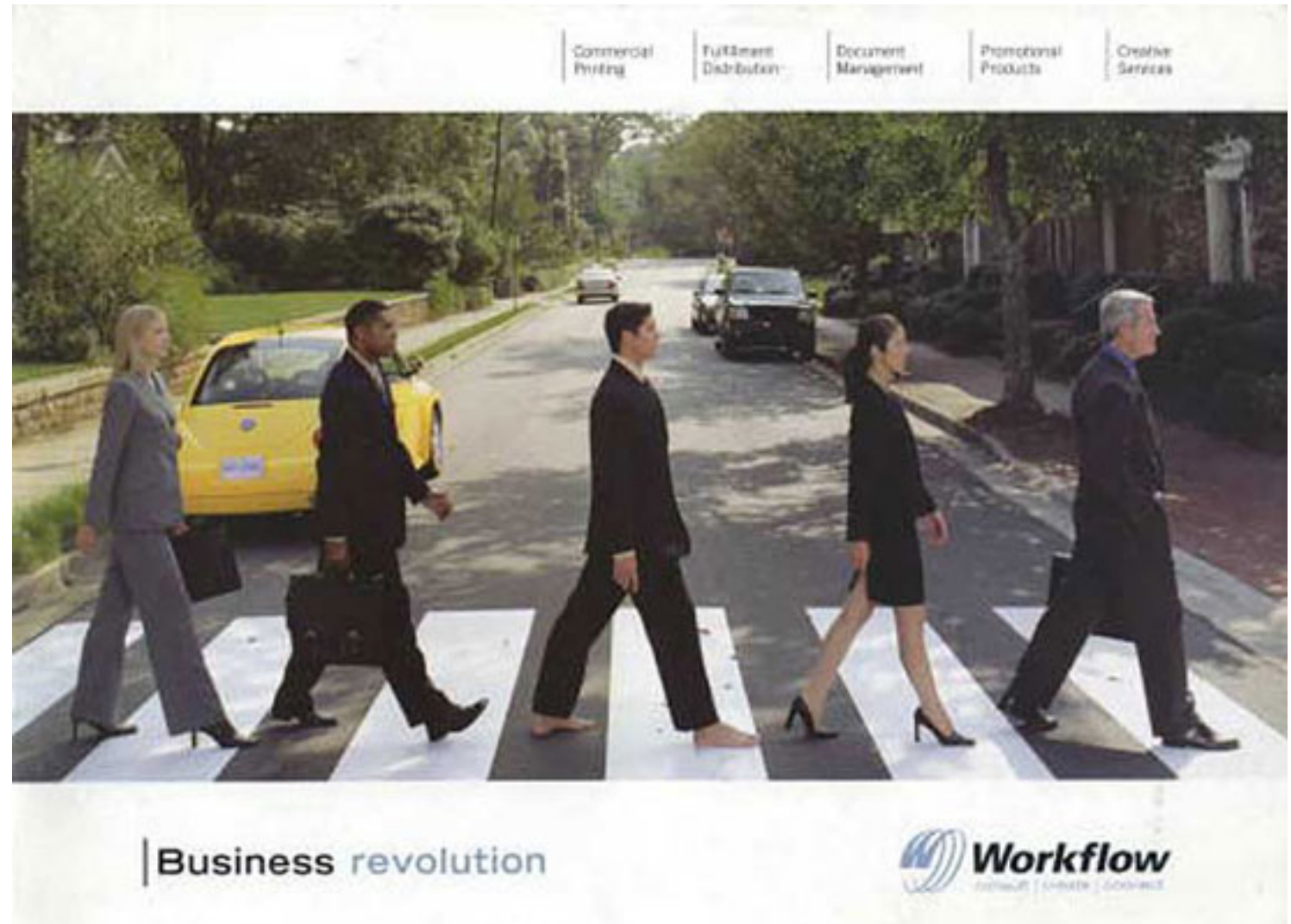


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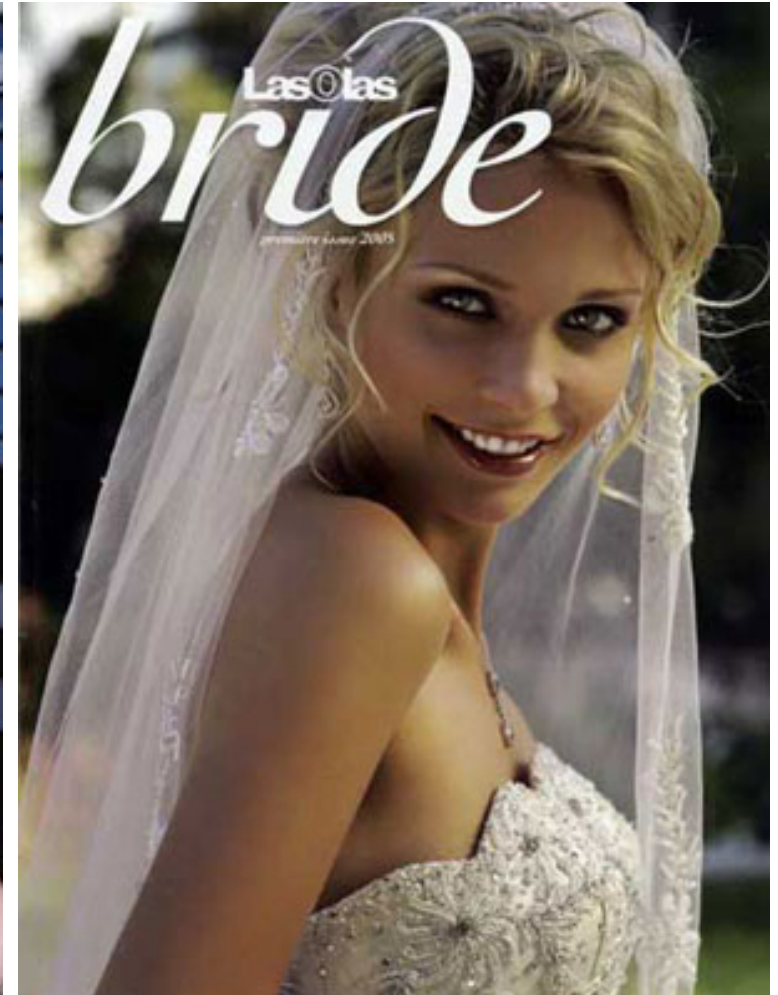


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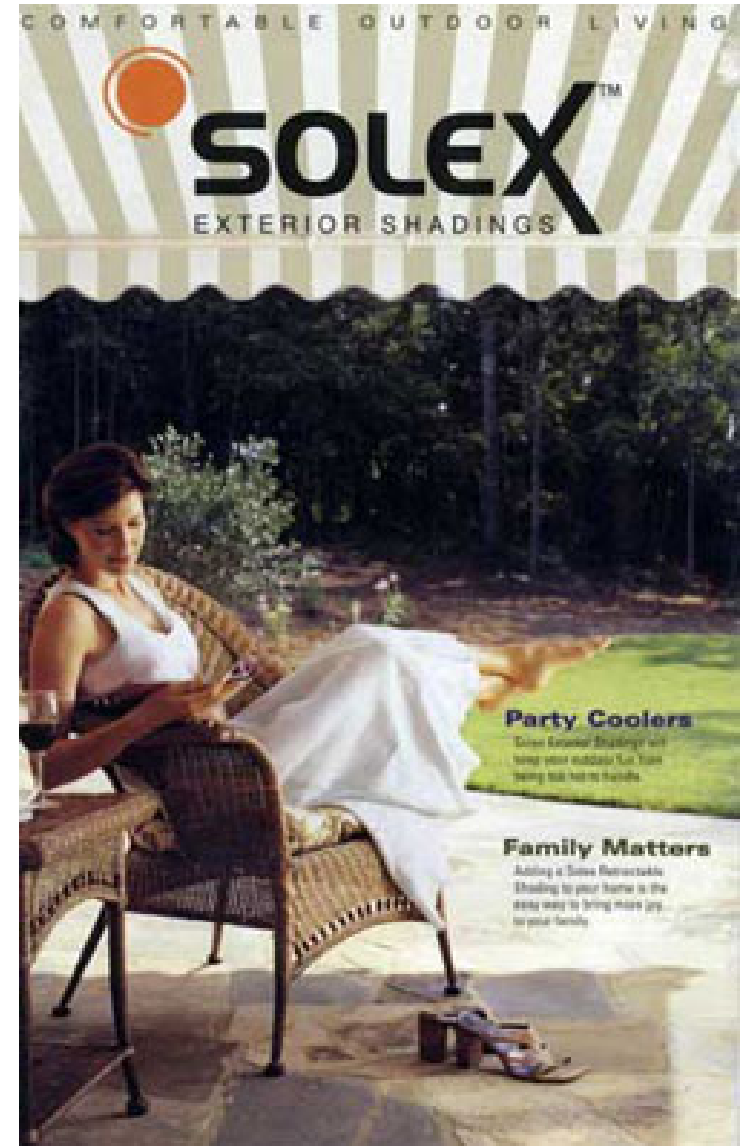


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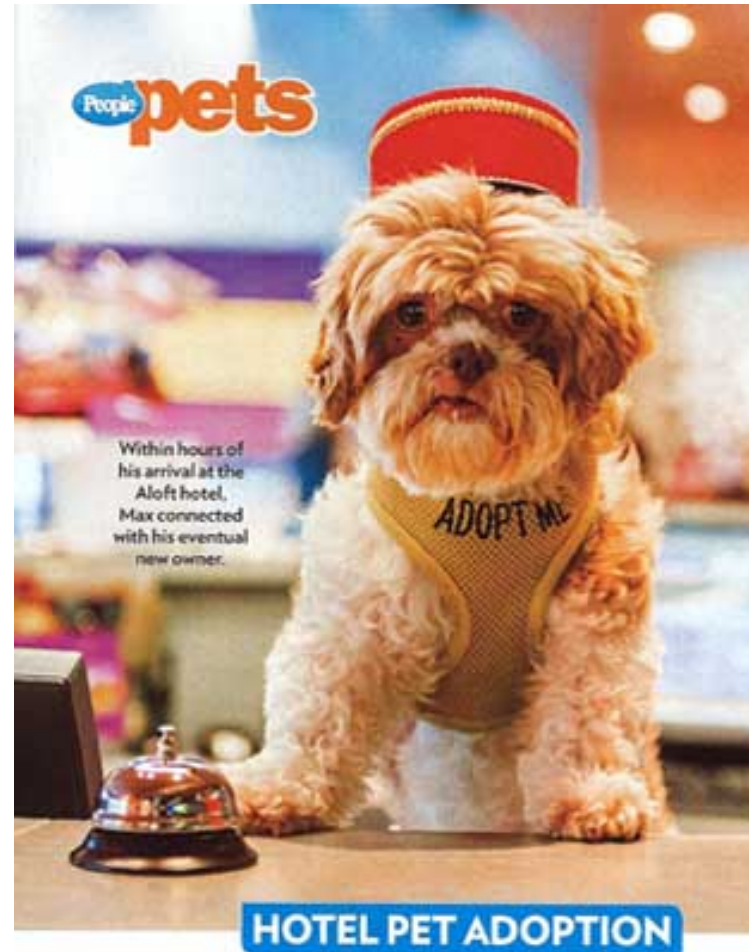


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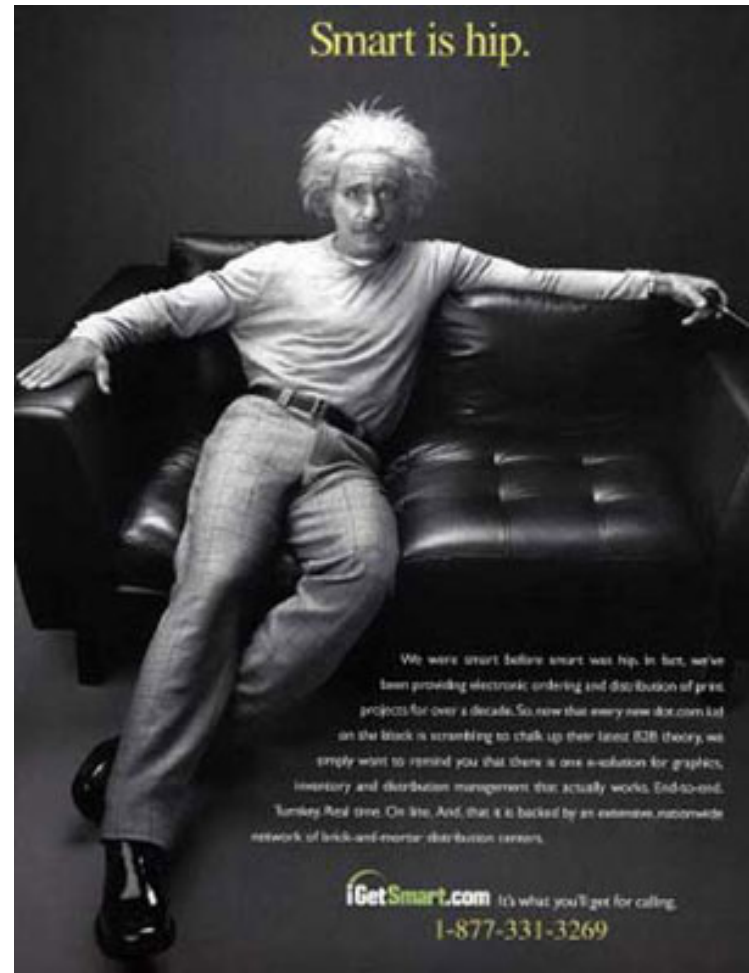


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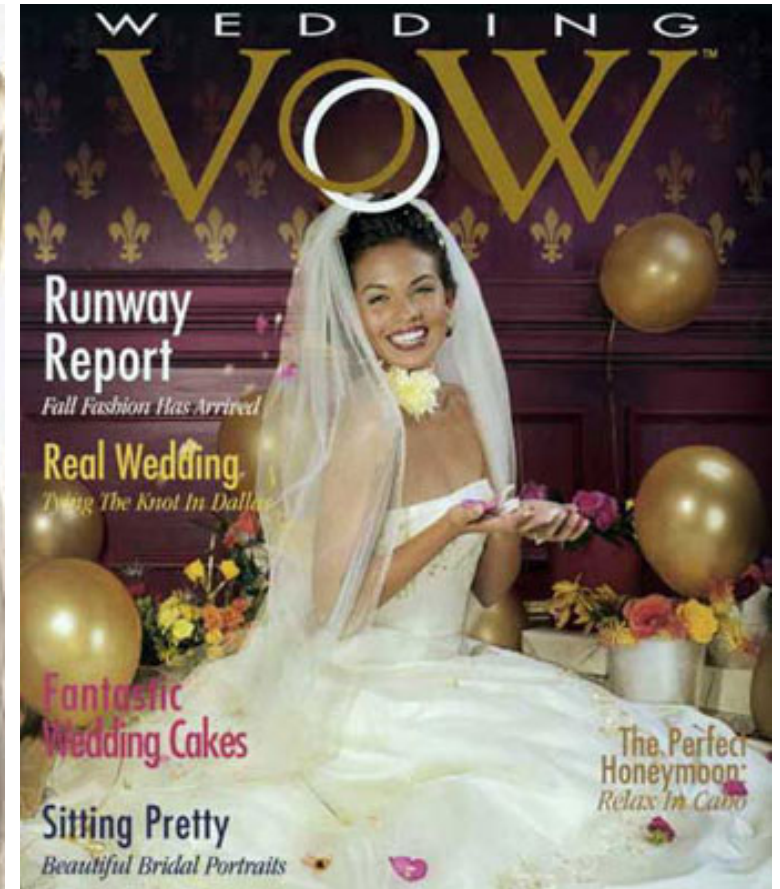


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Entrepreneur
Sara Blakely

The House that Spanx Built

FROM A LONE OFFICE TO A MARKET-BLASTING THE SHAPING OF QUEEN AND KING CREATES A PERK INTO THE NEW ATLANTA ONE

By MICHELLE TAUBER
 Photographs by CHRISTOPHER STURMAN

There's no secret handshake, but joining the self-made billionaire's club does come with its own unofficial welcoming committee. A few weeks after Spanx founder Sara Blakely revealed her billionaire status on the cover of *Forbes* magazine in March, she got a call: Bill Gates wanted to meet with her. Over dinner in Miami, "I said, 'Bill, I brought

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN KEDDICH; HAIR: ANDY MAJORS; MAKEUP: ALISSON LACOUR FOR ZENOBIA AGENCY; STYLING: ANITA FINKELSTEIN FOR ZENOBIA AGENCY

finding me

KYLEE CUCINELLA
 AGE 34 HEIGHT 5'6"
 LOST 66 LB*

Kylee lost track of herself in a storm of life catastrophes—but when the skies cleared, she realized it was time to take care of number one.

BY KATERINA GKIONIS

WHAT WERE SOME OF THE TRIALS YOU FACED?
 Hurricane Katrina, two moves, a job loss, my mom being diagnosed with lung cancer, my niece developing a life-threatening liver condition. For two years, I spent my days in the car going to work and then driving to the hospital, eating fast food for every meal.

WHEN DID YOU START FOCUSING ON YOURSELF?
 My niece and my mom showed signs of improvement, so I looked at myself. When I saw photos from the holidays, I searched for the first Weight Watchers meeting I could find after the New Year and I joined.

WHAT WAS STEP ONE?
 I looked at what I usually ate on a regular day and tracked it. The grand total: 118 points! I started to pre-track: Every night, I track everything that I'm going to eat the next day, and I stick to it.

HOW HAS YOUR FAMILY DYNAMIC CHANGED?
 When my husband and I met at age 15, we were in good shape—and now we're back! We go to the gym together six times a week, and we bring our kids, too. They go on the treadmill and we do weights. I'm fitter than I was a month ago, and the month before that, and our family bond is stronger than ever.

GET MORE
 Check out a video of Kylee telling her story at weightwatchers.com/us/kylee.

I'm so excited to share my story! I want everyone to feel the way I feel right now. I want to inspire others.

TAKE KYLEE'S ADVICE:

- **We consistent.** I started to eat at the same time every day. It felt like I was training a baby, but that allowed me to recognize my hunger signals. Now I know when I'm hungry and when I'm not.
- **Cook for now.** I never have leftovers. If I have extra food in the pot, I'll end up eating it all, so we cook only what we're going to eat that night, and we keep fruit and vegetables in the house for snacks.
- **Find the time.** Everyone is busy, but if you have time to scroll aimlessly through Facebook, you have time to track your food.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOHN KEDDICH; HAIR: ANDY MAJORS; MAKEUP: ALISSON LACOUR FOR ZENOBIA AGENCY; STYLING: ANITA FINKELSTEIN FOR ZENOBIA AGENCY

*People following the Weight Watchers plan can expect to lose 1–2 lbs/wk.

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heart & soul
 success secrets



RENÉ FALGOUT
 AGE 31 HEIGHT 5'6"
 LOST 92 LB*

seeing clearly

René put an end to closet eating and discovered that life from a healthy perspective is so much richer.
 AS TOLD TO KATERINA KIONIS

Before

GET MORE
 Hear René tell her story in her own words at weightwatchers.com/us/ren.

“NEVER TRUST A SKINNY CHEF.” That’s the first piece of advice I got from my instructors at culinary school. The next bit: “Fat equals flavor.” When I started there after I graduated high school, food quickly became my classwork and my homework. We’d cook a seven-course meal during class, and then sit down and eat it—with the appropriate wine pairings, of course.

After culinary school, I turned to recipe development. I was working on a cookbook about Louisiana cuisine, which can be very decadent. As part of the process, I had to taste all of the recipes—gumbo, racks of ribs, potato salad. But while I was cooking rich foods, my life didn’t feel very rich. My weight had climbed to an all-time high. I wasn’t expe-

riencing life: I wouldn’t allow myself to have fun. I’d shy away from events, because I was physically uncomfortable. I was depressed. I was bored, and I started closet eating for comfort. I always felt that everyone in my life was watching what I was eating, so I’d eat whatever I wanted when no one was around. I’d go to the grocery store to pick up ingredients for a delicious meal for my husband—but then I’d also buy cookies, eat them all in the car, and throw away the box before I entered the house so that my husband wouldn’t see what I’d done. It was a rough point in my life, and I didn’t know how to stop it.

Meanwhile, my co-worker Michelle had joined Weight Watchers and one day she asked if I wanted to go with her. I hadn’t been yearning

THREE WAYS THAT I’VE GONE BEYOND THE SCALE

“Hello, beach!” I haven’t waited until I weigh a certain number to do things. This past summer, I wore a two-piece to the beach with pride.

“The gym is my happy place.” Used to be so intimidated going to the gym, thinking that all eyes were on me. Now I realize that members are in their own zone. I head to the weights section with confidence.

“I found a new path.” I feel like I’ve discovered my calling: I want to merge my love for food and nutrition. I want to show people how tasty and healthy life can be.

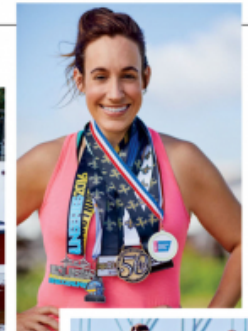
58

*People following the Weight Watchers plan can expect to lose 1–2 lbs./wk. RENÉ LOST WEIGHT ON A PRIOR WEIGHT WATCHERS PROGRAM AND SMARTPOINTS.

heart & soul
 success secrets

to go to WW: to be honest, I joined because of peer pressure! I didn’t think the Program could work for me. I had been up and down the scale for so many years that I didn’t think anything could stick. But when Michelle said, “Why don’t we just try Weight Watchers?” I jumped right in. It was on a whim that I walked into that meeting room in 2010, and since then, I haven’t turned back.

I joined in the summer, and I took advantage of the season by including all the different fruits and vegetables into my meals—all fresh, not fried. Soon I realized that “fresh equals flavor,” too. I became creative: I learned to make a gumbo I could eat on-plan by lightening up the base of the dish, the roux. How I do it: Instead of adding oil to the flour, I brown the flour in the oven. Then I swap in a small amount of olive oil for cooking the vegetables, then add the dry roux (browned flour) and fat-free broth to keep it full-flavor but not full-fat. I also eat yummy chicken sausages instead of pork, and I take advantage of local seafood. My grandfather loves to do crab boils, and the shrimp, crab, crawfish, and olena that are inside the pot are all so delicious.



LEAN ON ME

I had been on a weight-loss roller coaster for so long that I didn’t think anything could work for me. But my friend Michelle really helped me stick with the Program. When I didn’t feel like going to a meeting I was having a bad week, she’d push me to go. Now we work out together, too, and if she doesn’t want to go to the gym one day, I motivate her to get moving. We like to run together, we’re really competitive, and we each do some fun talking, and that makes it fun. When you call all that, it’s amazing to have someone there to say, “Let that roll off your shoulders—you can do this.” I feel blessed to have a person who does that for me.



“I’m a turtle—I lose slow and steady—but six years later, I’m still moving forward!”

Of course, I have moments when I head to the pantry aimlessly, but now I first ask myself a few questions: What am I craving? Am I craving peace? Am I craving love? And then I close the cabinet door. I’ve realized that a box of cookies won’t give me a hug. This revelation didn’t happen right away. Over the past couple of years, I started to reflect on myself. I realized that no one is watching what I put in my mouth—it only affects me and there’s no reason to eat in private like that. And the SmartPoints plan has made a huge difference in the food choices I make. I don’t have the desire to eat what I’d want in the past. I have this clarity that I’ve never had before, and I can see a bright future ahead. I’m a fit and healthy chef now—and my friends and family can trust me to help them reach their own goals, in Cajun country and beyond.



NO MORE BARRIERS

When I discovered my “why” for this journey, I was able to find success. I realized that I didn’t want to be limited anymore. Before my weight loss, when I’d go to weddings, I’d never dance. I’d sit in the corner with my arms folded, worried that someone was going to ask me to dance. I didn’t want to be in an awkward situation so I hoped no one would notice there. Now, I want to get on the dance floor—I want to be a wedding co-star! I never realized how much fun dancing was. I barely danced at my own wedding; I was 27 years old when I really danced for the first time. Why didn’t I allow myself before? My weight held me back mentally and physically in so many ways, and now it doesn’t. I’m realizing my capabilities. I’m not living on the side lines of my life, watching everyone else have fun. I’m the one enjoying myself now—and it feels amazing.

BE YOUR OWN KIND OF BEAUTIFUL

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lost and found

I lost 30 lb*
I FOUND
 my future.

I SAY TO MYSELF,
 "My best days are
 ahead of me, not
 behind me."

I'M GIVING MYSELF
 A FIGHTING
 CHANGE TO LIVE
 A LONG LIFE.

Zumba class,
 my kettlebell,
 and my bike
 all help me
 RELIEVE STRESS.

I found the root
 cause of my
 emotional eating—
 my unstable
 childhood—and I
 made peace with it.

It's not JUST beignets
 and jambalaya in
 Louisiana—we have
 fresh seafood, too!

**BRANDY
 EVANS,
 39, 5'8"**

When my size 14 pants
 started cutting into my
 skin, I decided to join the
 Program. It was December
 30, 2014. The next
 night, I went to a New
 Year's Eve party. I live
 in Louisiana, so I know
 there'd be a classic Cajun
 spread—pralines, gumbo,
 and peach cobbler. But
 I ate before I went be-
 cause I didn't want those
 foods anyway. I was
 super excited to make a
 change that would last
 forever. And I did it!

AS TOLD TO KATERINA GIKONIS

**GET
 MORE**

weightwatchers.com/brandy

People following the Weight Watchers
 plan can expect to lose 1-2 lbs./wk.
 BRANDY LOST WEIGHT ON A PRIOR WEIGHT WATCHERS
 PROGRAM AND SMARTPOINTS.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JERRY VERNON; HAIR: ANDY MARSH; MAKEUP: ALLEEN LACOUR FOR JENNERA AGENCY; STYLING: ANITA FINKELSTEIN FOR JENNERA AGENCY.

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