

Updated Progress Report for Danita

Because of my history with every diet plan from Weight Watchers to Nutri System, I could never imagine myself losing 50 lbs. I've told you before that the most I have ever lost is 40 lbs and as soon as I went back to eating regular food I gained that and 100 friends back.

But, after a little commitment to changing my eating habits and working out consistently (and TONS of support from some magical princesses at Fitness Lady) I sailed past that mark. Then I began working with you and dreamed about getting to the 100 lb mark. When we achieved the 100 lb weight loss I almost felt like I was done. That was as good as it was going to get. I had several weeks of plateau. I was frustrated, but I still wanted to achieve more and for the first time I knew that not only could I, but that I had someone on this trip with me that was going to help me. Now here we are at 117 lbs. Over halfway to my goal weight! I guess one of the biggest things that I have learned is that getting healthy isn't something that has an end date. No matter how fit I am, there are always new things to learn, new muscles to work and new heights to reach. Every pound that comes off my body makes me feel so much better. Not just lighter, but stronger, more agile, more balanced, and even younger. I've also learned that strength training is way more than just working muscles. This experience for me has also been about learning to deal with emotions instead of suppressing them. This time has been about learning that sometimes my head isn't right and I need to listen to my body and my heart. I can not let fear rule my life. I have also opened up to people. For the last 10 years I have slowly been eliminating people from my life. My circle of friends has gotten

smaller and smaller because I was so scared. I built a wall around me and was more careful than the CIA about who I let get close to me. My weight was my first line of defense. No one could be my friend unless they were willing to look past it and sometimes I still would try to make it an issue. I was constantly scared that people were looking at me and judging me. So, I hid away. I was so lonely and sometimes I still struggle with it. When you hide for a long time it becomes hard to relate to people. As the weight has come off, I have found myself more willing to go to new places and more willing to meet new people. I also think I am more positive now. It is a lot easier to be positive when you have hope. I still have a hard time letting people in, but I enjoy the world now. So, will we see 250 by Christmas? Absolutely. Hopefully, we will see it way before then.

There have been changes in my life, setbacks, and other things that have tried their best to get me off track. I think there is a poem by Robert Frost that talks about two roads in a wood and taking the one less traveled by. In my case the story doesn't end with that first decision to take the road less traveled by. I have to continually make choices to stay on that road no matter how difficult the terrain or how far it is between rest stops. So many things try to take me off my chosen path.

The first thing was that I lost my job in August. I was so proud of myself. I picked myself up, dusted off my shoulders and charged forward. Then, I started a new job at the beginning of October. For some reason the good thing was harder to adjust to! Of course there are the things that every working woman has to deal with. What do I take for lunch? How do I cook and make good food choices when I am away from home so much? These things were not a big challenge for me. I have learned so many things from you, Audra, Shelley, and from all of the wonderful seminars at Fitness Lady. So I had these two things in the bag. My challenges were my body and finding time to get in my 3 workouts with you and 300 minutes of cardio. So, why was I having a hard time? My body went nuts. I was nervous and my stomach killed my for the first two weeks. My weight started to go up on the scales even though I was eating like a champ and still exercising. Of course, maybe I didn't mention that I wasn't getting in the 300 minutes a week you told me to get in, but I was still working out. I wasn't sitting home and eating bon bons for goodness sake! But I was sitting at a desk for at least 8 hours a day and I was not nearly as active as I had been for the last 9 months. Add that to the fact that I was not following your instructions on cardio and you now have the reason the scales were not being my friend. Then I also realized that I was looking at my time situation in the wrong way. I kept thinking that I had to "find time" for my cardio. Like suddenly the week had fewer hours in it. No, I just need to make it a priority instead of something I am doing after everything else. No one forced me to start this weight loss journey. This is what I want. If that is true, then my priorities will reflect that. At the end of the day, the road I have chosen has made all the difference. I have had an amazing time losing 117 lbs and dropping 6 sizes. I love it when I see people that I haven't seen in a while and they don't recognize me. I love it when my best friend that has known me since 6th grade says "NeNe, I have never seen you look so small! You're upper body is tiny and you're butt is disappearing!". Nothing can compare to how great these things have felt. I also want people to know that weight loss isn't just made up of moments like that. There are also struggles, tears, frustration, and even times when you get off track. But, you can do it. Surround yourself with the right people (aka Brianna Larson and all my peeps at Fitness Lady) and remember why you chose that path in the first place.