

The Truth Shall Set You Free
by Mike DeCinti

I've often use the television program "The Biggest Loser" as a topic for my articles, and the last week's episode sparked another idea for this week's column. In a nutshell, "The Biggest Loser" on NBC is a reality show where obese men and women compete against each other to loose the most weight. Now since it's a reality show you have to see past the silly challenges, strategies and alliances to see the true importance of the show. The contestants are average people who sadly let their weight (and health) get out of control. And because of their time on the show they learn how to eat right and exercise and they get control over their lives. But most importantly the show not only teaches viewers at home how to do it themselves, but teaches everyone that they have what it takes inside of them to accomplish these goals. Too often we do one of two things. We either don't believe in ourselves enough to think we can do it, or we lie to ourselves and believe we don't need to do it.

I'm a strong advocate that no matter what it is you put your mind to, you can accomplish it. I know that can come off sounding like a greeting card or some over-rated motivational speaker, but I truly do believe that. If you can decide to do something and commit the effort, there is nothing you can't accomplish. However if you constantly lie to yourself and believe everything is fine, not only will you fail in reaching your goals but chances are you'll never even try.

Kristin began the show at 360 pounds, and after 15 weeks, until she was eliminated, she had lost 116 pounds, becoming the first woman to lose 100 pounds while on the "Biggest Loser" campus. And as it often happens when these eliminated players go back home they are welcomed back as inspirations to their communities, and Kristen was no different. She was invited to speak to a group of women, all of who are in similar situations as Kristen was, to try and motivate them to follow in her footsteps, and that's when she said the one thing that caught my attention. She said that if you had asked her at 360 pounds if she was healthy and active she would have said "yes." Because she was not only content with lying to herself, she didn't want to deal with the fact that she never could have believed she had the strength inside of her to lose the weight and regain her life back.

Sadly, a lot of people tell that same lie, both to themselves and anyone who may want to help. But like Kristin, when they commit and put forth the effort, when they finally get healthy they will be able to look back at their lives and realize the lie they were living. Here are the results from a survey conducted by The National Association for Sport and Physical Education compared to actual numbers compiled by The Center For Disease Control.

- When surveyed the majority of adults (59%) feel that they are getting enough physical activity to maintain a healthy lifestyle. However more than 60 percent of American adults are overweight, while almost one out of three is obese.

- 41% of those who don't think they're getting enough physical activity primarily say it's because of their job and not having enough time. However on average, American adults watch 2.2 hours of television per day and are spending almost two hours a day using a personal computer for Internet browsing, chat rooms and games.
- And when asked about their health habits affecting their child's health only about three in ten parents (28%) say they worry that their children are or might become overweight or obese. When in fact in the last 20 years, the proportion of overweight children between ages 6 and 19 has tripled, to nearly one of every three kids.

The Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health states that Americans become increasingly less active with each year of age, and inactivity and poor diet cause at least 300,000 deaths a year in the United States. This is more than by infectious disease, firearms, motor vehicles and illicit drug use, combined! Physical activity or more directly inactivity is a risk factor for many diseases including stroke, heart disease, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, various cancers, diabetes, depression, obesity and more.

These facts don't lie. Should you?

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