

**HowELL ARE YOU**



# MY VEGAN & WEIGHT LOSS JOURNEY

## HoWELL ARE YOU

I had always considered myself to be on the heavy side, but I really wasn't – I had hips and butt and most of my peers didn't. So, I was always self-conscious about my size. I would always wear blazers or shirts that would cover my butt and hips. I had no idea what I was working with. I didn't know THEN, but I know now what I was working with! LOL! (Some of y'all will catch that next week)



During middle school and when it was time for P.E., I recall the first thing we would have to do was run a lap around the track – just one. I could never make it around the track without running out of my breath. I always attributed this to my “size”, but I now know that was not the issue. I actually didn't know how to breathe.

I was determined to be athletic, so I joined the track team, but I wasn't a runner – I threw the discus and the shotput. I wasn't that great at it, but it made me feel better about myself. I earned ‘bragging’ rights for being on the track team! I DID receive a ‘letter’ for being on the track team and that counted for something right? I still have that letter to this day! It's the letter ‘R’, which stands for Rosenwald – the name of my middle school, and it's marron and white. I know some of you don't have a clue as to what marron is. Google it! By the way, I'll NEVER get rid of my hard-earned letter! LOL!

Since I was determined to move my body, I took up bike riding which I really enjoyed, and it was no issue for me.

Let me just say that my average size had always been around a 14. I always carried my weight very well and having a very small waistline was my saving grace. Bey ain't got nuthin on me!

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Fast forward to my mid-twenties, I ended up marrying a guy who was a runner. I admired him for being able to run very long distances, but I never aspired to do so. He was nice and would walk with me.

Exercise and working out was never a priority for me because believe it or not, my mind was on lockdown about my middle school experience with running NOT being able to make it just ONE LAP around that doggone track.

But what I did recognize about myself is that I was able to walk long distances. I mean very long distances with no issues – let's just say between four and five miles.

Now when I got married, I was somewhere around a size 10 but within six months or so I had gained a considerable amount of weight and had crept back up to a size 14 again. I think I could even wear a 16.

I maintained that size until I went through a divorce and as a result ended up landing somewhere between a size 8-10. You couldn't tell me a thing. I looked great! But as you can see my weight was on a roller-coaster ride.

For several years I fluctuated between a size 10-12. I eventually ended up getting remarried. I was married for about two years which were probably two of the worst years EVER in my life. Oh, but that's a different subject for another time. By the time I left that guy, I was at a size 18 and moving swiftly to a size 20.

I moved from Florida to Pennsylvania in February of 1996. The altar workers at the church that I was attending undertook a 30-day

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fruit and vegetable fast and I decided to jump onboard. Remember, I was a size 18 at the time headed toward a 20. Within a few weeks, I started shedding pounds. By the time the fast was over, I was down to a size 14. This inspired me and I continued fasting on a regular basis. I'll say I did go a little overboard because I remember being able to briefly wear a size 4. My weight eventually stabilized, and I landed at a size 8 which I maintained for several years.

Fast forward again to my early forties and peri-menopause hit. By this time, I was exercising regularly, but my weight started creeping up again. The size 8's started fitting a little snugly, and try as I may, I couldn't get it under control. I landed at a size 12 and maintained that size until I got married again (yes, #3 – don't judge me) in my late forties. Wow, my head is spinning from all of the size fluctuations, and I know your head is probably spinning too! Lol!

*To be continued...*

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