

# Move It and Lose It

## The Journey Continues...

By Kelly Melang

## Why We Do It

Working with personal trainer April Hartsook, the members of our group of Challengers have hit their first milestone and completed their first challenge. To some it has not been just a journey of weight loss and inches, but a journey of self, reflection, atonement and the decision to become something different. Monica Swaim, one of our Challengers came to the Challenge on a whim.

"I never thought I'd go from 150 pounds and winning Ms. Surry County in 1982 to 261 pounds! I knew that my culprit was eating, I knew I was hiding behind eating – hiding from abuse in my childhood, and allowing myself to abuse my body as a result. I remember looking at myself in the mirror in my nursing scrubs and wondering how I arrived at this place, and then wondering what I was going to do about it," said Monica.

"That day I went to K&W Cafeteria for lunch, and picked up Forsyth Woman magazine. I saw the advertisement for Move It and Lose It, and thought about that face staring back at me in the mirror that morning, thought about all the pain I'd put my family through with my habits, and before I could think twice about it, I sent the email and enrolled myself into the program," Monica said. She was one of Forsyth Woman's first enrollees. Did she know what she was getting into? No. Did she want to make the change? Yes. "I had things in my past that I needed to confront, and after

confronting them, I knew the next step was to take control of my body. I needed someone to help me find my way with eating and exercising, someone to believe in me and help me find the courage to believe, too. I found that in the Move It and Lose It Challenge with April Hartsook," said Monica.

"The Challenge not only helped me with a plan to reclaim my life, but it also gave me an incredible support team – there's a group of 25 of us on each weekend day, and I've now got Tammy and Angie as my support crew and we've become friends.

Angie and I email or text each other every day providing support. We are there for each other, in the hard times and the good times," Monica added.

Is the Challenge the Silver Bullet for Monica? "No, I know there isn't a silver bullet, but I've got April. She makes each weekend a challenge, but she tells us we can do it with a smile. She tells us to push it because she really believes that we can do it. I was so excited that I did a

workout that really CHALLENGED me, and I did it. I knew then that I could do more."

"The best part is that with this group and within myself I've learned that I'm not perfect. That I've had things happen to me, that I've made mistakes along the way, but who hasn't? But I took the first step in confronting all this negativity in my life and making a positive step. I can even play with my grandchild and not be winded after 10 minutes," noted Monica.

Where does Monica see herself 5 years down the road? "I see myself back to 160 pounds. So far, I've lost 30 pounds AND 30 inches – we know it's more about the inches than the pounds, but I see myself healthy, and that's what the Challenge has brought to me. I want to get out there and share my story as a motivational speaker, to let others know if I can do it, they can do it, too."

*Want to see change? Signup for our Move It and Lose It Beginner Challenge starting July 16th on [www.forsyth-woman.com](http://www.forsyth-woman.com), or check out more info on pages 116-117 of this issue!*

