

My weight started to get out of control in college and in August 2006, at the start of my final year of graduate school, I weighed somewhere in the 400s. I became so sedentary that I could not raise my hands above my shoulders without extreme pain. At night, I slept upright in a chair or on the floor, propped up between the corners of the wall. I could not lay flat on my back, even while awake, because my airway immediately collapsed under my weight. Sleeping upright caused my legs and feet to swell, often to the point where I could not wear shoes. I rarely slept, and when I did it was never longer than 45 minutes. I spent most of my nights vomiting in the bathroom while asking myself how I would survive another day, and questioning if I even wanted to.

It was around that same time that I started suffering from time loss. It escalated quickly and within a year I found myself in real danger. I went to the doctor; he prescribed all the medications one would expect a “super morbidly obese” person to be prescribed, and he told me what I already knew – I was dying. I was 30 years old.

I spent the next 8 ½ years losing and re-gaining weight, often ending up right back where I started. And while my weight fluctuated, one thing remained constant – pain. Many people recognize how hard it is to lose weight, but far less understand how hard it is to be overweight, especially 200+ pounds overweight. It is mentally and physically exhausting, and the pain can be incapacitating. You spend each day just trying to make it to the next. That was my life before joining Farrell’s. I was alive, I was breathing, but I was not *living*.

Now, after joining Farrell’s and completing the 52-week challenge, I am a different person mentally and physically. I feel normal. I don’t stand out in a crowd. I can buy clothes anywhere. And for the first time in a long time, I am pain free.

It’s as if I was given another chance at life. A chance to go back to Jiu-jitsu. A chance to swim and ski and run and do all the things I used to love. A chance to be the same type of father for my young children now as I was in my early twenties with my older children. And most importantly, a chance to be happy.

Finally. *This is living.*

Jeremy E.

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