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Lori Stein - 2011 Summer Weight Loss Challenge Entry Form Responses

- 1.) What frustrates me most about health and fitness, is all of the conflicting advice and information. With so many diet plans and programs saying different things, how am I to know what really works? Am I supposed to eat every 2-3 hours, or not? If I do, then what if I go over my calories for the day? What is the correct "balance" of fat, carbs, and protein? I have been trying so hard to lose weight by keeping my daily caloric intake low, my carbs low, and exercising, yet I am not getting the results I want. It is so frustrating, not to mention discouraging, having this motivation to lose weight and get healthy, but not knowing how to do it correctly. I NEED help, and this is the opportunity of a lifetime. I know with the proper knowledge, guidance, and support, I can beat this struggle I've had with my weight since I was a teenager.
- 2.) At this point in my life, I am a stay at home mom to my two sons, Bradley (10) and Brandon (7). Our days start usually by 6, as my sons are early risers. After breakfasts, packing lunches and book bags etc., their bus comes at 8, then my day begins. I have my protein shake for breakfast everyday, then I talk to my sister and 3 year old niece on the computer, as they are stationed in Fort Hood TX while her husband is in Afghanistan. After I talk to my sister, I head downstairs to workout. My current routine has been doing Step Reebok The Video on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, then Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday, doing cardio workouts recorded from FitTV. I feel like I am obviously not doing something right, as I have only lost 10 pounds in 6 weeks, and it is getting discouraging. A typical lunch after my workout consists of 2-3 ounces of meat (either turkey or ham), ½ cup of 1% cottage cheese, some fresh fruit, and a pickle. Throughout the rest of the afternoon I do laundry, or other house hold chores. I also enjoy sewing sometimes until the boys get home from school. Then we do homework, and practice instruments. Dinner could be chicken, pork or beef, with mashed potatoes, and a veggie, or rice and pork and beans with a veggie. On pasta nights, I'll eat a bowl of Special K, red berries, or some other low calorie option, like an egg white omelet or nutrigrain waffles. Following dinner, the kids get ready for bed, we have family reading time, and then it's lights off for them at 8pm. Once the kids are in bed, my husband and I enjoy some quiet time together and watch our shows until about 10:30. My days pretty much stay the same, although there are errands to run, doctors appointments, etc. that come up. I also enjoy getting together with my aunt every week and visiting.
- 3.) If I am so lucky to be chosen, there is nothing I won't do to make time to ensure this program is a success. The ideal class for me would be the 9Am, however if I am unable to have a babysitter once school was over, I would get up at 4:30 and come to the 5:20 class. It doesn't matter to me, I will do what I have to do, and I will do it gladly if you give me the chance. Where there is a will, there is a way, and I will make it happen! In addition to classes, I will make time to do extra workouts at home, properly measure all of my food, keep a food journal, and anything else that will help. My husband is very supportive, and will also do whatever he can to help me.
- 4.) I feel that I should be selected for this challenge because I really think it is the answer to my prayers. Just as I have started to get discouraged due to lack of results on my own, the email came in regarding this upcoming challenge, as if it were made for me. Since I was 16 I have battled with my weight, and have been a classic "yo-yo" dieter. However, after I left my job over 3 years ago to stay home with my struggling (then 2nd grade) son, my weight spiraled out of control. I gained about 70 pounds in the first year and a half after leaving. Then, on May 1st, 2010, my grandmother passed away. It was very hard for me, as I was very close to her. Since

she passed away a year ago, I have gained another 35 pounds. I have been very upset and depressed about my weight, and the way I look, but didn't have the courage to try to do anything about it. Then about 8 weeks ago, a girl I went to school with got the LapBand surgery, and after only 2 weeks she lost 10 pounds. I thought, wow, that sounds great! So I investigated this option for myself, however was told that my BMI was only 38, and the program required a BMI of 40 or more. I was so depressed to find out that while I was 90-100 pounds overweight, it wasn't enough for them to help me. My options were either gain 15-20 more pounds to become eligible for the program, or start doing it on my own. I decided that I wanted to do it without surgery, and have been praying everyday for the strength and willpower to continue. I want to lose weight and be healthy for my kids so I can be a good example, and live a longer, healthier life. My boys deserve to have a healthy mother that can run and play with them. When I saw the email this afternoon about this challenge, I couldn't believe it. I knew that it was the answer to my prayers! I promise that if I am chosen, I will work my absolute hardest, and give 110% to the program. I will make sure this wonderful opportunity you are offering is not wasted. Please choose me and I promise I won't let you or myself down, and you will not be sorry with your decision!

- 5.) If chosen for this incredible and generous gift, I would have a few goals. First, my weight loss goal would be 30 *or more* pounds by the end of the 3 month challenge. My long term goal is to lose 70-80 pounds to be at a healthy weight. However, for the challenge, I want to stay realistic to avoid being disappointed. Another very important goal to me, is gaining the knowledge of fitness and proper nutrition to continue not only my weight loss journey but also maintain a healthy lifestyle. My last goal may sound silly, but I will share it anyway, as it is important to me, yet I have not told anyone about it. I want to be in good enough shape to compete in our church's (Crosswinds) 5K race in September. I have never been in a 5K, or any race in my life, nor did I really have the desire. Then about 6 weeks ago, just as I was deciding to take control of my life and weight issues, something happened. When we arrived at church, there were many tables set up around the outside walls of the worship area, with different signs over each one. There were tables about small groups, trips to Africa, helping with child care, and many others. However, I only saw one sign, it said "Crosswinds 5K Challenge". Throughout the service, I kept looking at that sign, and the table with the information. Upon conclusion of the service, our pastor encouraged everyone to check out the opportunities. As overweight as I am, I was too embarrassed to walk over to that table and get a pamphlet. I mean, c'mon, who'd take a 230 pound woman seriously about a 5k challenge? I really feel like God inspired me that day, but I need your help to have the confidence to walk up to that table and sign up for that challenge. Please choose me and help me meet these goals. It would mean so much to me.
- 6.) Once the challenge is over, I know I will feel more confident about myself. I also know that this is the chance I need to continue on the correct path to reaching and maintaining my ideal, healthy weight, and lifestyle. Although the challenge itself would be over, I will still have a lot of work to do, but will have the knowledge and confidence to do it. I would also keep my trainers posted on my progress, because without them, I wouldn't be able to do it. It would also wonderful to really feel like I am getting my life back, and never go back to being obese. I long for the days when my kids ask me to play baseball, tag, or basketball, and I am actually able to do it. I have the drive and determination, I just need your help to teach me how to make this change.

Hopefully my responses weren't too long, but they are honest, and from the heart. I really wanted to let you know how much I want and need this opportunity. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Joni B. Stein