



Healthy Living

based on



Curriculum Three (3)
Week 18

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Healthy Living

based on
THE PRISM
WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAM

WEEK EIGHTEEN:

Surrounded
by so Great a
Crowd of
Witnesses

ENCOURAGEMENT... AN EVIDENCE OF FAITH

There are many times in the midst of a struggle when people may begin to feel they lack the will to go on. Questions and more questions arise in your mind. Fatigue seems overwhelming. You may think to yourself, "I can continue as long as things are no tougher than this..." Then, guess what? They get tougher! In times like this, your goals and resolve lose their edge and become unclear. Only that "glimmer" within you can keep you going. That "glimmer" is faith, "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Today, you must hold on to the substance and look for the evidence to continue your journey in faith. The opposite of faith is doubt, which also consists of substance and evidence. Therefore, your focus today will validate one or the other. Faith will ultimately produce courage; doubt eventually leads to discouragement. **YOUR FAITHFUL ATTITUDES WILL PRODUCE ACTIONS OF HOPE!!**

One way to encourage actions of hope is to examine the "fruit" produced in the life of others. Do not look at them with an attitude of, "Why them and not me?" Realize that they may have been through similar struggles in their own lives. They may have once felt just as overwhelmed, discouraged or bored; but, their consistent actions based on faith helped them to complete their journey. They are not different from you, just further ahead in the transformation process. Their lives can be your evidence, your substance, and your faith will be increased.

As you read through the personal experiences of others this week, reach out for the strength you may be needing to faithfully complete your journey. Remember, **IT HAS BEEN DONE THIS WAY BEFORE! YOU ARE ON THE RIGHT ROAD, AND THE BEST IS YET TO COME!!** Finish your weight loss journey and solidify your commitment to lasting transformation. These individuals have done this and they desire nothing less than to become the person they were created to be!

ENCOURAGEMENT

by Brenda Wight

Encouragement is such an important part of our weight loss journey. Along the way, the compliments we receive on how our bodies look on the outside fill us with pride and excitement. At our weakest moments, those times when we feel like giving up, God sends someone to tell us how wonderful we look. They tell us how glowing our smile is and how proud they are of us. Words, simple statements like this, can carry us through. They help us through the rough spots and we amaze ourselves that we do not have to eat over that problem in our life. All because someone has taken the time to speak some words of encouragement.

On my weight loss journey, at those crisis times when I really felt like giving up, God sent my "angels of mercy." It was always someone who could not believe the changes they saw happening to me on the inside. They could see how patient I had become, through my loving actions to my children. They observed that when people treated me coldly, I was able to respond to them with warmth.

WEEK EIGHTEEN - Lesson 1

They recognized that the choices I had made in my life were positive and good. Someone always appeared to bring me encouragement. One of those special people was my leader, Toni. I will love her in a special way for the hope and life she restored in my times of need.

Optimism filled me because others could really see change from the inside. All of this gave me the power to continue to make the right choices. I could regain my strength and motivation, and eagerly await what else was to come, good or bad.

Going back is no longer a choice. This program has given us a road with forward movement only. Reverse is not an option. **YOU CAN DO IT – THE CHOICE IS YOURS!**

If you have not had encouragement in your life lately, encourage someone else! The encouragement you need is just that far away!

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

HEBREWS 11:1

*“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”
(King James Bible)*

HEBREWS 3:13

“But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.” (New International Bible)

JOB 16:5

*“But my mouth would encourage you; comfort from my lips would bring you relief.”
(New International Bible)*

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. “Faith is the substance of things hoped for.” What are some of the things you are “hoping” for?

2. Substance is action. What “substance” of the hopes you described above do you see in your life today? What can you do to be sure that these actions are a consistent part of your life?

3. “Faith is the evidence of things not seen.” What are some of the “things not seen” that you desire for your life?

4. Evidence is proof. What “proof” do you see in your life today that the “things not seen” are becoming a reality?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK EIGHTEEN – LESSON ONE

THE RISK THAT LEADS TO TRANSFORMATION

“If you haven’t had encouragement in your life lately, encourage someone else! The encouragement you need is just that far away!” Brenda’s words are filled with experience and are evidenced in her life. Today, you may be feeling that it has been a long time since you received a compliment. The outward signs of change and your hard work are not as apparent. People cannot see the daily “sweat equity” that you deposit in your “transformation account.” People compliment what they see. Do not rely on the encouragement of others to be your only source of strength. As Brenda said, encourage someone else. The strength and affirmation you receive from this action will encourage you.

Today, you will read a letter from a PRISM® class member to her leader which validates this fact about encouragement. Her words will also encourage you to become progressively more transparent in your life. Honesty is one of the keys to lasting transformation.

**RISK BEING HONEST
RISK TAKING A DEEPER LOOK
THE RESULT IS
LASTING TRANSFORMATION!!**

Dear Leader,

I really want to thank you for everything you have taught me and for the love you showed me all the way through my weight loss journey. I am so thankful that you urged me to look for the causes of my weight problem and did not just offer the “quick fix” line I had heard all too often. What I found surprised me. I found my whole life – physical, emotional and spiritual – was being affected by my weight. The underlying problems of deceit, stubbornness, wilfulness, and gluttony were keeping me from being the person God created me to be. I wrote the following piece the other day. If you think it could be of any use, you are welcome to share it with others.

A person can become a Christian and yet live a defeated, useless type of life for many years. During this time, the person will be very unhappy, angry and confused because they are not living in harmony with the Spirit that is within them. The Spirit within them is hindered and cannot work because the Christian has not totally surrendered their whole self to God. I lived this way for most of my Christian life. I would come very close at times catching a glimpse of what it really meant to be a Christian. Then, I would turn away when I chose my own will over Gods’ will. I would see other Christians who had what I really wanted and wonder what their secret was. I searched for the answer in books, sermons and anywhere else I thought I might find the secret.

All the time the answer was within me. God’s gentle Spirit was saying, “Come unto me.” Stubbornly I would think, “I’ve already done that. I’m already a Christian.” Yes, that was true, but where was the joy of my salvation? My unwillingness to surrender had kept that joy far from me. Now when I look

at those years of internal pain I put myself through I am sad. The thing I dreaded and rebelled against the most was so simple. When I finally surrendered my will, it was such an easy thing. The only way I can describe it is the feeling of being home where I belong. My spirit in harmony with the Spirit that came into me when I first accepted Jesus as Savior. Now, He is also my Lord.

Your friend in Christ,

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

ISAIAH 43:11-13

“I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from Me there is no savior. I have revealed and saved and proclaimed – I, and not some foreign god among you. You are My witnesses, declares the Lord, that I am God. Yes, and from the ancient days I am He. No one can deliver out of My hand. When I act, who can reverse it?” (New International Bible)

II CORINTHIANS 4:1-2

“Therefore, since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. What parts of this letter most deeply touched you today? Why?

2. How was she taking a risk by writing this letter? How can you relate the risks you have taken or are currently considering to hers?

3. What kinds of “things hoped for” do you receive when you risk being honest?

4. How do these things affect the process of lasting transformation?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK EIGHTEEN – LESSON TWO

SETTING YOUR TALENTS FREE

One of the unique qualities of human life is “talent.” Talent is defined as “aptitude, or ability of a person.” Even if you have not recognized or fully developed them, you have talents. What does talent have to do with weight loss? A great deal! For instance, how and why you focus on or deny a talent can be closely related to your feelings about your weight and eating behavior. Often, overweight people may try to compensate for what they cannot seem to control (eating) by energetic development of what they can control (talent). Some people also may use their overweight and resulting low self-worth to excuse the undeveloped talent within them. Perhaps you have noticed a change in how you view and approach your own personal talents. In the last five months, you have been released from the need to compensate or hide from your talents. It is time to use talents to add beauty to the world around you. Your talents are a gift, not to be used selfishly or secretly.

YOUR NEW ATTITUDES OF POSITIVE SELF-IDENTITY FREE YOU TO PRODUCE TALENTED ACTIONS WHICH ENHANCE YOUR WORLD!

Lisa, a talented singer, shares her experiences with you today. Lisa used her voice differently prior to her weight loss. At one time, she used her talent to “balance” her hurts and fears. As you will read, she now sings with freedom and power. Let her story encourage you to develop your own special talent in new ways today.

“My weight loss battle began shortly after the birth of my youngest son. Growing up, I had always been very thin and never thought I would have a weight problem. However, after my pregnancy I found myself grieving over my past. I had some tremendous emotional hurts that I tried to cover with food, mainly sweets.

Chocolate became my dear friend. I was certain that chocolate would never reject me and would always be there to make me feel better. Soon, my weight skyrocketed to nearly 200 pounds. I began to buy clothes in the “larger” women’s shops. But no matter how loose fitting the dress was or how the yards of material flowed over my fat body, I simply hated how I looked. I could not bear to look in the mirror or have my picture taken. Night after night I would cry and weep wishing that tomorrow I would find the answer or magic formula that would make me thin. I must have tried almost every diet there was, only to gain back the weight I had lost plus more. I was filled with anger and self-hatred. I felt ugly inside and out.

When I first began this weight loss journey, I was very frightened. I didn’t think it would really work either, but God gave me the glimmer of hope I needed. I signed up for the class. The REAL journey lay ahead for me. It wasn’t always easy, I had to say goodbye to my “friend” chocolate. I also have said goodbye to my old ways of eating, but in doing that, I said hello to a whole new life.

WEEK EIGHTEEN - Lesson 3

God had given me many gifts and talents and I now felt beautiful enough on the inside to use them. This freedom to be the person God created me to be has released me in a whole new way. I am still in the process of transformation, but I will never be the same person I was when I took that first step. My self-esteem is where it should be, I like what I see in the mirror now. I am a new creation. I have come out of the pit of despair with God's help, and He has set my feet on solid ground. He has put a song of freedom in my heart and forever I will sing it and be glad."

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:**JAMES 1:17-18**

"Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation, or shifting shadow. In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we might be, as it were, the first fruits among His creatures." (The New American Standard Bible)

PSALM 96:1-3

"Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise His name; proclaim His salvation day after day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous deeds among all peoples." (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. In what ways have you used your talent in secret or to overcompensate for your weight or eating behavior?

2. What are your talents?

3. Do any of these talents remain undeveloped? Why?

4. Have you resisted developing these talents because of your weight? How do you feel about your talents today?

5. Describe what the following statement means to you: "I am free to develop and share all of my talents in a natural, balanced way!"

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK EIGHTEEN – LESSON THREE

SELF ACCEPTANCE... SUPPORT FOR THE TRUE YOU!

Today, Belva will share with you how she was able to overcome the reactions of others to her outward appearance. Her response to the way people viewed her physical nature was one of self-condemnation and abuse. As people grow up, they collect the negative names and judgments of others in their “mental tape.” Many of these “tapes” are the basis of your self-identity and the way in which you may nurture that identity. If a person is identified as being the “ninety-eight pound weakling” he or she may either respond in quiet anger or shy retreat.

If your outward appearance draws attention, you may feel uncomfortable or resentful. Eating may be viewed as the only means of “control” you have in fighting back against the comments of others. You may be at a point in your weight loss journey where old “name tags” and identifications may be resurfacing. It is important that you closely examine how you have responded to these identities in the past. Belva has been able to lovingly accept the person God created her to be. She is no longer tied to the reactions of others when it comes to her outward appearance. Let her fantastic story encourage you in this same way today.

“I recently heard a speaker say the formation of our personality and self-image can be traced to five statements made to us, about us, that we believe to be true. It was as though a light bulb went on over my head. I could almost list verbatim the statements that had contributed to the formation of the negative self-image I had about myself before I joined PRISM®.

For example, because of a 27 year old statement made to me by a high school student regarding the ‘meat’ on my upper arms, I believed my arms were extremely fat. Therefore, I rarely wore sleeveless tops, even on the hottest days. On the days I did wear a sleeveless top, it was with an all-consuming self-conscious feeling that everyone was looking at, laughing at and talking about my ‘meaty’ upper arms.

Because of this example and several similar ones, my self-image was blown entirely out of proportion. For years I chose to believe every negative comment I heard about myself and to disregard each positive statement as though it had never been uttered. I began to believe I *was* my physical body. If my physical body was flawed or imperfect, then I was flawed and imperfect.

This unrealistic self-image began to negatively impact my inter-personal relationships and my spiritual well-being. I began to yo-yo diet in such a manner that my weight fluctuated between a low of 118 pounds and a high of 183 pounds. This sixty-five pound spread was not healthy for me or pleasing to God.

My body size, at it’s largest, further contributed to my poor self-image. It became a daily routine for me to step on the scale first thing each morning. My bathroom scale became the measurement of my self-worth. If my weight was the same or less than the day before, I would leave the house feeling worthy to face other people. If my weight was ‘up’ from the last measurement, I plummeted into a depres-

sion that affected me the rest of the day or until I weighed less again. I would eat nothing on the ‘up’ days, and stuff myself on the ‘down’ days. As strange as it now sounds to me, the scale had become my mirror, my self-image and my god. Daily I would let the scale dictate my outlook, my mood, my existence. Even though a Christian, I did not realize how far I had moved from God’s plan for my life. I was so unhappy with myself that I became unable to function in a normal manner. I reached the point where my husband had to convince me almost daily that I was not too ugly to leave the house.

It was during this time that I heard about a Christian weight loss program that sounded interesting to me. I called Toni Vogt for more information and discovered that I had to wait four weeks for her next class to begin. During this wait I continued to feel that God was steering me toward Toni. I believed this time things were really going to be different.

When I began classes, I never realized the changes that would take place in my spiritual life would far out-weigh those that took place in my physical body. For the first time in my life, I began to feel God really loved me!! He had to love me because He created me specifically. In Psalm 139:15 and 16 God’s word says: ‘My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be.’

When I believed God loved me just as much at 183 pounds as He did at 118, I could truly start to work on becoming what He created me to be. Of course, this meant I had to give up the measurement of the scale and take up the measurement of the Word of God. I began to realize that because God created me, He wanted me to be all that He created me to be. This truth meant bringing my mind and body into submission to Him. It did not mean giving up the freedom of eating what I wanted to, but gaining the freedom of eating what He wanted me to. After all, my body is His temple. I gave up foods that were not good for me and replaced them with healthy food choices.

I began reevaluating the negative statements I believed about myself and started putting them into perspective. I began to take responsibility for areas of my life that I needed to control or change, and at the same time, put aside areas that were beyond my control. This process called ‘PRISM®’ is hard to explain because while giving up ‘false’ control of my life, I was gaining ‘real’ control. For the first time in years, I liked ME!! I realized I was a child of God, created by Him, and I was proud of this new found truth.

After almost three years, I will not say that I *never* slip into old thought patterns. However, PRISM® has provided me the tools to bring my life under submission to Christ. With this new freedom, I have gained peace, joy and happiness. I no longer feel ugly... even though I know my body is not perfect. I no longer feel unworthy of God’s love... even though I know my Christian walk is not perfect. I have learned to accept what I can’t change and to move forward in the knowledge that He has ‘all the days ordained for me...’ I will continue to believe that I am a worthwhile human being. I will continue to trust His guidance in all areas of my life.”

WEEK EIGHTEEN – Lesson 4

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

I JOHN 1:7-9

“But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (New International Bible)

PSALM 139:15-16

“My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, Your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. How can you relate to Belva's story? What similar feelings to those expressed by her have you encountered?

2. How have you found yourself equating weight lost with evidence of successful transformation? Describe why this may not always be true.

3. What are some inward changes you have made which are not yet seen on the outside? What do they have to do with the process of transformation?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK EIGHTEEN - LESSON FOUR

A LIFETIME DECISION

Laurie shares the following words:

“A life of freedom from being overweight. That is what I was looking for when I began my weight loss journey. I, like many of you, tried many diets. I found myself losing and regaining, never feeling happy with what I saw in the mirror. I never thought of myself as a thin person. But, when I got to my heaviest, I would have given anything to be back to my starting weight.

I began putting on more weight with each of my pregnancies. At the start of my third pregnancy, I told everyone that I was showing early, so that I could start wearing maternity clothes. The truth was, I had gotten too fat for any of my normal clothes. After the birth of my third child, I realized that I had become out of control with my weight and overeating.

I went through a process of trying to accept the weight. I told myself things like, ‘I am a woman now, the mother of three, what do you expect?’ I thought I could just purchase cute clothes in a larger size that would make me look thinner. Even though I tried this kind of thinking, I was a very unhappy person.

I was so excited to find out that I did not have to accept my weight! Thanks to many prayers and following the road of my journey, I lost 30 pounds. I thank God for showing me the way to freedom when it came to food. I have decided that I do not have to live my life being overweight. This decision stays the same no matter what my age is or my circumstances. I have made the choice to be slender for the rest of my life.”

As you read of Laurie’s experience, what do you see has really changed in her life? Her weight. Her self-esteem. Her cycle of dieting. Yes, these things have changed! However, in the last paragraph, you see the most important change that has taken place. Laurie has made a decision – a decision to remain at her “right weight.” She now accepts what she does to care for her health as a natural part of life. This effort is not like “pulling teeth” to her. It is a simple acknowledgement of fact. Her food intake and energy output must be in balance. Through tough times, busy times, even when she does not feel like it, this balance must not be upset.

**WHEN YOU RENEW YOUR MIND,
YOU MAKE NEW AND LASTING DECISIONS.
THIS IS WHAT THE PROCESS OF TRANSFORMATION IS
ALL ABOUT!!**

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

I PETER 1:13-16

“Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed. As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just as He who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’” (New International Bible)

PROVERBS 16:9

“In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. How has your view of “dieting” changed in the past few months?

2. How will this new viewpoint affect your health for life?

3. What attitudes toward your diet would you still like to see changed?

4. What actions can you take to see these changes become reality?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK EIGHTEEN – LESSON FIVE

“IT’S COURAGE THAT COUNTS”

**“SUCCESS IS NEVER FINAL...
FAILURE SELDOM FATAL...
IT’S COURAGE THAT COUNTS.”**

Sir Winston Churchill

Winston Churchill proclaimed the above statement in the absolute “worst of times.” Great Britain was facing impossible odds and he was their leader. His choice for courage, regardless of the outcome, helped him to continue and “never, never, never surrender!”

The evidence of the “things not seen” is the courage you have to act in faith today. Regardless of what you may have discovered this past eighteen weeks, you can continue with courage. “Caution lights” do not have to become “stop lights.” Increased awareness is not a basis for fear or doubt. Your new knowledge and understanding will strengthen your hope for becoming the person you were created to be. You may continue to face difficult “intersections” because they are a natural part of life. However, your new strength and courage will allow you to confidently proceed through any intersection you may encounter.

Today, Debbie shares with you about many of the “intersections” in her life. Debbie’s courage and determination have produced strength in her life. Be encouraged by her words as you continue on your journey.

“I see my weight loss as a birth of a new person. I lost 37 pounds and have kept it off. Thirty-seven pounds may not seem like much to some, but to me it represented years of unhappiness. I never realized how much food controlled my life. Instead of dealing with my problems, I would eat them away, only to now have another problem.

I was stuck in a very unhappy and unproductive marriage. I didn’t have enough faith and self-confidence to stand up for the right thing. I just lived each day hoping the next would get better. I couldn’t face doing what I knew was right and getting control of my life. That marriage ended in a painful divorce. So I filled up the lonely nights with eating and self-pity. I would go on and off diets, losing weight, feeling good about myself, then putting it back on again.

I finally met a wonderful man and was happy. I believed I was now in control of my eating. But I found I ate when I was happy too. I wanted to get in complete control, before I broke up another marriage by self-pity. When I first began this weight loss journey I knew it was for me. Toni was my leader and made me feel special. I realized the only way to total control was to lean on God for help. He was there for me and helped me to deal with my eating problems. I now face each day with a new hope and love for life.

I now realize that no type of overeating is worth my happiness. I am the boss now – not the food. I believe the PRISM® program can help anyone if they follow the KEY PRINCIPLES. You too can be free to live the life you want. Believe in yourself, believe in God.”

WEEK EIGHTEEN - Lesson 6

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

II THESSALONIANS 2:15-17

“So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the teachings we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter. May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.” (New International Bible)

PROVERBS 16:3

“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.” (New International Bible)

PERSONAL EVALUATION

1. What does the statement “success is never final” mean to you?

2. What does the statement “failure is seldom fatal” mean to you?

3. How important is it that you either succeed or fail?

4. How can having courage every day bring peace and freedom to your life?

5. How does courage give you the determination to continue when success or failure may not?

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK EIGHTEEN – LESSON SIX

ACCEPT NOTHING LESS!

On this last day of Phase Three, you will read about Brenda Wight’s personal weight loss journey experience. You will then read about the choices before you as you continue on your journey.

“My weight loss journey began almost seventeen years ago with seven pounds I wanted to lose right after my marriage. I was eighteen years old and I turned to the only place I knew of that could help me, the latest women’s magazine diet and a neighborhood health club. It worked for a while. I eventually got bored with “diet” food and tired of being disciplined with the routine of exercise. I returned to what was familiar and easy; eating what I wanted, when I wanted it and as much as I wanted, especially sugar and bread items. Little did I know I was on my way to a lifetime of yo-yo dieting; losing five pounds and gaining ten, then losing ten and gaining fifteen. I had no clue that I was addicted to sugar and white refined carbohydrates or that I had sentenced myself to a slow and painful death. I was binging and dieting, losing weight and regaining, compulsively eating to push painful feelings down. There wasn’t a magazine article or health club anywhere that could help me see those truths about myself. I was abusing myself with food, committing a slow suicide. In my denial, I really believed I had a thyroid problem and just enjoyed eating.

So, the cycle continued for sixteen years. I was in and out of the offices of doctors and therapists. I even switched my addiction to exercise, running seven miles a day to cover up my insatiable appetite. I kept searching for the answers. Couldn’t someone – anyone – tell me why I couldn’t stop eating?

Different diets and programs worked for a while, but I could never keep the weight off. I think my top weight was 194 pounds. It was when I hit that weight that I quit getting on the scales for fear of what I would see. I hated myself and everyone around me. I was a failure at weight loss and at life. I was either “better than” or “less than,” depending upon what the scale said. When I did buckle down and use some disciplined eating, I became the “guru of weight loss.” I knew it all. I had a warped sense of self because of my damaged self-esteem. I thought because I had managed to stay on a diet for more than three days, I could help you with all of your problems without ever having to dig any deeper than the surface of my own problems. You see, I just needed to lose a few pounds and my world would be perfect. If I was out of control in my own life, perhaps controlling yours could make me feel better. I always took my eyes off of my own plate to see what was on yours – and so the cycle continued.

I had also become a master at sabotage. When I did manage to lose some weight and begin to feel better about myself, it would trigger the out of control eating. You see, those feelings were too uncomfortable. I had a FAT head and still believed I was a failure and didn’t deserve to feel that way. So away I would go, regaining weight so I could hit the comfort zone and prove to myself once again that I was a failure.

Why couldn’t I gain control in this one area of my life? I felt even God had abandoned me – or had I abandoned Him? These were questions I had to ask myself, but somehow God and eating didn’t go

together for me. It was like asking for a new car or a vacation to the Bahamas. Ask Him to help me with my eating? How silly! I can't ask for help with my eating. I should be able to do it by myself. I should have willpower. I have to use God for those big things like illness (I'm certainly not ill!), death, safety and forgiveness (for the big things, not those little white lies or cheating on my diet!).

Well, God was with me and had never left. I was the one who walked away. I shut Him out to delay having to deal with the reality of my problems. Denial had caused me to lose my conscious contact with God. My life wasn't working because I wasn't allowing Him to work it for me. My problem wasn't really with food, it was dealing with life without God's help.

Finally, the pain of my compulsive eating and food addiction took me to my knees and I did the only thing I knew left to do. I turned my life and my will over to the care of God. I began to see that the weight would have to come off and stay off for me to experience any real serenity in my life. I knew I could no longer depend on food for survival and comfort.

My life has been changing since I began this weight loss journey. By losing fifty pounds, my life has changed dramatically. I am learning a whole new way of life. Transformation is still taking place on a daily basis and I pray it never stops. I'm dealing with life instead of merely surviving it. I'm finding out what's eating me rather than eating to cover the character defects and problems in my life. Yes, I did say problems. Being at your "right weight" does not mean the problems and trials of life disappear. But, I am free!! I am free from food and can deal in reality with confidence and pride that with God's help all things are possible. I have found truth and knowledge through the KEY PRINCIPLES of the PRISM® Weight Loss Program and that truth has truly set me free! Free from fat, fear and addiction to any food.

Giving up food for truth and reality has sometimes been an overwhelming challenge. Dealing with those things that I had stuffed down with food has been very painful at times. Being a victim of physical and verbal abuse as a child and being co-dependent and an enabler throughout my whole life was and is difficult to admit to and heal. The rewards and blessings that have followed are innumerable.

My prayer is that you find these truths and set yourself free! The PRISM® Program can be that first step for you.

Come fly with me! Be the person God intended for you to be!"

ARE YOU READY TO FLY WITH BRENDA AND THOUSANDS OF OTHERS?

Then it is time to proceed to Curriculum Four – colored green as in Go!!

**GO FOR TRANSFORMATION...
BE RENEWED AND MADE WHOLE!**

Transformation does not only involve weight loss. It is not completed when you reach your destination. This type of thinking has kept you in a cycle of "dieting" for years. Whenever you have "stopped the program" before you completed or even began the process, you have set yourself up for one more "go-around" on the cycle. **DO NOT MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN!**

WEEK EIGHTEEN – Lesson 7

Could you “do it on your own?” Perhaps, but consider the following analogy. You can receive some training, given tools and supplies, and desire to build your own house. But, this alone would not assure your success in completing this project. Somewhere in the process, you would need assistance to make it a “great” house versus a “good” one. The KEY PRINCIPLES of the PRISM® Weight Loss Program work in unity with the commitment of your Agreement of Resolution. Without this Agreement, you may be left with an unfinished transformation. **GO FOR THE “GREAT!!” GO FOR THE GREEN!!**

If you are within a few pounds of your “right weight,” you may choose to weigh at this time. Ask your leader to help you evaluate your current size compared to your TRUE YOU picture.

Perhaps you are ready for the Continuance Phase of the PRISM® program. Your leader can help you with the decisions you need to make at this time.

You are encouraged to honestly assess your commitment. If you feel you have faltered in your commitment, do some serious soul-searching. PRISM® was not designed to be just another “social diet” or “support group!” One of the objectives of this program is to see you SET FREE from “cycle dieting.” You are a unique, healthy individual, not a person destined to struggle with a lifetime of weight problems. Therefore, as you go on to Curriculum Four, re-commit yourself to the lifestyle change you have begun.

**YOU ARE A LOVABLE, WORTHWHILE AND
SUCCESSFUL PERSON...
BE THANKFUL FOR THIS TRUTH!
LET YOUR ACTIONS SUPPORT IT TODAY!!**

OPTIONAL SCRIPTURE READING:

II CORINTHIANS 4:16-18

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” (New International Bible)

LAMENTATIONS 3:19-24

“I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness. I say to myself, ‘The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for Him.’” (New International Bible)

THIS CONCLUDES WEEK EIGHTEEN – LESSON SEVEN