
THE JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME!

I have struggled with my weight for my entire life. From the earliest time I can remember, I was overweight and constantly on a diet trying to fit in. Trying to lose that extra weight.

As time when on, I began to despair that things would never change. I would lose the weight and balloon back up afterwards to even bigger proportions.

Things were totally out of control in 2011. I was HUGE. Nothing fit. I was scheduled for my second knee replacement surgery in early 2012. I was in constant pain. My blood sugar level was climbing to pre diabetic rates. I decided to try losing weight on my own. I joined Nutrisystem and was letter perfect for 9 full months. I was excited to lose weight but after nine months when I started eating "regular" food again, the weight started coming back on. By February of 2014, It crept up 43 pounds again and I was devastated. I could not face those sizes again but they were staring me in the face.

To my horror, the pre diabetic stage was even further along than it was before. I was having difficulty swallowing and would choke when I ate or drank. I was unhappy.

I had researched Gastric bypass surgery many years earlier but I was not ready at that point to make a permanent change. Well, I was now. I would not even consider a diagnosis of diabetes.

I searched on the internet and found Dr. Frantzides. I called to schedule an appointment immediately. His office put me in that very week. I wanted to strike before I lost my nerve. I was totally at ease with Dr. Frantzides. He examined me and explained my options. They scheduled me for further testing which was stress free. During those additional tests, it was discovered that I had a medical issue that the only option to correct it was the Gastric bypass. Saved me the stress of making the decision. I would have had many issues with the swallowing problem in the future if it was not surgically corrected. The gastric bypass was the solution.



"This has been the most amazing couple of years of my life"

While Dr. Frantzides was in my surgery, he determined that I had a fatty liver. I probably would have gone into liver failure and died without the surgery. I never would have known I was that close to liver failure had I not gone ahead with the laparoscopic bypass surgery.

This decision saved my life in more than one way. The fatty liver resolved itself. My blood sugar level is perfect. My blood pressure is normal. My weight is under control. And I no longer have the swallowing and choking issue.

The surgery itself was not that bad. Pain wise it was annoying but not horrible. The weight was coming off. I was melting. It was so wonderful. I actually enjoyed the protein shakes.

People who knew me before, were amazed at the transformation. I was happy. I was getting healthy. I fit in an airline seat! I had been in a size 24 on January 1st of 2012. By August of 2015 I was down to a size 10-12. Men were opening doors for me.

I had been dating a guy for 20 years. He was the final push behind the surgery. He had had a gastric bypass years earlier. In May of 2015, he proposed. We were married in August of 2015. Adjusting to post Gastric bypass with two people is so much easier. We can split one lunch or dinner between the two of us. We remind the other to drink their water and take their supplements. We understand the challenges the other faces with food. We can support each other and keep the other on track.

I scheduled my "tummy tuck in November of 2015. They removed 11 pounds of extra skin. Those jeans now actually fit the way they were supposed to. I am wearing a size 6 pants. I could not have imagined that in my life. People call me small. People call me skinny. I feel beautiful. I feel sexy. I am wearing clothes I had always envied on other women. I am shopping for clothes at stores I could only dream about. I had the most difficult time adjusting down from plus size clothing to regular size but it is a problem we would all love to face. I do not have to cover up the rolls, I can wear what I want!

This has been the most amazing couple of years of my life.

Judy Penzel