

MOVING Step-by-Step Toward Weight-Loss Success: One Veteran's Experience with MOVE!®, MOVE!® Intensive, TeleMOVE! —and Overcoming the Gremlins!



My name is Walter (Wally) Lind, and I live in New Richmond, Wisconsin, which is just east of the Minneapolis-St Paul metro area. I first heard about MOVE!® when I went for a routine exam with Dr. Eric Olson at the Minneapolis VA Hospital in the summer of 2009. During the pre-exam one of the nurses gave me a little blue pamphlet, and I read it while waiting to see the doctor. The doctor suggested during my exam that I was very obese and it might be something I want to look into.

Making the first MOVE!®

Weight concerns bothered me for about 2 years, and I was having trouble facing them. After I spoke with the doctor, I tucked away the MOVE!® pamphlet, although my weight was in the back of my mind. In October 2009, I had reached 370 pounds, the highest weight I had ever been in my life and said, “That’s it!” I searched and found the little blue pamphlet and called the MOVE!® number. They told me about an informational group meeting on October 20th, and I decided to go.

Giving MOVE!® a try

I skeptically went to this first meeting with my wife, Esther, and found that a lot of other people were there with their spouses. Then I weighed in for the first time. I was 378 pounds and felt devastated, not liking it at all that first day. I felt like it was a bunch of stuff I had heard several times before, including my past work with Weight Watchers. However, as I listened to the various speakers at the meeting, I realized there was an organized program and a plan here—and decided to give it a try. At the start, though, I postponed the beginning of my group sessions because the first weekend in November was the opener for Minnesota deer hunting. I had to go to deer camp—I haven’t missed that since I was a young boy!

My MOVE!® group session experience

When I returned from deer hunting, my wife said, “Are we going to go?” So, the second week of November we attended the first of the 10 weekly group sessions. At first, I thought it was a bunch of “hoey” because it was a lot of stuff that I had heard and tried before, all of which eventually failed for me after a short period of time. But with my wife's encouragement, we went back the next week for the second meeting. I was

determined to prove that I could do the weight loss thing and virtually shut my mouth and eat very little. I completed the 10-week group sessions in February 2010, and although I lost 15 pounds, I still did not feel totally good about what was going on inside of me. Kathy Proebstle told us that if we completed the 10 weeks, additional help was available. The offer of “more help” intrigued me; clearly the VA was not going to abandon me. So, I signed up for the two-week “extreme weight loss lock-in” at the Minneapolis VA Hospital.

My MOVE!® Intensive experience

I had watched “The Biggest Loser” and had visions of *Bob* and *Jillian* being my personal trainers. But this two-week intensive was nothing like that at all. The first day was like any first day: registering, meeting people, just like I was checking into the hospital. There were no treadmills or other extreme exercise equipment and no *Bob* and *Jillian*. I had no idea what some of the things they had us doing had to do with weight loss, like going to arts and crafts. But by the third or fourth day, the pounds started dripping off! We all had lost seven or eight pounds! I figured this was because the calories were very restricted, but I also noticed that we found more time to be in the exercise room, and some of the guys had started challenging each other to do more and get more steps on their pedometers (8000+).

After that first week, all of us were anxious to see how we did over the weekend, and we all did well. By the middle of the second week, I’m not sure what it was, but something had finally clicked for me. I realized that I was not going to be on a “diet” but that I was making a **lifestyle change** with my eating and my attitude, and I made a **commitment** and **accepted** this commitment to change. It was a great experience working with all the experts during my two-week stint under their tight control and scrutiny. I realized that it could be done at home, and if I continued to watch out for myself the weight would take care of itself. I started to write down everything I ate in a log.

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-Wally Lind

My wife’s contribution to my weight loss success

My wife of nearly 45 years was a key player in many ways. She’d remind me about the meetings, encourage me to go, and would even go with me. And she also does 90% of the meal preparation in the house. We learned right away to leave food in the kitchen, on the counter. Since she had to make the changes to her habits and lifestyle, she even lost more than 20 pounds during that time too!

My TeleMOVE! experience

Now with TeleMOVE! I log in my blood sugars and vital signs every day. I attend monthly follow-up group sessions at the VA, and I stay in contact with some of the people I met in MOVE!® My TeleMOVE! nurse, Susan, is fantastic! She responds to me when I need her.....by golly, she called me when I got below 360 lbs, 340 lbs, and so on, to congratulate and encourage me.

The bottom line

It has now been one year since that first weigh in. I have gone from a 3X shirt to an XL and from a 44" waist to a 40" waist. I have now lost 105 pounds, and my goal is to continue losing some more weight (15 to 25 pounds) by my birthday in May 2011. I could not have done this on my own, and something within MOVE!® made me take ownership of myself. I cannot do it without the added support of my "MOVE!® nurse" Kathy, the extended support groups, and my friends from MOVE!®

My pearls of wisdom



The gremlins still sit on my shoulder all the time. I average 22 days/month at the gym, even though maintaining my motivation to go to the gym or to increase intensity or distance is a hurdle I have to overcome regularly. The little voice is always there within me: "Do I, don't I, should I, shouldn't I?" The MOVE!® psychologist was very helpful in dealing with this.

Now when a friend brings over some homemade caramels, I can let them sit on the counter. I will eat them, but they will be budgeted into my daily calories, logged in my diary with everything else I eat.

***MOVE! made me take ownership of myself...
If you want to succeed with losing weight, you have to be
true to yourself and acknowledge that this lifestyle has
to be your new lifestyle.***

—Wally Lind