

A BETTER
LIFE AWAITS

*Baby steps
to health and
happiness*

SUZANNE PANTAZIS

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	9
Chapter 1: Not Another Diet Plan	11
Chapter 2: Life as a Fat Person	29
Chapter 3: Learning to Think Thin	45
Chapter 4: Looking Within	61
Chapter 5: The Importance of Relationships	75
Chapter 6: Getting to Know Your Body.....	91
Chapter 7: Problem Foods and Harmful Substances.....	109
Chapter 8: Exercise	129
Chapter 9: Rest and Stress	143
Chapter 10: Baby Steps 101	157
Chapter 11: Real People, Real World	177

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CHAPTER 1

-Not Another Diet Plan -

I sat at my kitchen table as the tears streamed down my face. I had just gotten off the bathroom scale and realized that I was 100 pounds overweight. I decided to write an entry in my journal. "How do I start the process of losing 100 pounds?" It seemed like such a daunting task. Was my life over? Was I just destined to be an unhappy, unhealthy, overweight person for the rest of my life? I guess this was the point at which I hit rock bottom. I was so sick and tired of being overweight. I did not want to try another diet. I had tried them all, and although I may have lost weight temporarily, I could never just lose the weight once and for all and keep it off. I was angry. It wasn't fair! Why did I have to deal with this struggle? I just wanted to be normal and enjoy my life like everyone else did. I have always been pretty stubborn and determined about things. On this day, I decided I was going to overcome my life-long struggle with weight, and when I figured it out, I would share my secrets to success with others, so they could achieve what had always eluded me—a normal life and a normal, healthy body. I wanted to lose my weight permanently, and I wanted to be healthy, but most importantly, I wanted to feel happy.

A BETTER LIFE AWAITS

So here I am, years later, happy and excited to share my success story with you. I have lost 101 pounds. I am happy. I am healthy. I did it! I did not use drugs or surgery to accomplish this goal. I changed myself from the inside out. I made permanent lifestyle changes at a slow and steady pace. I know that I have unlocked the secrets to permanent weight loss. I have gotten in tune with my body. I have learned how it works. I changed my way of thinking. I no longer think like a fat person. I have learned to nurture my spirit. I am joyously embracing my life each day and feeling so grateful for my life. I have beaten the battle of the bulge, and now I know that I will positively impact many people who will read this book and realize that whether they want to lose 20 pounds or 200 pounds, they don't have to feel hopeless. There is a solution, and I have found it. And now I want to share with you how I turned my life around, and I hope that you will now find the way to turn your life around also. I realize now that my extra weight was just a symptom of something bigger that was going on within me. I understand now that this is more than just about losing the weight. It is also about becoming happy and about leading a fulfilling life and going after your dreams, no matter how unattainable you think they are. So please: read on with an open mind; perhaps your dreams will come true for you, just as they did for me. Remember that it is never too late to start to have a better life.

As you read this book, I would like you to allow yourself to simply take in the information being presented with an open mind and without putting any pressure on yourself to make any changes in your diet or lifestyle at this time. If you can simply be open to educating yourself, this is a huge step in the right direction.

As a person who has dieted repeatedly, I would always fall into the trap of going from one extreme to the other. I would be extremely strict with myself, and then when I cheated (as I always cheated), I took the all-or-nothing approach. I convinced myself that I'd already blown the diet anyway, so I might as well eat the

SUZANNE
PANTAZIS

whole chocolate cake! This would negate any positive results I'd had by being so strict and hard on myself.

I have succeeded in permanently losing my weight by slowly and methodically educating myself and by slowly implementing changes at a pace that I could easily adjust to. The changes have not been just about diet and exercise. I have made changes in the way I think and in the way that I approach life. Making gradual changes that you can live with on a permanent basis is the real key to success. It is not about implementing drastic changes into your life that cannot be maintained on a permanent basis. I recently met a young man who has lost a lot of weight. While I feel happy for him, I am also concerned that he will gain the weight back. He lost his weight by doing a lot of exercise. He goes to the gym every day for two to three hours. I worry that he will not be able to maintain his weight loss because he has only made a change in one area of his life, and it will be hard to maintain the level of exercise he is doing for the rest of his life. I hope he will maintain his loss, but I think for the average person, working out for two to three hours a day, every day, will be hard to maintain for the rest of their lives. When we make changes, we want them to be gradual and permanent. Throughout this book, I will educate you about many things that you could do to change your life, but I really need to emphasize how important it is to not overwhelm yourself by implementing changes too quickly.

I will tell you now that if you do this too quickly, you are probably going to fail. So take it from someone who has been there: simply read this book and take in the information. That is all you need to do at the moment. Once you have absorbed the information, you can, if you are ready, begin to implement small changes that will start you on the road to permanent weight loss. Success isn't about hitting it out of the ballpark on the first swing. It is about slow progress that lasts. So please, just sit back, relax, take a deep breath, and know that this is the first step toward a better life.