

Teens: Overweight? You're in Charge

You know that one kid who always gets picked last for teams? Well ... that's me. I've been heavy pretty much as long as I can remember. My mom used to say I was "chubby." It doesn't sound so bad when you're a little kid.

By junior high, I was big. PE was torture. Some of the guys teased me about how my chest jiggles when I run. This one guy used to call me Porky. Sometimes he'd just snort when I went past, and the other kids, even ones who weren't mean, would laugh.

I wear hoodies and baggy sweatpants and try to be as invisible as I can. Then about a month ago, I was in my Teen Living class, and the teacher was talking about nutrition.

I was drawing in my notebook, only half listening. But I heard her say, It's your body. You get to decide what goes in it. I don't know why, but that stuck in my head.

For a long time I was unhappy, and I thought I wanted to be different ...but I kept doing the same things, eating the same junk day after day. Like I was this big, sad robot who had no control.

But after that class, I started reading about calories and how if you take in more calories than you use, they get stored as fat. That made sense.

I went online and found a site for teens who want to lose weight. It had good information about food, but the best things were the trackers and the message boards. A lot of kids were posting stories about being called names and feeling like losers.

And they were asking stuff I wanted to know, like what to do when I want to eat a whole pizza ...or how to deal with the guilt when I do that. I even started posting some stuff of my own.

It feels really good when people who are going through the same things I am tell me to hang in there and keep going. I started tracking what I eat and drink too.

That really showed me how much more I was eating than I need. I saw that a lot of times, I'm not eating because I'm hungry. I'm eating because I'm bored or lonely ...or because it's just a habit to stuff my face when I watch TV.

I've only been doing this for a few weeks, so I haven't lost a lot of weight yet ...but I'm on my way and I feel more in control of my life.

Some people who post on the site have mottos. I've thought about it a lot ... and I've decided mine will be "Fat is not my fate."