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Life in the Middle of the Road

Friday, May 07, 2021



We are all an "Experiment of One" a Sparker phrase that has defined my 12 years here. Losing weight is one thing, a very important thing and while there are similarities, each of us faces different obstacles, roadblocks and potholes on our journey to our goals.

My last blog on Tuesday focused on the "fun" we had as children while getting "exercise." Thank you for your stories. I enjoyed reading them.

In my case I continued to see exercise as an enjoyable activity even while working and raising children. I've had a gym membership continuously since 1972. Anybody remember Spa Lady? Leotards? Leg warmers?

Still I gained weight. Remember those charts on the doctor's wall? The recommended weight range for small, medium and large frame allowed a 40 pound leeway for my height (the same range as BMI actually). Over time I rationalized by deciding I really didn't have a "small" frame. I had a LARGE frame. Then suddenly I edged above that range too. (For the record my frame IS SMALL).

For me it's all about the food. I LIKE food. I like LOTS of food. I can rationalize how much food I'm eating. I can overeat healthy food.

Fortunately, I also like numbers. They don't scare me or depress me. They just represent reality. My weight, my waist size, my blood pressure, my cholesterol levels, percentage of body fat, my checkbook balance. All just numbers. None define me but all give me a point in time from which I can decide what if anything should be done. A few of these require vigilance before they get out of hand. I sure don't want to bounce a check.

Last week a Sparker wrote "The trackers are, in fact, the single biggest reason why I keep coming back. I have data all the way from 2013 in there! I love seeing my charts from this long timeframe! And I like keeping my data in one place"

Wow, a kindred spirit!
She went on:
Charts will show you if you are going in a right or wrong direction while looking for some middle path.

Yes, that's what I want a comfortable middle path.
Nothing extreme that will impact my joy in each day.
Just a direction that I hope will increase the number of days I have to enjoy.
(Editing here to paraphrase a great comment: I want to not only add years to my life but LIFE to my YEARS - Thanks Phebe!)

Every morning I take a few minutes to plan my food for the day. The "recent" and "favorites" tab make it easy. It's not just about the calories for me but the balance of nutrients.

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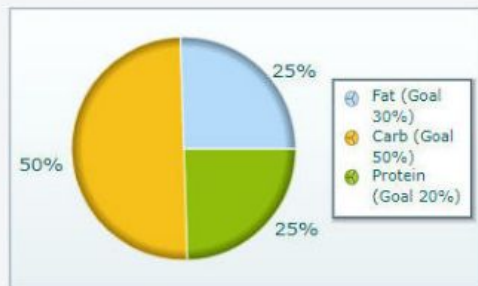
This is last week.

Weekly Progress

NUTRIENTS	GOAL	SUN 4/25	MON 4/26	TUE 4/27	WED 4/28	THU 4/29	FRI 4/30	5/1
Calories	1,410 - 1,750	1,305	1,630	1,662	1,568	1,310	1,308	1,536
Fat	31 - 68g	37	58	55	55	42	39	45
Carbohydrates	109 - 286g	104	214	220	198	100	100	204
Protein	60 - 154g	68	82	88	84	90	83	98
Fatty acids, total saturated	0 - 25g	83	22	20	21	15	14	16
Sodium, Na	600 - 2,000mg	1,711	2,021	1,409	1,691	1,823	1,732	2,282
Calcium, Ca	198 - 500%	133	121	117	123	141	842	148
Cholesterol	0 - 250mg	146	181	191	196	158	91	161
Fiber, total dietary	25 - 38	22	27	26	26	25	28	29

Percentage wise on a typical day. Not bad.

Calorie Breakdown



So this is a snapshot of my own "Experiment of One"
My wish is that each and every one of you can find yours.
A Spark Friend once wrote that "Maintenance is the MAIN thing"
That advice that has guided my 11 years of keeping the weight off.

If what you are currently doing isn't working, keep experimenting to find what will work for you.
The solution is out there.

I don't want any of these numbers to be the focus of my life.
I want to make each day count.

As another Spark Friend reminds us, "Today is the only May 7, 2021 we will ever get."
It is also a grandson's 25th birthday.

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DSJB9999

I love numbers too and you look fantastic to have a 25 year old grandson! Happy Birthday to

him! Great blog.
1 minute ago



PATRICIAAK

Happy Birthday to your grandson.
Make each day count.

28 minutes ago



PLCHAPPELL

All good for thought
32 minutes ago





LIS193

Tracking always puts my head in the game. When you have to record everything it's right there staring you in the face, so better "behave" 😊
1 hour ago



ETHELMERZ

Hope your grandson had a Happy Birthday!
2 hours ago



RKOTTEK

KEEP YOU IT UP! CAN DO IT!
2 hours ago



MARYJEANSL

I am not really a numbers person when it comes to myself - although I love math, even calculus. But I do like to work on constant improvements, and that works for me.
3 hours ago



GREYDOLPHIN

Like many here, I'm a numbers person. My dad was an accountant. I guess the "counting" is in the genes. I mainly use the tracking to keep me living up to my goals for numbers of minutes a day that I exercise.
3 hours ago



ALIHIKES

Great blog, with a log of insights. I do find that tracking helps me a lot. And checking in with SparkPeople, and getting support and encouragement from SparkFriends on my wellness journey. I am certainly not perfect, but tracking helps show overall trends, moving in a positive direction!
4 hours ago



NANANANA

My eating patterns were so crazy, I decided that a weekly average of macro and micro nutrients would give me a better picture of where I stood. The over and under days should balance to the recommended average. If not, review my log and see where to adjust.
6 hours ago



SPEDED2

Happy Birthday to DGS.
6 hours ago



JEANNESPAK

I'm with you on tracking everyday -- I aim more towards 50% fat, 30% carbs, 20% protein. I'm also very interested in the micro-nutrient information, so instead of just entering cheeseburger, I'll enter 4 oz. ground beef, 1 ounce cheddar, and so on. That way you get a better breakdown as to micro-nutrients like zinc, B12, B6, and so on.
7 hours ago



JAMER123

I also enjoy looking back at the trackers. It does give you plenty of information. I can see where I have messed up for me and then I can see what I did well and hope to continue that pathway.
7 hours ago



HAYBURNER1969

I also like seeing data over time. It's very helpful when your body goes through metabolic changes, too.
7 hours ago



SAMMILESSACH

Living Healthier with SPARKPEOPLE
Many happy returns grandson!

You are So right about this analysis!

Thank you for sharing your data.

I believe now I am tracking the food..something will change!

The first 2 decades of my life food....meh...are when I was hungry & All sweets were welcome.

Now I had found i eat myself out of my exercise!

Legwarmers yes remember those!

My mom had that Jane Fonda the tape..and Richard Simmons Sweatin to the oldies!(I enjoyed that one).

You are awesome in maintaining your weight& health..You are a role model for us Spark ers....we all have the same goal...but different paths.



You amaze me!!!!
7 hours ago



KOHINOOR2



Happy Birthday to your grandson!
7 hours ago



DOVESEYES

Well said... I thought I could lose weight and then go back to eating what ever I wanted...
Today I eat food that works in my body and not always things I like ... those things I used to eat a lot of I can have a tiny bit and funnily enough enjoy it more than 'scoffing' the whole bar or cake :)
.... who knew ???
7 hours ago



TERMITEMOM

Happy Birthday to your grandson!
Charts are also for me the only things that interest me in Sparkpeople now. The articles unfortunately have not been updated in several years and some of the announcements/posts are repetitive. And most of the "featured" blogs have nothing to do with living a healthy life, but are banalities and a popularity contest...
8 hours ago



Comment edited on: 5/7/2021 9:48:50 PM



BKNOCK



8 hours ago



MSMOSTIMPROVED

Happy birthday to your grandson!!!
I like the numbers but I'm more of a free spirit. I like to see how the spirit moves me. I get ideas or waste time looking for motivation in my fridge. Meal prepping on the weekend saves me a lot of time and helps move my spirit along when I'm waffling.
8 hours ago



RAZZOZLE



9 hours ago



JEANKNEE

You know that I'm a kindred spirit!



The sweet spot for my pie chart:
50% fat
30% carbs
20% protein

Yes. We are each an experiment of one.
10 hours ago



HARROWJET

I am still experimenting.

Happy birthday to your grandson.
10 hours ago



WHYNOTTRY45



10 hours ago



BUTTONPOPPER1

The trackers are really good, and don't they make you feel special and individual? If we're





honest and diligent, this program really works! But the best thing for me is the companionship I feel when I read others' blogs and get comments on my own. It's really a community!



11 hours ago



HARRIETT14

Your Grandson and I share the same day. I hope he had a wonderful happy day.



I track my food everyday along with my water. I have never thought about the percent diagram. So I went back to look at it and it seemed to be a little off. I find it hard enough at times to stay within my allotted amount of calories as well as making sure that I am fully satisfied with my meals. I feel like I work hard at keeping my weight in check. I am not as active as you are either. I use to be at one time when I was much younger. Not any where near as was then. Too old!

11 hours ago



52BINCE

Nothing to add to this blog. You hit the nail on the head with this one.

11 hours ago



HONEYBEESBLISS

MMMMMMMM Yes!!! I love seeing the numbers too! I started using my fitbit to track again to see what was actually going on and it helped so much to start making smarter choices again. One thing I learned from having gotten as skinny as I did last time was that while YES I can do that if I really want to and back then I did because I wanted to see what it was like. I'd never experienced that before and now I have. So now that I've got that under my belt I can make a choice of where I want to happily live. And being on the low end of the "overweight" BMI feels really happy and my health is good there! I told a friend that I never want to get so skinny that I don't burn around 450 calories doing Zumba! That was one of the worst things to me was after a certain point it was so extremely difficult to burn calories even doing the same if not more work than I did before! Geeze this could be a blog post at this point rather than a comment! HAHA Well anyway I'm glad you are finding what your happy middle is!

12 hours ago



CHERIRIDDELL

Happy Birthday to your grandson. I am very tall, but like you I have a small frame. I deluded myself for a while. The more my injuries caught up with me the more my weight rose, then finally I got wise. I am not so fond of numbers I am fond of saying "I speak 15 languages sadly math is not one of them" I do know that I have to stay within a certain range though and just a little variance leads me to add exercise. I also like food! All different kinds so tracking is important. Like you I want each day to count!

12 hours ago



DARLENEK04

My birthday is tomorrow the 8th.

I am all about things balancing.

12 hours ago



MORTICIAADDAMS

Happy birthday to your grandson. You are doing great and remind us that we have to stay diligent.

13 hours ago



MTN_KITTEN

I'm a numbers kinda gal, too.

Good for YOU getting off the pounds you wanted gone AND keeping them off.

I learn LOTS from you.



14 hours ago



SUSIEMT

I am not a numbers person, however, I never let the number on the scale bother me, it just tells me how I am doing. If I need to take action etc. Good blog! Happy Birthdy GS!



14 hours ago



ALEXSGIRL1

i like this blog i am in a rut. I eat okay could do better I am retired now all my jobs required a lot of physical activity, i worked at a job were i walked 10 to 15 miles a day, Then one where i stood for 8 hours and also did stairs and moved moderately. The last one for ups required me to move continuous for 6 hrs no break, bend twist and throw. now retired i no longer move that much and the pounds piled, I eat three meals a day exercise a half to an hour a day and no loss at all, i



guess i need to make my portions smaller,
15 hours ago



PHOENIX1949

Well Said! Well Done! KEEP SPARKING!

16 hours ago



NANASUEH

I'm a numbers person also and like using the graphs as a tool.

Happy Birthday to GS!



16 hours ago



WATERMELLEN

Good for you -- you've made the numbers work for you to achieve the results you want.

16 hours ago



LINDA!

The first gym I joined was Spa Lady. How I enjoyed that gym. I have gone through a few others since moving to different parts of the country. A gym is great. You make connections to friends that are looking for better health, just like you.

17 hours ago



PATRICIA-CR

That's why you are so successful when it comes to losing weight AND maintaining.



17 hours ago

Well Said!



NASFKAB

Happy Birthday to your GS mine will be 199 in August

17 hours ago



MOLLIEMAC

I don't obsess with using the trackers but about once every month or two I check in daily for a week. That catches any drift from where I want to be and like you say it shows me how my meals rank nutrient wise. Excellent information!

18 hours ago



SCDALYNCH

Tracking keeps me coming back to Sparkpeople. It has helped me see I needed more protein and fiber. It keeps me tracking my exercise. I have a record for my doctor.

Sparkpeople has helped me stay on healthy food and change to better plans.

18 hours ago



2BDYNAMIC

This is a blog that clearly expresses the discipline and diligence to tracking, planning, et al. And that is why you remain in maintenance for over ten years. It is working and that is the 'proof in the pudding.' ... (Oh dear---don't want to track that lol. And yes--you look awesome and still youthful and active. Happy Birthday to your grandchild!

19 hours ago



SPARKPEOPLE1951

I have been tracking my food intake for maybe a year. I rarely see the exact carb,fats & proteins that you show. Very good work. I did find w/tracking that if I keep my calories around 900-1100 I will lose weight.

I can see after my surgery in April that I have steadily been putting on weight (just 2#) but it is very hard for me to lose that weight. I am doing good if I can lose 2# in 1 month. I am going to go back to that regiment.

Reading your blog helped me make that decision. Thank you and keep on posting. I love your

blogs!



20 hours ago





LSANDY7



I PHEBESS's comment about extending the ability to enjoy the years we have left. If not for keeping the weight off and doing my weekly cardio time, I might end up a cardiac cripple as I



saw my step dad become. Not a pretty sight. This site is truly my life line.
21 hours ago



NANCY-

So many words of wisdom from our fellow Sparkers. I haven't logged food or exercise consistently. But I have shown up here and the inspiration and support keeps me going.
21 hours ago



PHEBESS

I'm another person who enjoys numbers - my steps/miles spreadsheets go back over 10 years!



And it really is all about the numbers - calories expended (out) need to exceed calories taken in. Such a simple equation.

I keep telling DH that for me, it isn't so much extending my years. But my nutrition and my exercise extend my ability to enjoy the years that I have.
21 hours ago



CFRAPPE

I am enjoying your blog. I too like being able to see the history. I've gained 20+ pounds in the past year...I like you, LOVE food, cooking it and eating it. I also fight anxiety and depression and eat emotionally...in the past year I chose not to deny myself anything, ice cream with chocolate syrup and whipped cream? SURE! Lets use all this pandemic time to perfect my pie crust recipe...SURE! and so on and so on. Now I really am appalled at the way I look, my clothes are tight and uncomfortable...This week I looked back at my history. My weight is back to where it was when I started Spark in 2016. At that time I LOST 20 lb in 6 months and maintained the loss for 10 months before it began to creep back up. Well, if I did it before I can do it again. Tracking, and planning and adding in activity. Back on track....
21 hours ago



ONEKIDSMOM

Yep! When I get down to self-honesty and being serious about taking care of the weight tendency... nothing beats those trackers!
21 hours ago



SLIMMERJESSE

I have to use the trackers more consistently, especially the food tracker.
22 hours ago



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