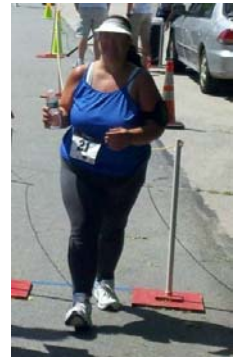


Name: Robin van der Maat

Pounds lost: 67.2lbs lost to date since joining LUN in May 2012; 137lbs lost to date since Jan 2012 when I decided to start losing.



What Eating Habits did you change to help you succeed?

I started tracking my calories using a free website (www.myfitnesspal.com) and ate normally, yet in moderation. I started using a food scale to weigh foods and discovered my idea of a portion and the REAL size were usually quite off. I eat more fruits and veggies than I did, eat “fast food” less often than I used to, and eat more frequently than I did with a “3 meals and 2 snacks a day” plan. I have not had to sacrifice any favorite foods just cut back on their frequency and amounts. My favorite recipe are my two favorite “go to” snacks, they make up in batches and freeze well:

[Whole Wheat Muffins](http://allrecipes.com/recipe/whole-wheat-muffins) (<http://allrecipes.com/recipe/whole-wheat-muffins> - you can modify the muffins by adding fruit, nuts, or chocolate chips) and [Energy Bars](http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchens/fig-and-walnut-energy-bars-recipe/index.html). (<http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/food-network-kitchens/fig-and-walnut-energy-bars-recipe/index.html>).

What Exercise Habits did you change to help you succeed?

My first and primary exercise has been walking. I started off walking around the area I live, at first struggling to go even 3 miles in an hour and not feel like I ran the Boston Marathon. I did this every other day initially, with the goal being time out, not distance. I would use my dog as the crutch to go with, so no one would “see that fat lady walking.” With the dog, I was just out for a walk, not exercising. I didn’t just stroll I pushed myself, quite hard each and every time. Once I was able to do 3 miles in 45 minutes I started working on expanding my route until I was covering roughly 4 miles in my hour walk. By then spring was around the corner and I was tired of the local scenery. I had been doing, what I refer to as the Greeley Loop (walking through Greeley Park and around my neighborhood.) I discovered Mine Falls State Park. It was love at first stroll. I actually got up to walking 8 miles every other day there, just lost in how wonderful and expansive and varied in terrain that area is! Don’t get me wrong, it took me two hours of walking to land the 8 miles, but the scenery is so amazing, it was a surprising find and I look forward to the spring thaw so I can get back there. I even did my first 5k (walking) last May!

Any tips to help maintain weight loss?

Focus on the big picture. There are going to be good days where the weight just seems to melt off, and horrible days where the scale is just looking to get replaced by a younger, newer model. There are going to be days where there is no motivation to exercise, and days that feel like nothing is impossible. There are going to be days where calories come in higher than preferred, and those are the days the real will power is tested. Eat, acknowledge that you did, and move on. Don’t let your lows get bigger than the highs. Never lose sight of how far you have come, and never ever give up. Regardless of what happened today, tomorrow is a whole new chance to start over. Life is going to happen, learning how to keep going is the part you focus on.

What was the best thing about the Lighten Up Program?

How easy it is to participate! I had heard about it in January 2012 and wasn’t “there” yet in my decision to lose weight. By the time I was, it had already started so I waited to join until May. Truthfully I participate as a challenge to myself. I like to have goals to meet, as I am a very goal driven person. If I can lose 10% in 1 session then I get the reward of meeting up with other participants and being proud of my own accomplishments. Even writing that I joined with a 285 weight last year, it just seems crazy. LUN keeps me on my toes!



1 Feb 2012 @ 348lbs 28 July 2012 @ 257lbs 24 Jan 2013 @ 223lbs