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Lifestyle

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PANAMA CITY NEWS HERALD

Sunday, August 22, 2010

LIFESTYLE

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Locals recovering from food addiction one step at a time

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Some can eat one donut or a few chips and call it quits, but others go haywire and never can appease their appetite because of a food addiction.

"I found out finally that I couldn't eat a bite of sugar or flour because they caused me to have this uncontrollable craving for food and then I was able to eat the house down," said Sue, a local member of the Food Addicts and Recovery Anonymous Program.

Now 68, and having had tried every diet that exists, Sue said the FA program that is based on the 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous has been a success for her.

Abstinence, defined by a strict daily meal plan of three weighed and measured meals per day with

nothing in between, excluding sugar, flour and personal binge foods, has Sue at 135 pounds today.

Since Sue began the program in 1995, she has lost 50 pounds.

Sue's history of hiding Jell-O packets underneath the couch and in the bathroom cabinets to sneak them without her husband seeing is a thing of the past.

"When my son asks who ate the last few donuts and I blame it on my autistic grandson, this is the extent that a drug addict would go to, for getting out of something they did," Sue said.

Post the food addiction, Sue has continued to follow the abstinence meal plan, goes to

the gym three times a week and attends yoga once a week, as well as maintaining contact with her coaching sponsor three times a week.

MEETINGS

Anyone interested in joining local meetings of the Food Addicts and Recovery Anonymous group may call Sue at 850-215-

when you first begin," said Sara, a local member and public information officer of FA.

Sara, 69, said to conquer the food addiction, it is not about having willpower, instead it is making the decision to surrender to a higher power whatever that might be, therefore, reversing this obsessive behavior of an addictive eating habit.

Exercise is recommended, but limiting food intake with portion size and weight measurement is really what matters in this program, Sara said.

"It's about realizing one is no longer able to make independent decisions around their food and their eating habits are unmanageable," Sara said.

Sara too has reverted back to a normal body size since joining the FA program after struggling for 10 years with food.

All those occasions of eating again after dinner parties, eating all the children's cookies, eating while cooking, during dinner and then eating any leftovers or putting down a gallon of ice cream in one sitting has been put to a stop.

Sara said she feels good again and is able to do the things she wants to do without being in a food stupor now.

"As long as you work the program correctly and follow the guided steps, you will put that addiction that's like a tiger, to sleep, whether it's being overweight or even bulimic or anorexic," Sara said.

"Many people use food in some way to deal with emotional feelings and then it gets out of hand."

Sara said FA is great because it not only offers a change in eating habits, but it gives the individual a way of life to live by, so there is no worry of returning to the nightmare again.

Sue and Sara are sponsors leading other people as far as Canada to their atonement.

"It's all about correcting a character defect. It doesn't mean that you are a liar and an evil person, it means you are addicted and you need to address these problems or it will get worse," Sue said.