

# The Bariatric Bulletin of the West Penn Bariatric Surgery Center

January 2007

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## The Staff

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### Issue Highlights

Support Group Info

Follow-up

Patient Feature

Nutrition Note

Tips from Dr. Tom

Miscellaneous Info

## Support Group

The next support group will be on **Monday, January 15, 2007** in the Wintergarden

Conference Center at West Penn Hospital (1<sup>st</sup> floor, across from the cafeteria) at **6:00 pm**. Dr. Papasavas will be the featured speaker. He will give a combined informational talk, as well as an update on bariatric surgery. **It is mandatory for pre-op patients to attend at least one of these support groups before surgery.** This support group is for people who are considering a gastric bypass, people who have had surgery, and friends and family. Hope to see you there!

## Post-op Group

Susan Hawkins, an associate of Dr. Tom Petrone, is presently leading a support group for up to 12 people who have already had surgery. The next one is scheduled for **Thursday, January 18, 2007 from 6-8pm pm** at West Penn Hospital in the Karen Jones room, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, North Tower. Please contact Julie to reserve your spot. There is a fee of \$20 per patient and \$5 per guest for each 2-hour session. Limited financial assistance is available.

## Survey Coming

Some of you will receive a packet containing a survey in the mail this month. This is for a dissertation study examining the influence of specialized services used by women before and after surgery. The survey is completely anonymous. A small gift is enclosed in each packet. The generous contribution of your time (approximately 15 to 20 minutes) and your shared experiences are both greatly appreciated!

## Follow-Up

It is *very important* for you to follow-up with your surgeon on a regular basis. The regular follow-up schedule after surgery is at 2 weeks, then months 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 18, 24, then yearly. If you have missed any appointments, please contact the office ASAP to schedule your next appointment.

## Patient Feature

**Name:** Nancy A.

**Date of Surgery:** 8-22-05

**Pounds lost:** 125

**Best thing about weight loss:**  
"Buying new clothes and looking good in them."

Before



After



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**Most surprising insight:** “The way I feel – my health, my activity level, and endurance have all improved greatly. Also, I am moving easier and have more energy.”

**Comment:** “Go for it! It is a life-changing experience.”

## Nutrition Note

### Setting Goals

Many people see the start of a new year as a prime time to make a fresh new start with their weight loss efforts. With that in mind, let’s take this opportunity to review some good goal setting strategies.

1) Be realistic. When it comes to goal setting, this is one area most people fail miserably in. When you set a goal, ask yourself: would I expect my best friend or neighbor to be able to meet this goal? Is it realistic to vow to *cut out all carbs*? Wouldn’t it be more realistic to set a goal to *not buy potato chips & snack cakes (or whatever you tend to go overboard with) at the grocery store anymore*? Think about it.

2) Be specific. To say you’re going to start exercising is rather vague. Instead, set a goal to walk 15 minutes on your lunch break Mon-Fri & workout at the gym at least 3 days a week for at least 30 minutes.

3) To put long range goals into perspective (for example, to lose 150 lb.), envision yourself in the future having already met that goal. Then think backwards about how you reached that goal. In other words, begin to divide the long term goal (losing 150 lb.) into smaller, more manageable goals (walking 30 minutes 5 days a week, keeping a food diary 6 out of 7 days a week, etc.). Anticipate what your obstacles might be & develop realistic plans to overcome them.

4) You didn’t reach your current weight overnight, and you’re not going to reach your goal weight overnight either. Build in **non-food** rewards along the way to help you stay the course in the long run and sustain the lifestyle changes you’re trying to make. Examples of non-food rewards include buying a new book, making time for a bubble bath, or treating yourself to a manicure. Always remember to reward the **changes** you’re making that will **lead to** the weight loss, **not** necessarily the weight loss itself! In other words, even if your weight doesn’t budge one week, you might still reward yourself for meeting the goals of sticking to your grocery list and measuring your portion sizes all week.

## Tips from Dr. Tom

Self-concept refers to how we **think** about ourselves. Self-esteem is how we **feel** about ourselves. Self-awareness can be viewed as the way we put the first two together.

We encourage patients to pay attention to their self-concept and self-esteem to see how it changes as they prepare for the surgery and then experience the changes that occur after surgery.

In defining your self-concept, what are the traits you use to describe yourself? How do you feel about those traits? Take a few moments to list ten traits or characteristics you may use to define yourself. Then, put a plus next to those you feel good about and a minus next to the ones you are troubled by. Some may be both positive and negative aspects of your self.

If there are more negative than positive feelings about the traits, it is time to take a hard look at your self-esteem. Pay attention to your self-talk (those things that you are always saying to yourself about day to day situations).

**Coaching statements** are the self-talk thoughts that are self-supportive. For example, “I think I can.” “I can handle it.” “I know I have what it takes....” On the other hand are the **“killer statements”** that often get in the way of our success. Have you ever

said to yourself: “This will never work. It’s the same old story over and over again...the situation is hopeless...Nobody will ever like me.”

If the killer statements are more your style, try to identify your **sources of self-esteem**.

Spend time with the people and in the places that are supportive. Try to build your coaching statements and use them to combat the negative self-statements. As you succeed in employing the tool of the surgery, share your success with others. It is a great way to build your own self-esteem

## Email Update

Recently, we updated our email list. If you are receiving this newsletter by paper and would prefer email, or if you are receiving this via email and would prefer not to receive it, please email Julie at [jmaurer@wpahs.org](mailto:jmaurer@wpahs.org). Thank you!

**Contact** - to sign up for the post-op group, or to offer any ideas or suggestions, please contact Julie at [jmaurer@wpahs.org](mailto:jmaurer@wpahs.org) or 412-235-5902.