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FirstPlace4Health.com

February 2011



Dear Ones,

I began a three-part series in January on why, as First Place 4 Health members, we are better together. I am using the ABC's as a guide and last month the A was for *accountability*. If you didn't read the article, you can access it in our E-Newsletter archives.

B = Belonging

This month I want to talk about the B of why we are better together. The dictionary describes the word *belonging* as a "close or intimate relationship," and that is what should happen for members of a First Place 4 Health class.

When I came to know Jesus personally at the age of twelve, I immediately had a sense of belonging. Even as a twelve year old, I could tell the difference when I read my Bible or prayed. I now understood the Scriptures and knew my prayers were being heard. People who don't have a personal walk with Christ have a hard time understanding the Bible or knowing how to pray.

Group One

This group of people who join a First Place 4 Health class are people who do not yet have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. They know someone from work or maybe a neighbor who has told them about their FP4H class. These people come strictly to lose weight, but find a love and acceptance they have never known before. This is why it is imperative that we welcome our "pre-Christian" friends and neighbors to come to our First Place 4 Health class. Those of us who already belong to Christ have the opportunity to love and accept the new member and help them learn what it means to be a follower of Jesus. Many men and women have made a decision to follow Christ because of the difference they see in the members of their FP4H class. When unconditional love and acceptance is shown we want to belong.

Group Two

The second group of people who join a First Place 4 Health class are those who know Christ personally, but they have deep wounds from past pain and hurt. Their excess weight is like a wall built to keep out pain. This is what I love best about the FP4H program; we realize that we all have problems and past hurts and we come together to find balance and heal our hearts. I never found this kind of love and transparency until I came into First Place 4 Health. We can be gut-level honest with our classmates, knowing that they will pray and never breathe a word to anyone outside of our class. When this happens, our emotional walls begin to crumble and God is able to heal our wounded hearts.

Continued on page two

Matthew 6:33:

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Dear Ones

Carole Lewis ~ Page 1

Best Value in Weight Loss

Vicki Heath ~ Page 3

One Step at a Time

Jeannie Blocher ~ Page 5

What you See is What You Eat

Steve Reynolds ~ Page 6

Devotional ~ Page 7

Success Story ~ Page 8

Recipes ~ Page 9

First Place 4 Health

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Continued from page one

Group III

The third group of people who join a First Place 4 Health class are those who are struggling to lose weight. Most of these men and women have lost weight before but seem to always gain it back again. They love eating and have developed an unhealthy relationship with food. The people in a FP4H group bond quickly and we find that we have a group of people who are cheering us on to victory. A lady told me once that her class members were more excited about her weight loss than they were their own. This lady had a lot of weight to lose and she inspired her class members by her perseverance and discipline. Her success was a source of encouragement for the rest of the class.

Those who have left their FP4H class and gained weight always know they are welcome when they return and will experience the same sense of belonging they knew before.

Group 4

The fourth group of people who join a First Place 4 Health class are those who have reached their weight loss goal, but want to stay because they have found a group where they truly belong. One of my members told me, "I give an hour a week because I never want to gain the weight back again. I have made lifetime friends in this class."

So the feeling of belonging is important to us all and there is no better place to experience the joy of belonging than in a First Place 4 Health class.

Next month I will talk about the C of why we are Better Together, *Commitment*.

Blessings,

Carole Lewis

Simple Ideas for Leaders

- **Recipe Review**
Have members sign up to bring in a recipe each week to share with the group. They can even bring in samples. Yum!
- **Portion Size Quiz**
If you have access to the Internet and a projector in your class, try the portion distortion quiz on the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute website: http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/oei_ss/menu.htm#s12
- **Fast Food Minute**
Have members sign up to share a healthy fast food choice with the group. They could print the nutrition information from the web.
- **Plan For Fun!**
Plan little "parties" during your weeks - Super Bowl Party, "Heart Health" for Valentines, Scavenger Hunt at Easter, Half-time party at your halfway mark with a football theme, etc.

Please share your leadership tips and creative ideas for your class. We would love to include them in our new Simple Ideas for Leaders column in future newsletters. Send them to lisa.lewis@firstplace4health.com.



Leadership

Best Value in Weight Loss



Vicki Heath
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In 2008, I wrote an article on why I once again choose First Place 4 Health as my weight loss program. It’s time I did that again. In the past three years, we have had a tremendous downturn of the economy and I cannot think of anyone who has not been affected. As I am beginning my class of 2011, the cost for the first session of FP4H has come into question from some of those who want to join my class. You might be tempted to try another weight loss program instead of First Place 4 Health. Let me assure you – you will not find better. Below are my top ten reasons for once again choosing First Place 4 Health in 2011:

Reason # 1 ~ FP4H is the best value out there.

We have a complete and comprehensive weight loss program. FP4H does not just focus on the physical part of the person, but the whole person. The whole person approach is becoming more popular with weight loss programs, but none of our contemporaries embrace the spiritual part. Here is the skinny on what is out there:

Weight Watchers®

What I discovered is that the program does have some variation on cost, depending upon area of the country. These statistics are from the South Carolina area, which is actually one of the less expensive areas.

Weekly meetings: There is a \$30 registration fee, in addition to a \$12.00 fee for the weekly meeting. The fees for this 12-week program are: \$174.00 (\$30.00 registration fee plus 12 weekly payments of \$12.00). That is not too bad if you can lose all the weight you need to lose in 12 weeks. That weekly fee continues until you meet your weight goal.

Nutrisystem®

Right now they are having a “special” for \$259.00 a month. This includes 28 days of food, delivered right to your door. For 12 weeks that is with everything you

need, but you may need to take out a loan; the basic 12-week plan is \$777.00!

Jenny Craig®

Their newest metabolism-based diet plan is \$599.99 to join and approximately 18.00 each day for food. Food for 12 weeks is \$1,602.00, plus the joining fee of \$599.99 for a grand total of \$2219.99 for the 12-week session.

First Place 4 Health

The cost of the materials to join a First Place 4 Health group is \$96.00 for the first twelve-week session. (Based on the 20% discount offered on our website right now.) Some groups will also charge a small registration fee to cover costs associated with hosting the group. If you do not lose all the weight you need to lose in the first twelve weeks, you have the option to continue for only the cost of a new Bible Study, which sells for \$16.00 on our website. This is an amazing life-changing value.

Reason # 2 ~ I get to eat normal food.

The FP4H Live It food plan encourages me to eat from all of the major food groups and I don’t have to buy any “specialty” foods, just the everyday healthy food on my family grocery list!

Reason # 3 ~ FP4H groups pray for each other.

In doing research, I have found some groups that offer group support, but none that offer prayer support. Recent studies show that prayer makes a scientific absolute difference in people’s health. For me, personally, there is nothing like being a part of the First Place 4 Health family. I have just come through surgery strong and healthy and I know that the prayers of my faithful friends in FP4H made all of the difference in my day-to- day wellness walk and getting through those tough days.

Continued on page four



Page three continued... Vicki Heath

Reason # 4 ~ God leads in the way everlasting.

I can eat the foods on the Live It Plan the rest of my life. An important question we need to ask when considering a food plan is, “Can I do this or eat this way the rest of my life?” If you cannot answer yes to that question, it is not a good plan. Anything we have to go “on” is not a good plan because what will happen when I go “off?” That usually means we go back to old ways of living and eating. FP4H is an excellent way to live; it’s good for me. If I never lose another pound, I chose to live this way.

Reason No. 5 ~ We have a lot of teaching to do.

America is obsessed with two things: food and appearance. We have a lot of work to do to educate people on what true wellness really is. There is a new generation of researchers, physicians and health-promotion specialists diligently working to change our thinking by promoting what they call the new weight paradigm. As leaders in First Place 4 Health, we teach people the truth.

Reason No. 6 ~ First Place 4 Health continues to offer new Bible Studies.

I have been in the program for over fifteen years now and I appreciate having new and fresh Bible studies to grow with me.

Reason No. 7 ~ It’s a good investment in my future.

February is the anniversary month of my father’s death and it always reminds me of my mortality. He was a young 73. He died of heart disease. He had his first heart attack at the age of 54. I am two years past that now. My mother just recently passed away with lung cancer. In addition to that, she had diabetes and high blood pressure. Because of DNA, I am predisposed to some of those same diseases, but my participation in First Place 4 Health over the past fifteen years has nearly wiped out my chances of developing these diseases. I want to be around to see some of these grandchildren all of you are so crazy about!

Reason No. 8 ~ We are getting bigger.

Studies show that obesity is one of the fastest growing diseases among adults and children. According to recent statistics, one out of three children in the south are now overweight. There is a need for First Place 4 Health classes now more than ever before. We cannot become weary in well doing. As leaders, we need to be part of the solution for parents and children alike.

Reason No. 9 ~ God is up to something!

We are hearing more and more about pastors coming on board with the whole person concept of wellness, and are championing weight loss campaigns all over the country. We, the church, need to rise up and join what God is doing! For such a time as this, let’s get healthy.

Reason No. 10 ~ I’m *not* there Yet!

God is not finished with me. I have more spiritual maturing to come; I have more people with whom I need to minister; I have more weight to lose.

Save your money, First Place 4 Health is *worth the investment*.

For the Kingdom,

Vicki Heath



Balanced Living - Physical

One Step at a Time



Jeannie Blocher
jeannie@bodyandsoul.org

Is exercise one of the hardest things for you when it comes to healthy lifestyle changes? If your answer is yes, you are not alone. Many people feel the same way. There are so many things that seem to happen in life that sabotage our efforts to exercise. We have to find time to do it, and our lives are busy. We have to be willing to sweat and that makes us uncomfortable. We have to find a place to do it, and we have to find a mode of exercise that works for us. These are challenges, and the challenges are real, but with God's help, we can take one step at a time to add exercise to our health habits! It doesn't matter whether you made resolutions or whether you didn't. Today you can take your first step.

First Step ~ Prayer

I suggest that your first step is prayer. Ask the Lord to help you turn sabotage into success. He can make you an overcomer in this area of life! Ask Him to help you take negative thoughts captive and change your thinking about exercise. Ask Him to show you a way to be more active that will work in your life. Ask him for a friend who will exercise with you. Pray with a friend about it!

Second Step ~ Just Do It

Then the next step is to take the *first* step and, as Nike says, "just do it." Go for a walk and don't worry how short or how long it is. Just put on those tennis shoes and do something active. And notice, Nike doesn't say "just *like* it"—it's about action. It's ok that you may not like it at first; in fact, you may never really like to exercise, but as you make it a life habit, you will reap the positive results for your health, and you will *like* that!

Final Step ~ Thanks

And don't forget the final step each day—thank God that you were able to do it. Ask Him to help you do it again the next day. Trust Him to be your fitness partner. He will never leave you or forsake you.

Jeannie Blocher

President, Body & Soul Fitness



Upcoming Events

Hope 4 You ~ California

February 26, 2011
Bayside Community Church
Roseville, CA

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H
Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H
Jeannie Blocher, Body & Soul Fitness
Steve Reynolds, Pastor, Capital Baptist Church

Hope 4 You ~ Pennsylvania

March 26, 2011
Crossroads Church
Oakdale, PA

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H
Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H

Weigh to Wellness for Women

April 3-8, 2011
Sandy Cove Ministries Retreat Center
North East, MD

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H
Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H
& More!

Leadership Summit 2011

July 29-30, 2011
Houston's First Baptist Church
Houston, Texas

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H
Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H
and many more!

Hope 4 You ~ Massachusetts

September 10, 2011
Attleboro, MA

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H
Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H

Contact: Monique Johnson

Email: FP4H_FAC@yahoo.com

Wellness Retreat

October 6-13, 2011
Round Top, Texas

Speakers:

Carole Lewis, Director, FP4H
Vicki Heath, Associate Director, FP4H
and more!

~ ~

**For more information or to register for
any of these events, visit our website, www.firstplace4health.com**

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Power of Hope T-shirt

You'll love this soft and stretchy, super-comfy T. Anvil Jersey T, 4.5 oz. 100% combed ringspun cotton jersey. Side seamed with shoulder-to-shoulder tape. Double needle stitching on sleeve and bottom hem. Slightly fitted.

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What You See is What You Eat

Steve Reynolds
sreynolds@capitalbaptist.org



King David said, “I will set nothing wicked before my eyes.” Psalm 101:3

We must consistently evaluate what we’re exposing ourselves to through our eyes? What about the movies and TV programs we watch? All the Internet access to pornography and even the music videos that can be considered light porn? All of this stuff, this junk that comes into our mind through our eyes? More than ever, and because of such easy access to these kinds of visual stimulation, we have to discipline our eyes. We must learn to turn off the TV. Discipline must be exercised to refrain from going to websites that exist only to pollute our minds. We must also choose the films and other programs selected for entertainment. We must choose and watch wisely. *Set no wicked thing before your eyes.*

So, what does that have to do with weight loss? Well, let’s talk about television and weight loss. What about all the advertisements for food products that do not enhance good health? There are thousands of products advertised on TV that are not healthy. Then there’s the food channel where someone is cooking delicious-looking meals nonstop—24/7. Yes, a few of them are promoting healthy eating, but not enough to warrant keeping the channel on all day long. We have to discipline our TV viewing.

Your eyes and weight loss:

- Use your eyes to read God’s Word and encourage yourself.
- Use them to read helpful information about good health.
- Use them to look in the mirror and think positive things about yourself.
- Use your eyes to enjoy the beauty of the healthy foods God has created.
- Don’t use them to watch the food channel or too much TV—get moving instead.
- Avoid the lust of the eyes, which includes focusing on unhealthy foods.

Let’s all make this commitment: “God help me keep my eyes pure, and show me if I’m looking at anything wicked.”

Remember, what you see is what you eat.

Steve Reynolds

Steve Reynolds is the Senior Pastor of Capital Baptist Church in Annandale, VA. He is also the author of the book Bod4God and the creator of the Losing to Live Weight Loss Competition. Steve has lost over 100 pounds and has led his church to lose over three tons of weight.



Devotional

With all Our Heart

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.

COLOSSIANS 3:23

This simple truth sounds easy and yet, sometimes I find myself not giving God my personal best in all that I do and say. That's because I buy into Satan's line of thinking and get the "who really cares anyway" attitude." I mean really. Who cares if I don't do my best at home or on the job? Who cares if I don't work at my relationships with my husband, friends and family? Who cares if I don't press on to fulfill the commitments of First Place? Who really cares, right?

GOD CARES! He really does charge each of us with the personal responsibility to give Him our very best in whatever we are doing because in the end, He is the one we seek to please and honor.

So whether we are folding laundry, serving communion, or working at our jobs, God wants our best work. Does that mean perfect work? No, it means *our personal best*. It means living our lives with the sole purpose of bringing honor and glory to our Heavenly Father. And, that means we may have to confront attitudes and behaviors that keep us from reflecting back to others the very character and nature of Christ.

See, that's what it's about. Working with all our heart, soul and might in whatever and wherever we are so that others may see Jesus. Our employer is God and He wants us to shine for Him – all the time. Are you ready to make some changes because of your love and desire to please God? If so, you WILL be blessed and find victory along the way.

PRAYER

*Dear God, Help me to be mindful that it is YOU I truly work for in this world.
I pray for a spirit of excellence to fill my heart so that all that I am and all that I do brings Glory to you.*

Journal: Write down areas of your life that you are not giving God your best. Ask God for the strength and help in overcoming a spirit of mediocrity. Write down the things in your life that you are giving God your very best work and attention.

Kelly Shearer
Indianapolis, IN

*Taken from Living Well, FP4H Devotional Book. To order, visit our website,
www.firstplace4health.com or
call 800.727.523, x1002.*



Success Story



Helen Baratta
Oakdale, PA

Weight Loss: 116 Pounds

One of my strengths is positivity. Outwardly, I am glowing with the joy that only Christ can provide. Being honest, losing 116 plus pounds over 4 years has been hard work. Four of the 12 sessions, I lost less than 5 pounds. In session 9, I actually ended 2 pounds greater than I started. In my quiet time with God, I have spent time grumbling and groaning. I would find myself apologizing to God for not being more positive. I am thankful that I have an awesome

God that lets me grumble. I know he loves me and expects me to keep on going. I continually recall, Deuteronomy 30:11 “Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult or beyond your reach”.

There is much evidence on the outside that I have changed. The incredible truth is that I have changed more on the inside. It is hard to explain. Now, I rise at 6:15 and spend 35-45 minutes exercising. Where I used to walk, I now run. Next on the agenda is time with my awesome Lord and then breakfast. Then dressed and out the door for a busy day at work. There are so many opportunities to share my story. I beam when I am complimented, excited for another opportunity to share what Christ has done in my life. I am taking care of my body for God. My body is a temple for the Holy Spirit who is in me. I no longer take care of my body for me. WOW!

My journey continues--I am focused on maintaining my weight loss. As the Pennsylvania Network Leader for First Place 4 Health, I am committed to supporting and encouraging leaders.



Listen to Helen tell her story at last year's Leadership Summit 2010 in Houston, Texas on our website. Just visit www.firstplace4health.com and click on Media and then Audio.

Make your plans now to join us for Leadership Summit 2011. Exciting speakers and special surprises as we celebrate 30 years of First Place 4 Health.



Recipes

Breakfast Time

Warm Stuffed Peaches Serves 8

4 peaches, halved and pitted
1/2 cup dried tropical mixed fruit
1/4 cup slivered almonds, toasted
2 tablespoons graham cracker crumbs
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1/4 teaspoon ground allspice
1 (12-ounce) can peach nectar
1/2 cup vanilla yogurt, divided

Preheat oven to 350°. Scoop out peach pulp to form a 2-inch circle in center of each half. Reserve pulp, and finely chop. Combine pulp, dried fruit, toasted almonds, graham cracker crumbs, brown sugar, and allspice. Divide the pulp mixture evenly among peach halves. Place stuffed peach halves in an 11 x 7-inch baking dish. Add nectar to pan. Bake at 350° for 40 minutes or until peaches are tender. Drizzle peach halves evenly with liquid from pan. Top evenly with yogurt.

Nutritional Information: 134 Calories; 2.5g Fat; 2.2g Protein; 27g Carbohydrate; 2.1g Fiber; 2mg Cholesterol; .5mg Iron; 30mg Sodium

Tip: Prepare stuffing the night before and bake in the morning. Great pre-workout snack or have two halves with a glass of milk for a filling breakfast.

Lunch Time

Beef Barley Soup Serves 6

Cooking spray
2 cups chopped onion
1 pound chuck steak, trimmed and cut into 1/2-inch cubes
1 1/2 cups chopped peeled carrot
1 cup chopped celery
5 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup uncooked pearl barley
5 cups fat-free, less-sodium beef broth
2 cups water
1/2 cup no-salt-added tomato puree
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 bay leaves

Heat a large Dutch oven over medium heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add chopped onion and beef to pan; cook 10 minutes or until onion is tender and beef is browned, stirring occasionally. Add chopped carrot and chopped celery to pan; cook 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in garlic; cook 30 seconds. Stir in barley and remaining ingredients, and bring to a boil. Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 40 minutes or until the barley is done and vegetables are tender. Discard bay leaves.

Nutritional Information: 275 Calories; 5g Fat; 21.8g Protein; 36g Carbohydrate; 8g Fiber; 43mg Cholesterol; 3.1mg Iron; 649mg Sodium

Tip: Make on Sunday and enjoy all week. Serve with crusty French bread or whole-grain crackers.



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Dinner Time

Heart Healthy Sausage Penne

Serves 4

12 oz. whole-wheat penne pasta
1 large bunch broccoli, cut into florets
12 ounces Italian turkey sausage
1 pint grape tomatoes, each cut in half
1 jar tomato and basil pasta sauce
½ cup fresh basil leaves, chopped
¼ cup grated romano cheese
Salt, to taste

Heat large saucepot of salted water to boiling. Add pasta and cook as label directs, adding broccoli during last five minutes. Reserve ½ cup cooking water, drain pasta and broccoli. Thinly slice sausage. In 12-inch skillet, cook sausage on medium heat 7 to 8 minutes or until it begins to brown, stirring occasionally. Add tomatoes and cook 5 minutes, stirring. Stir pasta, broccoli and ¼ cup of pasta cooking water into sausage mixture in skillet, heat through, adding additional cooking water if needed. Add tomato and basil pasta sauce. Remove from heat; stir in basil and cheese.

Nutritional Information: 383 Calories; 4g Fat (8.4% calories from fat); 20g Protein; 76g Carbohydrate; 13g Dietary Fiber; 7mg Cholesterol; 140mg Sodium

Dessert & Snack Time

Whole-grain Gingersnaps

Yield: 3 ½ dozen cookies

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup whole wheat flour
1 tablespoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon salt
½ cup sugar
6 tablespoon margarine
1 large egg
½ cup dark molasses

On sheet of waxed paper, combine whole wheat and white flours, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. In large bowl, with mixer on low speed, beat sugar and vegetable oil spread until blended. Increase speed to high; beat until light and creamy, occasionally scraping bowl with rubber spatula. Beat in egg and molasses. Reduce speed to low; beat in flour mixture just until blended. Cover dough in bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate 1 hour or until easier to handle (dough will still be slightly sticky). Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. With lightly greased hands, shape dough by heaping measuring teaspoons into 1-inch balls. If you like, dip top half of each ball in nonpareils. Place balls, 2 ½ inches apart, on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake cookies 9 to 11 minutes, or until tops are slightly cracked. (Cookies will be very soft.) Cool cookies on cookie sheet on wire rack 1 minute. With thin metal spatula, transfer cookies to rack to cool completely. Repeat with remaining dough. Store cookies in tightly covered container at room temperature up to 3 days or in freezer up to 1 month.

Nutritional Information: 55 Calories; 2g Fat; 5mg Cholesterol; 75 mg Sodium; 9g Carbohydrate; 1g Fiber; 1g Protein