

# Health Comes from Healthful Living

by Janet Carter

*Janet Carter shares her story of transformation after water fasting at TrueNorth Health Center. She describes how she went from being 100 pounds overweight and in quickly declining health, to losing the weight, eliminating her health issues, and living life with an abundance of energy and free from her old cravings for unhealthy foods.*



I am a 46-year-old mother of six children, and during each of my pregnancies I was close to 100 pounds overweight. Living life as an overweight person and raising six children took a toll on my body.

When I was 34, I tried the Atkins Diet in hopes of losing weight; just one of the many diets I'd tried over the years.

I lost 45 pounds on Atkins, but my inability to sustain the weight-loss over the long-term—due to how bad I felt most of the time from eating all that meat and dairy—was frustrating. Part of my frustration also stemmed from knowing that eating mostly meat, cheese, eggs, and butter was poor health logic.

While I was on the Atkins diet, I developed sinus allergies for the first time in my life. It started out with what I thought was just a bad cold; except the cold didn't go away. So I went to an allergist for testing, and the results indicated that I was allergic to almost all plants and animals.

Given this new information, I set out to purify my home of toxins and other allergy-sources, and I also began taking antihistamines daily to lessen my suffering. But I remained sick. My doctor's suggestion was that I lose weight and exercise more. He said the way I ate likely added to the inflammation in my body, but he made no dietary recommendations other than to choose a good weight-loss program and adhere to it, noting that while this would increase my health, I would likely suffer from allergies the rest of my life.

Exercising wasn't difficult for me since I had always played sports in my youth and knew how to work hard. I

went to the gym and lifted weights, and I walked and jogged. But I just couldn't stick to any weight-reduction program for very long. I came to see over time that I didn't simply lack willpower to adhere to a diet; I had an intense addiction to food, with little idea how to overcome it. I ended up gaining more weight in time, eventually reaching a high of 275 pounds. My allergies remained as bad as ever.

Soon I began having other symptoms of ill health. I was diagnosed as pre-diabetic, with the warning that within a few years I'd have full blown diabetes. I had regular bouts of tachycardia (faster than normal heart rate), which was scary. If I couldn't get my racing heart rate to stop within a minute or two, I felt like I'd run a marathon. A

few years later, due to my nearsightedness, I had a detached retina and rapidly developing cataracts in both eyes. Seven eye surgeries later my eye sight was restored. But the misery of me trying to lose weight, hoping it would cure all my ailments, went on for eight more years.

## Finding TrueNorth

In January 2012 I took a microbiology class at our local university. We spent four weeks studying the immune system and how allergies develop in the body. I remember thinking, "If that's how they develop, the body must also be capable of reversing them." I started researching online about the treatment of sinus allergies. Luckily I came across a YouTube video of Dr. Alan Goldhamer, founder of TrueNorth Health Center in Santa Rosa, California. I listened to him talk about how "health comes from healthful living" and what that meant exactly. My gut feeling was he had

*"The biggest obstacle to any kind of transformation is the voice that tells you it's impossible."*

*Women, Food, and God by Geneen Roth*



*Before Janet's visit to TrueNorth*

some important truth for me, so I called him.

Dr. Goldhamer reviewed my current health status and suggested that I might be a good candidate for water-only fasting and adopting a whole-foods, plant-based diet. What intrigued me most was when he said, "If you

come here and learn how to eat this way, it is very likely you won't suffer from allergies anymore." So off to TrueNorth I went. Even though I had woken up every morning for eight years with severe sinus allergies, within five days of fasting I had zero symptoms.

I was taught that if I continued to eat plant food until I was full at every meal, exercise regularly, and get enough sleep every night, I'd consistently lose one to two pounds per week until my body had reached its natural weight. Sure enough, within 10 months I'd lost 105 pounds. I've maintained that for a year and a half now. All symptoms of diabetes are gone. I no longer take any medications and I have zero allergies. My tachycardia went from twice a month to twice a year.

But best of all, I wake up every morning free of cravings for salty, sugary, fatty foods, and I no longer caffeinate myself just to get through the day. I now live with an abundance of energy every day to take better care of my family and really enjoy being a mom.

## *After My Fast*

When I began eating again after my fast, I discovered that whole plant foods tasted great! I learned that one of the many benefits of water fasting is that the taste buds are cleaned out and reset, in a sense, and that foods that didn't used to taste that good now tasted great. The first food I ate after fasting was a mushroom. It just looked wonderful and tasted divine. Baked mushrooms are still a favorite. I love that a potato can taste wonderful all by itself. I love that you can take just about any combination of fresh plant foods and combine them to make a delicious meal.

My amazing husband never once commented about my weight or health over the years, only to say how beautiful I was to him. When I decided to go to TrueNorth and make this change, he fully supported me by just allowing it, without resistance or criticism. He was raised on a cattle ranch and yet was open to hearing all my rants about the beef and dairy industry. The only thing I asked my family to give up when I got home was dairy. Surprisingly, they did it and with very little trouble.

I now exercise about four days a week consistently. I sleep a regular six to seven hours each night. I've actually never struggled with falling asleep as soon as my head hits the pillow. The biggest change in sleep comes from not needing to take naps every day because of exhaustion. I put in a good day's work because I have the energy to do so and sleep well at night.

I saw my doctor in September of 2013, and he hardly recognized me. He asked what I did to change my life. I told him that I had gone to TrueNorth Health Center and adopted a plant-based diet. He congratulated me, and said he knew that a vegan diet worked, and that he would recommend it to everyone if he thought they would actually adhere to it. Well, now he knows someone who actually adhered to it, so hopefully he is recommending it more.

Was this transformation easy? Not at all. It was the hardest thing I've ever done. I gave it everything I had. I had to admit that my life had become unmanageable. I found hope in a higher power, trusting it to restore me to complete spiritual, emotional, and physical health. I took a fearless, written, moral inventory of my life. In essence, I was becoming entirely ready to be done using food for all the many reasons I used food, aside from it being neurologically and chemically addictive.

My advice to anyone considering a similar journey is to take your transformation as seriously as you've ever taken any large undertaking before. Get honest. Lean into the pain. Ask for help. Concentrate your energy. Do the work. It will yield your desired outcome.

I am grateful for the superb education, tools and treatment I received from the TrueNorth staff. They offered me a new voice, one telling me that reclaiming my health is possible. I think my "before" and "after" pictures say it all. I am proof that health really does come from healthful living.



*Janet Carter with her family after fasting at TrueNorth.*