

Tony Trims Down

Amazing Weight Loss Story

Tony Martin is 60 years old. He lives in Hermitage in a beautiful apartment. He is supported by Mid-TN Supported Living, Inc. He visits his elderly mother regularly. This article sounds pretty typical so far doesn't it? Tony's story is far more amazing than this.

Several years ago Tony began a weight loss program with the help of dietician Rosemary Kenyan. Weighing in at 435 pounds and suffering from joint pain, Tony knew he had to do something to improve his health.

"The good Lord helped me," said Tony in a recent interview when asked how he managed to begin a weight loss program.

Tony wanted to lose weight because he could not walk any distance without having to sit down. He said that his biggest motivator was Scottie Pippen. Not Scottie Pippen the basketball player, Scottie his dog, who is named after the famous basketball player! It was Scottie's desire to be leashed that got Tony into walking. He said Scottie would pull and lead him farther and farther each day increasing his walking distance. Tony can now walk for 20 minutes without stopping!



Sharon Claybrooks has been Tony's direct support professional for five years and has been instrumental in helping Tony trim down. She said that she kept a diary of what foods Tony was eating and discovered he was eating way over 200 grams of carbohydrates a day. They began watching portions more than anything. She measures out small one-serving quantities of healthy snacks and keeps them in zip bags in the refrigerator. They buy individual serving-size microwave popcorn that Tony prepares himself.

Tony began to restrict himself by making wiser food choices, eating more salads and drinking lots of water. He now eats only one roll instead of three at dinner and tries to stay away from sweets. He enjoys sugar-free desserts.

"I can't tell any difference in sugar-free desserts," stated Tony, "and I eat oatmeal and fruit for breakfast."

Sharon Lee, Support Team Leader, said that Tony has wonderful willpower. His weight loss, which totals about 174 pounds, has enabled him to have more energy and improved skin. He is able to ambulate without pain and much less shortness of breath. He is employed part-time as a paper shredder at Community Connections. The weight loss has given him the stamina to perform duties because he can stand for longer periods of time.

Sharon Claybrooks said that Tony also does volunteer work at the Grassmere Zoo. He has volunteered at Second Harvest Food Bank in the past.

Tony's weight loss has been steady. He lost 75 pounds in 2004, another 50 in 2005 and about 49 so far this year.

Tony's clothing size has gone from a six 6-X to a 2-X! He no longer has to buy all his clothes from The Big and Tall Store.



From left to right: Sharon Lee, Sharon Claybrooks, Scottie Pippen, Tony Martin and Rosemary Kenyan

Tony has his own regular bathroom scales now. When he was at his largest he had to be weighed on postal package scales! Tony rides in any car now instead of a special van.

Tony loves animals, likes to shop, and attends church every Sunday. He enjoys the apartment complex swimming pool and sometimes walks at the YMCA and Rivergate Mall.



Tony at 435 pounds before his weight loss

"I enjoy life and my dog more than I used to. I stay strong by praying every day," said Tony happily. "I like to watch wrestling and car racing on television. I would like to have a Jeff Gordon t-shirt."

Occasionally Tony still treats himself to high calorie foods, but overall he controls his intake. Tony is extremely proud of his slimmer self!

Rosemary continues to monitor Tony's progress quarterly and both Sharons support his choices. Scottie just wants to be loved and leashed!



Tony working at the Grassmere Zoo this past summer