

Metamorph

PART ONE OF A SPECIAL MINI-SERIES

Our story begins with a woman who finally found weight loss through gastric bypass surgery. The voyage continues with a casual conversation on the Jersey Shore that leads to a partnership to attain not only a more aesthetic exterior, but more importantly, a FIT interior. PhillyFIT shares with you the journey of Audrey Solomon...

My name is Audrey Solomon. I am a forty - four year old the mother of a beautiful, eight year old daughter. I am also in the biggest transition period of my life. Let me start by briefly going back in time. I have had a weight problem that began in my early teens. It is something that I've battled my entire adult life. I have tried every diet out there from Weight Watchers to Optifast to Nutri System. All of these commercial 'diets' will help you lose weight, but try keeping it off! That is where the true challenge begins.

Keeping off the weight is a monumental challenge that millions of people struggle with on a daily basis. That being said, I, too, had resigned myself to the fact that I would never lose weight; maybe I should just find a way to be happy within my own skin, all 350 pounds of it. A cop out? You betcha! Then one day I was listening to the radio and I heard Carnie Wilson on the Howard Stern Show talking about gastric bypass surgery. Initially I thought, "Sure she's Carnie Wilson; she can afford it." However, after a quick investigation, I realized this was something that could be covered by insurance. At that very moment I knew I had

found the answer for me. No one, no matter what, could stop me. My worst fear, besides dying if I didn't have the surgery, was that at some point my daughter would be teased because her mother was SO fat. After all of the past weight loss failures, I wanted to have this surgery for myself *and* for my daughter.

On May 18, 2001 I had the surgery, and have lost a total of 180 pounds. Six years later the weight remains off and I am extremely proud of myself, but there is still something gnawing at me. I don't feel like my journey is complete. There is more, much more, I need to accomplish. First and foremost, I need to get into shape; the one thing missing from my quest for better health is exercise. To make matters worse, I have worked as a post-gastric surgery support group leader for several years, and I absolutely *do not* practice what I preach. After six years of working to accomplish this weight loss goal, it is time to meet my second challenge - finding a way to get my 'new body' FIT!

A friend of mine says, "There are no coincidences in life." With that statement in mind, I recently was on vacation with my brother and sister-in-law and a group of new acquaintances at the Jersey Shore. One afternoon on the beach, we were talking and I told the group my 'weight loss story'. It turns out, one of my brother's friends was Jami Appenzeller, the Owner and Publisher of PhillyFIT Magazine.

She was intrigued with my voyage and even more excited at the potential for the future

possibilities. For those of you who are avid readers of PhillyFIT, you know that one of Jami's goals is not simply to create an amazing magazine, but also to network businesses, and more importantly, people, to achieve the highest possible level of health and wellness.

We discussed how important it was for me to find a gym and even a personal trainer who could help me reach my latest goal of obtaining not only an aesthetic exterior, but also a FIT body. Again, the "no coincidences factor" presided and while we were discussing these possibilities, my brother walked up with another friend of his, Fred Brandt. When Fred told us that he owned The Center Club in Newtown, PA, Jami and I were dumbfounded. We had just googled his club that morning. The Center Club happens to be located in the same shopping center where I work as a travel agent! We all know that when considering a gym, accessibility is a priority. It just so happens that convenience is the number one thing that keeps me going. Could this be the venue that would help take me to the next level?

After some great conversation, Fred suggested I meet with Tony Robinson, a personal trainer. Fred felt that Tony and I would be a tremendous team; and that he could help me achieve my goals. Fred couldn't have been more "right". After the Shore getaway, I made an appointment with my new personal trainer at the very welcoming Center Club. I do have to admit that while everything seemed to have fallen

hosis



Audrey and her daughter, Emily.

into place, I was a little nervous about my new undertaking. Whatever doubts were present, Tony quickly helped erase them. He was extremely enthusiastic and seemed to only have my best interests at heart. We talked for a while, and he went through a physical assessment with me. During this interview process, I indicated to him that I had a hernia. We agreed that it was in my best interest to see a physician before beginning our training sessions.

Once the hernia is taken care of, I'm on my way! This was all falling into place very, very neatly. How lucky am I? The journey to achieve a future full of good health and unlimited possibilities seems to have

everything set up in its perfect place.

BUT...

How long will this hernia thing keep me from beginning my work with my new personal trainer? *Can I do it? Will my body be able to handle the challenges set forth by Tony?* As confident as I am, the questions and obstacles are definitely present...

Stay tuned to find out if Audrey's body can recover from yet another surgery, if she is truly ready to make the commitment

to hit the gym daily and if she can survive the challenges and expectations set forth by her trainer, Tony. Jami and the PhillyFIT Team are behind Audrey 100%, and look forward to following her through her journey in the coming months.

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