

Get Back to 'Happy Days' - I was asked if I would write this to help guys, maybe you, to lose weight.

A little about me, If you don't know I was in 2PWRR up to 2004, when my daughter got diagnosed with Leukaemia and I managed eventually to get a compassionate posting down south (Canterbury) to be near my wife's family for support and cutting a long story short, ended up transfer to the Argyll's (5 SCSOTS) which I stayed with, until my 22 year point in 2013.

Like most of us while in the army we don't have much choice, we have to do fitness. When I got out, I thought I don't have to do it! *'You can't make me now!'* So guess

what..... *'I'm not doing to do it!'* I think a lot of us think like that after getting out. I still had ongoing injuries after I done my back in during my Afghan tour and had two ops on my back afterwards. Those who know me, I also had 4 ops on my ankle throughout my career which didn't help with the weight situation. So slowly and the scary thing about it I didn't really realise (ok I was most probably in denial) I put on weight and in October 2017 when I had an MOT at the doctors, I topped the scales at 21s 9lbs, when I thought I was no more than 18 stone. The doc said I didn't have diabetes after tests but being clinically obese I was in the risk bracket.

So two shocks: the weight and the possibility of being soon diagnosed with diabetes certainly got me thinking that I had to do something and drastically. But *'oh no - Christmas was coming'* and I know I didn't have the will power to start straight away in the October. I'm glad I didn't start straight away because I think I would of gone off the rails within the first couple weeks, if not: day one, week one. So New Year 's Day was D-Day with a new resolution and to get my mind-set ready - that is one big advice to you: to be mentally right to do it and know you want to do it.

Now I had time to take advice, make a plan and this is what I came up with before I started:

Diet and fitness at the same time?

If you don't read anything on this, please read this as this was how a succeeded in losing so much weight: Someone told me don't diet and do fitness at the same time, which I was shocked when I heard this, as we all do that, don't we? Diet and fitness both at the same time? I was advised if you do both, you will cheat on the diet because after doing fitness, all you want to do is eat to *'replen'* the energy you have lost doing fitness. I must admit, it made perfect sense, so I decided to sort of the food side of things first and I was really glad not to do fitness straight away, which to tell you the truth, was the thing that really sold it to me when I was told from a fitness instructor friend.

Lists:

I wrote a *Pro* (Why, because, how, etc.) and *Con* list and stuck it on the fridge. Here are some of the things I put on mine:

Pro's	Con's
To live to take my 3 daughters down the aisle	Fitness
Not to get diabetes or any other illness due to being overweight	
Not being overweight so being able to sell the armed forces to my cadets as I'm a SSI at the Duke of York's Royal Military School.	
Lose weight and not be embarrassed to wear a wetsuit for our adventure training at school	
Having the embarrassment of getting an extension seat belt on the plane for my holiday in the summer.	
Not being overweight to go down the rip slide on adventure training.	



What I didn't do (but I wish I did) was to put by it on the fridge or the cookie jar a photo of me just in my pants (Nice) at the beginning and also a picture of me on the scales showing my start weight. (I did do it later in the year). This can really help remind you of why you are doing it!

Targets:



I set small targets and it didn't even come into my mind what my final weight I wanted to be or when I wanted it to be completed by, that came more apparent at the beginning of September 18. So my first target was to get down to below 18 stone by Easter to not be overweight to go on Britain's longest rip slide on our schools AT. As the previous year I got all harnessed up, got to the top of the steps and they weighed me and was told sorry mate your too fat (ok they said it more polite than that) and I had to do the walk of shame past my students and as you can imagine, there was not a lot of sympathy under their breaths, being kids. Oh I got down to 17s 10lbs in 3 months but still didn't have the confidence to wear a wetsuit then and look like the only gay in the village from Little Britain as someone pointed out to me.

Next target was not to wear an extension seat belt on the plane and hopefully be able to rattle around a bit in the seat to get more comfortable. Years gone before I have sat down and that's where I stayed till the end of the flight more or less. At that point at the end of July I was down to 15 stone with no extra belt and rattling in my chair!!

As I said the final target didn't come to light, until I came back from holiday and got back to work. My target was not to be overweight and stick my fingers up to the doctors. Doctors and the army as we know use BMI, can't say I have ever been the biggest fan of BMI but anyway, I pushed on and hoping to get down to 13s 2lbs (BMI) by Christmas which I done.....proud moment!!! as I got down to 13.1 total loss of **8 stone 8lbs** and according to that BMI I'm at a normal healthy weight.



Food and drink:

This is another biggie.....

Q. did I diet?

A. I don't think I did just eat healthy.

Q. Did I go hard line?

A. I think I did, so it won't suit everyone.

What didn't I eat? It was customary to smash a whole packet of biscuits with a cuppa tea most evenings and then also have a large dinner, then a hour later have 8 or more crackers with large lump of cheese. I know most of you have done it, as in finishing off the kids' dinner (I've got 3 daughters that don't eat much but their plates are always full), as you can't see it going to waste, apart from going on my waist line.

So, no fitness until after Easter (3 ½ months in) so I sorted out the food first as in healthy eating. I don't think I dieted, just being careful on my consumption. This was so I was ready to do fitness as in being lighter and in a routine and it started to become an obsession, which I didn't admit to at the time, as my family kept telling me.

Basically, I cut out all the crap, no dairy, which was hard, as my one true weakness was cheese, no sugar, very low carbs, eating loads of veg, salads, fruit, oily fish, chicken and loads of eggs. I cut alcohol out, which wasn't a problem really anyway, apart from a glass of red probably once a month, if I was a good boy. Drank

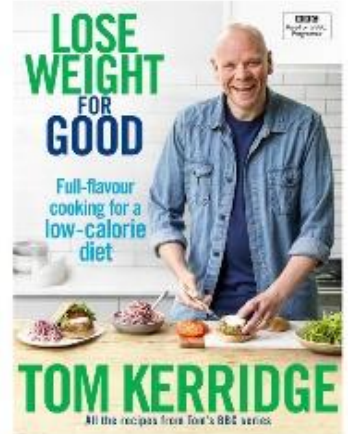
loads of water and a great tip: drink a pint of water before eating and that will fill up your belly and you won't want to eat so much. Remember, if you think you're hungry, actually you're probably thirsty, so drink before you eat. I did drink loads of Pepsi Max (There are other brands available!) especially after fitness just to get some taste.

Food side of things is hard because there is a lot of planning for the week, especially for the weekly shop and if you have a family and doing different meals, it's hard for the person who cooks in the household. I was shocked the amount of sugar in sauces, like your curry and 'spag-bol' sauces out of a jar, avoid them like the plague.

Alternative Spag-bol sauce: Chop loads of tomatoes or even chopped tin tomatoes, loads of mixed herbs and thrown in an Oxo cube, then chuck in small amount meat, then loads of mushrooms and peppers to bulk it out.

Alterative Curry sauce: Tin of low calorie coconut milk, curry paste half a small jar, then try and have fish or chicken with it and then loads of veg go in. Small amount of rice.

The wife got Tom Kerridge's books to help to get the variety of meals and he should know as he has lost over 10 stone.



Do you need help?

“Big time” I believe you can't do it on your own, you need your family to back you with loads of support and encouragement. Really could do with losing weight with someone else who wants to do it as well, make it a competition? You really need to go somewhere to weigh in, family member, at work, or weightwatchers. I also used Facebook to set my targets and if I didn't reach those targets, I would wait for the piss take from my old army mates. You can imagine, I always stuck to my targets.

Fitness:

I'm not going to teach you to suck eggs on this part, apart from as I said I didn't start until after Easter, 3 ½ months in, and started slowly and running mainly, and now I'm running between 7-10 miles a day with a rest day on Saturdays, I love it, can't get enough of it and this year I've booked into do Trail walker (100k in 30 hours across the south downs) looking to do 10k runs and hopefully a half marathon. I know longer get back problems touch wood but the ankle still does give me problems from time to time. I've got so much energy now and the best thing, I can go into any clothes shop and buy an item knowing it will fit me, as before I was XXXL and some items XXXXL



Final States:

Was	Now	Remarks
Weighed: 21st 9lbs	8st 1lb	Loss = 8st 8lbs
Neck size: 19	16	Tailored shirt
Chest: 52	42	
Waist: 44	33	

My summary is: you need to be mentally strong and keep mentally strong throughout and have reasons why you want to do it.... good luck and go for it!!!