

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

## COLLEEN PALMITER

There is not a day that goes by that something that touched me at H<sup>3</sup> doesn't, positively, creep up in my day to day life. Attending the 10 day program with my husband, Brad, was the best thing we could have ever done for each other. And I encourage other couples to share the experience together even if one party is fitter than the other—sharing the program helps bring it home. My husband has changed in how he supports me and how he pushes me to accomplish my daily goals. The competition that has been the undertone of our marriage has ceased and we are now exercise equals and on the same team—I had always felt inadequate next to him—now I do not—hey, I can out run him in distance (not speed)! Learning to push myself within my own boundaries and not at the same level as the person next to me has also helped me continue this quest for overall good health and Brad's respect and support as I go at my own pace and not his has made all the difference for me. I so love this!



Today I ran 5.5 miles! I could not stop running—imagine that—me not talking myself out of going farther! I attribute this to H<sup>3</sup> and all the encouragement and support I received from the most wonderful trainers there. Several months ago, I would be working on this Sunday—mentally exhausting myself with accounting and other business related paperwork to catch up or get ahead for the week ahead. Today, I desire to go and do something for at least an hour or more or else I feel stiff, sluggish, unaccomplished! Because of the continued physical activity, I seem to mentally manage my time better and—very big for me—I have completely gotten off caffeine of any kind and kicked my Excedrin addiction!

My weight continues to go down—I am down 16 pounds since I entered H<sup>3</sup>! I go to the gym and work out on the equipment if I can't get outside to run or take my dogs for a long walk. And I met with a weight trainer at the gym to begin the weight training component of increasing my metabolism and toning up this squeaky body- which I attribute to Adam counseling me on my sluggish metabolism after finding out what my metabolic rate is. Knowing this has also made a mental difference for me. I left knowing what my true calorie limits are. And I have consciously been looking at food differently since then—I forever hear Bob saying “Unwise, Better, Best” and hear this daily when making choices. Also, the one glass of wine with dinner when we eat out rule seems to be easier than I thought it would be! And yes, I have repeated “Alcohol dissolves resolve” repeatedly when I am tempted with that 2nd class of wine! Brad and I often share an entrée after eating a nice salad before dinner. Remarkably, we seem to feel better leaving satisfied and not over stuffed.

Another thing that comes up every day in my head (and this is really funny to me because it is constant) is hearing Amber yelling “YOU CAN DO ANYTHING FOR A MINUTE!” and when I reach a minute at the gym on the elliptical and increase the resistance and it is hard—I hear her say “YOU CAN DO ANYTHING FOR 2 MINUTES!” and you know what? Yes, I can! I bet she didn't know she would be haunting my exercise thoughts beyond H<sup>3</sup>!





I love my sneakers! Another “best thing I could have done”—be personally fitted for sneakers!

I have also rearranged the way I cook meals—I love to cook and am known as an incredible cook to all who know me. So, my biggest challenge has been to learn how to modify my recipes so they are healthier for all of us- and most importantly, still as tasty as they always have been. I learned a few tricks participating in the cooking demos at H<sup>3</sup> and everyone so far is not complaining. I also have hired a chef to prepare dinners and snacks (metabo meals) for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for us so we have healthy dinners waiting for us after our long work days. These 4 days are our downfall days with food because we have no time because of work to prepare and sit down to a meal before 9 pm—we have known all along that this needed to change. This will be a solution for us—tonight [Chef] Robert will bring us sample meals that he has prepared from the H<sup>3</sup> cookbook—we are very excited!

When I arrived at H<sup>3</sup> I was physically and mentally defeated. I could not intellectually figure out how to begin to fix years of physical and mental neglect. I had a wakeup call in the ER in December when I was rushed there by ambulance for a possible heart attack and when the cardiologist told me I needed to change my life or else I could die—I was very frightened. Turning 50 in February and hearing this news, stepping on the scale and hating the number but not being able to get a grip was a very low point in my life. Today I am like a new woman—maybe I was re-born at H<sup>3</sup> because when I was there I felt like a child again, smiling joyfully as I tried new things—pushing myself while learning to have fun being active and physically exerting myself! My goal for the future is to continue to lose weight—I would like to lose another 20-25 pounds which I know I can do—yes I can, to get off blood pressure meds, to continue to enjoy exercise and activity and not let food be the enemy anymore. To share a healthy future with my husband—my team mate, my best friend.

I think that is all for now although I could go on and on—but I think you get it—the experience at H<sup>3</sup> was the best experience for my overall well being and continues to positively influence me to this day. Period! They [Adam, Amber, Bob, Beth and other H<sup>3</sup> Program Staff] should know the positive influence they have had on me. And my life.

