

Finding a way back to health

Louise Heeneey of Stanmore Bay has said goodbye to the days when the numbers on the scales ruled her life.

Comfort eating, fuelled by depression and anxiety, meant that the 36-year-old's weight seesawed up and down throughout her teens, 20s and early 30s.

She weighed herself several times a day and tried every diet going. "I remember walking heaps at one time, and only eating an apple all day," Louise says.

But that level of restriction soon rebounded, with a return to binge eating.

The crunch came when she reached her heaviest, 120kg, after losing and regaining 30kg in just a few months. Her general health, joints and back were suffering as a result.

"I couldn't go through that yoyo dieting process again," she says. "I also didn't want my daughter, who is now three years old, to grow up with body image issues. I started looking at my mindset and began by thinking about things I'm grateful for, each day."

She also started moving.

"At the time, I was a Pilates instructor, despite being overweight, and also an aged caregiver for the Salvation Army. I saw older people with lots of physical restrictions and realized how important it is to keep moving and look after your health. At times I had exercised excessively and would be so sore afterwards that I'd soon drop it. I started more gently this time, walking for only around 10 minutes to start with. It was my type of exercise, so I stuck with it. I've come to realise that exercise should be something you look forward to and enjoy doing."

Feeling more confident and positive, she says, resulted in steady weight loss and a new focus on helping others to become healthier.

"Staying positive, for me, was about finding more fun, fitness and friendships. I had been missing those connections, but once I got out and met new people I found that network is what keeps me mentally strong."

After qualifying to be a personal trainer, Louise took up powerhooping.

Mind over matter, and a whole lot of hooping, helped Louise Heeneey back to good health.



"I met Amy McAuley of Powerhooping NZ and bought a hoop. I loved her energy – and the rainbow colours!"

It took Louise a few weeks to get to grips with the technique needed to rotate the large, heavy hoop around the body. "Even when I began as a Powerhoop instructor, I was only a couple of steps ahead of the class."

Louise now takes Powerhooping classes at Sharks Sports Club in Orewa, and Fitter Faster Stronger in Whangaparaoa. She has the technique sorted, and says the fun of hooping is also an antidote to depression.

"Once I tried hooping on a trampoline and it was hilarious. It began as a tearful day, but once I tried that, I cracked up," Louise says.

These days she hardly ever weighs herself and is the healthiest she's ever been.

"It's my mental outlook that made the difference. Now I'm up for a whole lot of new things – including doing the Colour Run with my daughter."

Louise's tips for healthy living are with this story at www.localmatters.co.nz



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