

THE EVOLUTION OF SUE HENDERSON – BEFORE AND AFTER PHOTOS

The photo (or one of them) that started it all. My brothers 40th at a Tharens Restaurant in Sydney August 2010. This is me at about 110kg. By mid January 2011 I was 108 and decided to get serious so started tracking my food on www.sparkpeople.com again, and using my treadmill. By the time the competition started I was around 104kg and I was ready to start going back to the gym so the call from my sis was very timely!



Check out the quadruple chins! Two on me, and a bonus two reflected in the mirror. FYI – a great place for a special event – hat themed restaurant in Sydney and we had a blast! But, I only knew one person there, my brother, I felt fat and had no clothes to wear that fit, and felt crap (albeit drunk) all night.

Havent got any current photos of me out in a social situation as a comparison, but suffice to say I am looking forward to going out, feeling confident, attractive and comfortable from now on. Just last weekend, working at the Womens Lifestyle Expo, my agent had the guy from the stand next to us come over trying to get the low down on me and my number while I was off working elsewhere for the afternoon. She reckons 'pulling in absentia' is pretty impressive so I must be lookin good 😊 Made my day!



I now enjoy shopping so am soon going to have a great collection of outfits, and never turn down an invite again because I had nothing to wear and be comfortable there as I have done many times before

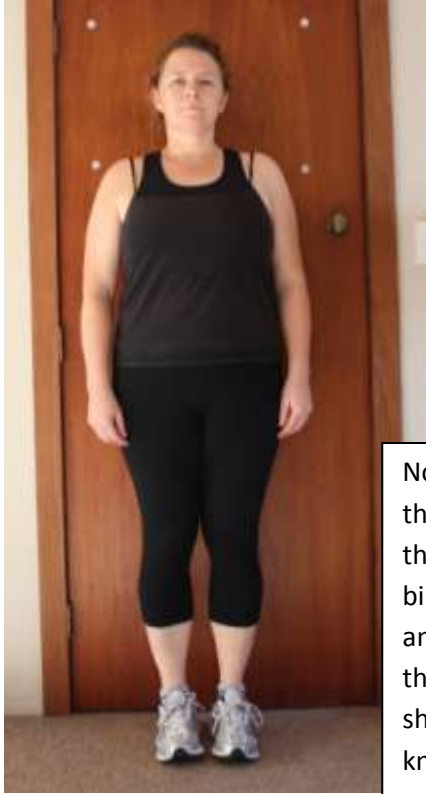
Thank you Sheta and Catch!!

Be warned – the following contains graphic and offensive images!

8.2.11

31.8.11

In tights and tank – I like that my shoulders re getting more square rather than rounded I started with. Collarbones starting to appear.

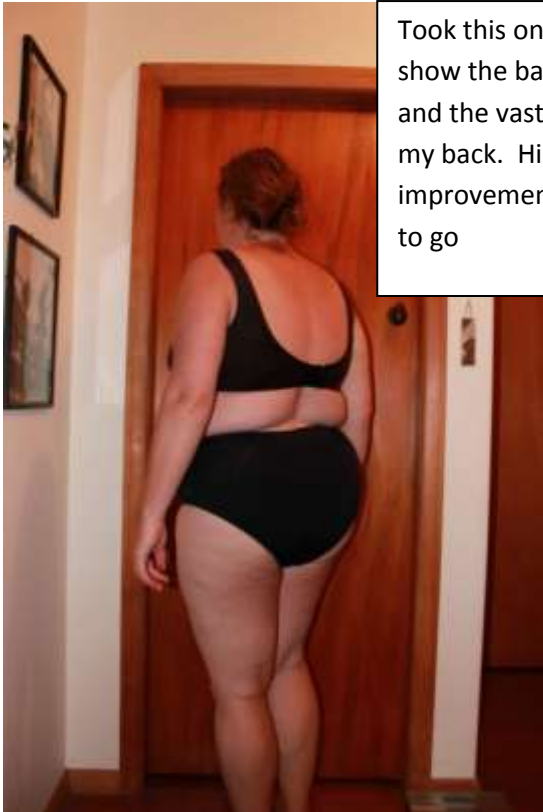


Now, before you think..OMG what is a chick that size doing owning a bikini!! It was tankini pants and a bra 😊 but I braved them in photos to better show the improvements I knew I would make.

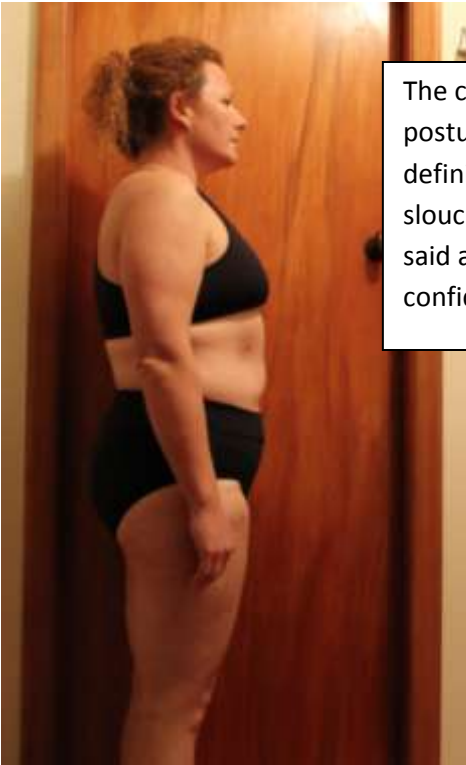


I'm getting a waist! Check out the frog face that my belly has become cos of all the sunken saggy bits gttng saggier! Loving that my shoulders are losing their roundness and my chins are disappearing. While its all wobblier at the moment, the 'shelf' of my belly is going – and this was a major contributor to me starting this back in January – I carry the weight in my gut/stomach – theworst place, and that's where my Mum carried it big time – and she died of a massive heart attack at only 59yrs old

Took this one of me turning to show the back fat rolls better and the vast roundness that was my back. Hideous! But major improvement here ...still a fair bit to go



Rear views are never good but still a shock that I let myself get so bad. Roundness still there but getting better, but stoked about the change in the back rolls and forming a waistline.

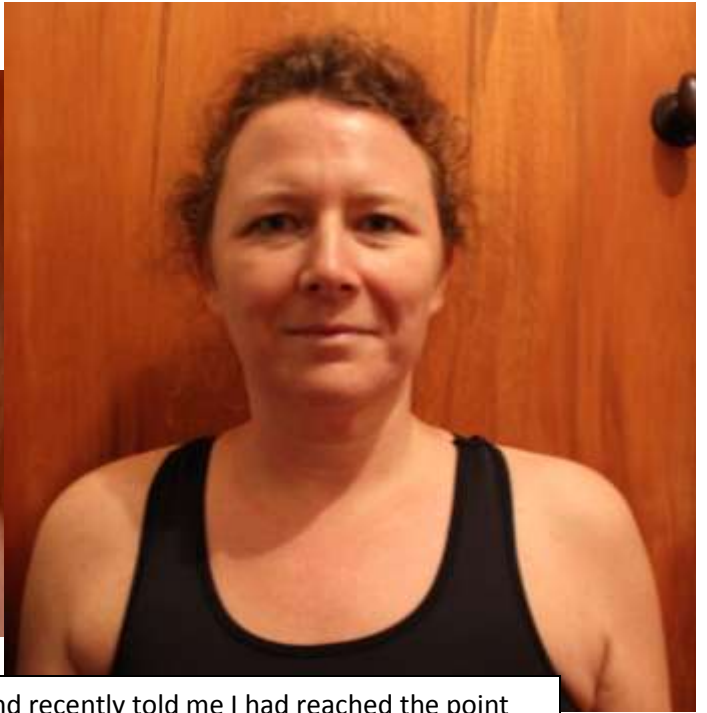


The change in my natural posture has done wonders – I definitely walk taller and my slouchie posture of the past said a lot about my confidence level!



That belly, combined with my high work stress, fast food living, poor sleep habits (lucky to get 4-5 hours a night, and usually pulled and allnighter working at least once a week!) is a heart attack waiting to happen.

Back then, I couldn't hold my belly in if I tried.



My face is coming back – my friend recently told me I had reached the point that I looked like it would explode! Nice way of putting it huh LOL.



What I Have Achieved throughout this process?

From Zero to Hero in the Exercise Stakes:

I never exercised, especially voluntarily, unless you count getting up of the couch (half a squat?), walking to the fridge (aerobic activity particularly if I really wanted it in a hurry), or going to the car (involved at least THREE steps!) to drive for takeaways (there is weight resistance when pushing the clutch in the car isn't there? Does that count?)

Now, I get a little tetchy if I haven't exercised for more than a day. I could not believe how antsy I was after a month of enforced non activity after my operation (even to the point I attempted to do mild treadmill work a bit sooner than I should have, and paid for it). I always do at least my 30 mins on the treadmill, often more. I do allow myself a rest on Sunday, but generally walking around lots or doing lawns that day anyway.

Was stoked with my fitness testing results, although felt I could have done a little better still, but a bit clogged up at the time with fleghm. Will blitz them and be 'above average' in no time!

Practical examples of the improvement in fitness I have experienced – digging over a vege patch a month or so ago it amazed me I had it done in half hour last month, when last year it took me most of the morning due to needing breaks! Same applies with setting up expos – used to take me 3-4hrs, now I am done within an hour – and that is purely due to cardio fitness improvement, able to just get it done without stopping.

From Major Shareholder in Fast Food Chains to Domestic Goddess:

Well I should have been a shareholder the amount of money I have injected to Hell Pizza, MacDonalds, KFC and Burger King over the years. They were my 'go to' meals on the drive home after work, for lunch, and often times for brekky on the drive to the office. Thinking back, I cannot believe how much time I spent eating on the run, in my car. I am ashamed to admit that sometimes on weekends breakfast, lunch and dinner consisted of Maccas, KFC then Hell, and literally it was hell on my digestive system which is now finally seeming to work normally.

Right at the start of my weight loss journey in January, my non-negotiable step was breakfast. I had to make my breakfast and sit down to eat it. Usually porridge, yoghurt, linseed & berries, and OJ and a coffee. Get in my vitamin D injection and get ready for the day in the sun on the deck.

I have had fun experimenting with recipes, modifying to reduce sodium, fat etc and now enjoy things that if you had told me a year ago I would choose as my lunch of choice I would have laughed. I still enjoy a pie OCCASIONALLY, but I actually prefer the taste of my cold roast vege salad topped with those seeds and stuff that only hippies eat on top, with my Mango coriander salsa...

I have at least 4 or 5 'go to' meals that I can cook from the stuff in my fridge/cupboard, and they are all 5 min meals so I have finally acknowledged to myself that the convenience of fast food was not a necessity

due to my time pressure and work habits, but simply an excuse because I loved eating them, and taste...I don't even enjoy the taste of them all so much now and my quick meals I love the taste of every time.

Early in the comp, I was growing my own veges, and will be doing so again now its warming up. I preserved heaps, resulting in soups, stocks, sauces etc that I was in control of the fat and sodium contents – ever mindful of my high risk for heart attack so wanting to minimize those in particular.

From Haggard Stressed out Night Owl to Rested, Relaxed and Efficient Superwoman!

I work full time most weeks, in accounting, and I run a couple of businesses. That means time is very precious. It was quite normal for me to operate on 3-4 hours sleep, and very often I pulled an all-nighter working/catching up. I'd very rarely get to bed before 2am, and was usually having to get up by 6. Maybe once a week I would get in a full 8 hrs – if I was lucky.. This, all despite knowing that if you don't get the right amount of sleep, and particularly combined with high stress levels, you can never lose weight easily – never mind all the other bad effects on health, stress, work inefficiency etc

Now, I aim to get into bed by 10.30pm, and usually achieve that. I still get up between 6am and 7am, but I get up feeling rested and refreshed. I am much better focused with all those numbers during the day, and basically am getting back on top of things (I was WAY behind the eight ball in many tasks). Now, if I am up past 10.30, I feel it, but now, instead of working through it, I say 'bugga it, its only work" and I go to bed and get up a little earlier in the morning.

Planner Extraordinaire

Im a believer in the saying "Failure to plan is a plan to fail". So now I religiously review my upcoming week on a Sunday and work out where I am going to be and what exercise and cooking facilities I will have available. I then plan out my weeks meals and shopping list, and what workouts I plan to do. Sunday nights are usually spend getting the groceries and doing as much of the prep that can be done to ensure it is easy to stay on track during the week. Simple things like cutting up the nights portion of eat before freezing it makes all the difference to me – as it is the thought of having to prepare a meal that sent me up to KFC (it is so close to my house I can sometimes smell it) – if I take it out to defrost the night before I just tip it into the pan..

A big issue for me was the amount of travel I do. A year ago I put on close to 8kgs working for one client as I had to travel to Auckland and live out of a motel for months on end, and at expos, the food selection available was always crap. Now, Sheta has given me INVALUABLE tools – I know what exercises I can do with limited space, no equipment etc, and meals that I can prepare for lunches etc – some using microwave, or some without anything needed.

I am also very proud to be assisting three of my friends in learning some new choices, and helping them plan out their meals and activity. Im yet to see them stick at it consistently for more than a few days, but as I tell them, every little change is a step toward the big one, and one day they will be in the 'head space' that I was, that gave me the determination to do it..

Emotional Eating?? What is that?

It was my favourite excuse to eat. Something went wrong in my life I ran to takeaways and wine for comfort. I felt shite about how I looked already so whats one more pizza/burger/bottle.

But, now I recognize it for the excuse that it is. The last few years have probably been the most challenging for me in my life emotionally, and financially, from many different angles. So I would eat, and would eat what made me feel good (albeit very temporarily before the guilt and disgust with myself would set in and I would inevitably eat some more).

This year in April I got told I have pre-cancerous cells (cervical cancer family) that had to be removed. This would previously sent me into a tail spin of eating and drinking. Not now. Sure, I had a burger that night because I felt like it but I also instantly recognized, "WTF...that aint going to get rid of them" and was back on track immediately. Previously if I had a slip up, I would have thought, ah well, damage is done, may as well restart next week/month. Now, I recognize it as a slip up, and just be extra careful the rest of the week.

Getting told last month there is more cells and a couple more operations to go through didn't really even phase me. Sure, it's a worry, but nothing I can do about it except ensure I am in the best possible health when the ops occur.

A Social Butterfly coming out of the Cocoon! Bring it on

I used to enjoy a great social life, but over the last 3-4 yrs in particular I have locked myself away – I felt and looked awful so didn't want to go out, I would drink a bottle or two of wine at home by myself instead. Lost count of the number of invitations from friends to come over for a BBQ or something that I have turned down because they will all be in shorts and tshirts and there is no way I could wear anything skimpy, or even just remotely comfortable. I was always going to be the fat ugly chick – no wonder she is single.. I wouldnt try new experiences due to fear of failure, in front of others.

Now, Im sooo looking forward to BBQ/party season (and very thankful my friends havent given up on me!). I feel so confident in myself now and I LOVE love love shopping when I can buy off the rack.

Have always thought "Im the same person, fat or thin". Although I am more realistic than others I have heard say this, in that I have always recognized I am more confident when I feel I look better. Once you lose weight you are a completely different person. The same in that your core values etc are the same, but your confidence, the way you carry yourself etc changes. I will accept new challenges with ease, I will go to parties with confidence, and I will expect people to like me, not think I am not good enough to know.

And....I am going to need to get myself a new 'Little Black Book'!! A couple of months ago, I was actually happy in my own skin, for the first time in my adult life. Yes, everything is still wobbly (and particularly so at the moment), but I know where I have been and am damn happy to be where I am at now. And dammit – who cares if the lights are on ;)

Im now "Normal" for the first time in my adult life

I have had blood pressure problems for as long as I can remember. At about 25yrs old, at one point it was being checked daily for a couple of weeks until it came down.

I haven't been a size 16 since was 16. And now I can buy off the racks, not have to go to the plus size section/specialty shops which I have had to do since my early 20's. At 42 I am kicking myself that I didn't do this sooner..but the headspace just wasn't there.

When I had my operation in June, even my sisters immediate reaction was "wow that's good" when she saw my BP on the monitor, at 119/79 from memory. Unfortunately at my retest last week, I was 130/90 so it had gone up, but given I was leaving for an expo and had heaps to do, I was operating on my old habit – 4 hrs sleep so that probably drove it up.

All my other tests, blood sugars, cholesterol were all too high in Feb, and are now in the normal ranges for the first time. I will always have to keep n eye on my blood sugars as both parents had type 2 diabetes, but I can keep it under control.

I'm Happy. Simple as that

My biggest achievement is that – for the first time in living memory I am completely at ease with myself. Im happy. I have also learned what sends my weight up and down and don't panic and give up if I am suddenly 2 kgs heavier – I just be a bit more careful over the following days..

This last month has been the trickiest to manouvre due to all the travel. But, it has shown me I can do this, I can maintain my weight and still live a life. I have had my treats when out with friends, more so in the last month, and I have maintained and lost still. That in itself is shows how far I have come.

And that may/may not be 10 things I have achieved, but it the main things that come to mind! And, looking forward to doing my PADI course later this month/early October – all paid for, just got to set the dates.

CATCH CREDITS

I haven't been too religious in tracking these as I was a bit too busy usually, and as I am the only Hamilton entrant, didn't have someone to do the challenges with, and seems pointless doing it when it couldn't be verified...I did some of them, like the Sue Slim steps challenge, the bike challenge, probably double the Ironman biking and running distance but didn't make it to the pools.

I commented/updated on the FB pages for Catch & 20 weeks most weeks, did the online feedback forms, done my 10 things I have achieved above, Sue Slims step challenge, have sister in comp, NNS set and photographed, the 7 day 4 min with someone, so probably have about 90 credits. Not verifiable so wont be using them anyway..

And that's me over and out 😊

Sue Henderson

