

dreams Do Come True



My weight loss journey
led me to Oprah...

by Sally Cain, RD, LDN

I can still remember the day in 1986 when my mother called me exclaiming, "There's a black lady on TV and she's better than Phil Donahue!" Thus began my 25 year stint as an *Oprah Show* viewer.

For years I've had a Bucket List, but it had just two items on it: 1. Lose 100+ pounds, 2. Go to the *Oprah Show*. Little did I know that one day my weight loss would be my ticket to the show.

I've been touched in countless ways by Oprah's productions over the years, but it was a weight loss story with a dietitian named Cindy in Jan. 2007 that inspired me in to lose 124 pounds. I've maintained my new weight for two years now. Cindy became my weight loss mentor, and encouraged me to send my story to Oprah in 2009. With the final season of the show approaching, I decided to try again in August 2010. Shortly thereafter I received an email from a producer who expressed an interest, but nothing came of it. So it was a total surprise when seven months later I received a phone call from another producer. They were planning a weight loss show finale. After a long discussion and follow-up contacts, I couldn't help but get my hopes up again. Then I got the news: I would not be featured on the show. I was disappointed for a few minutes, then realized that the glass was really half full – they were inviting me to be one of 100 audience members who had lost 100 pounds or more! I invited Cindy as my guest, since her support was so critical in my weight loss journey. Going to the *Oprah Show* together would be our full circle moment.

April 27th, the day of the show taping, we were required to be there at 6 am. Waiting for the show to start, I spoke with those nearby. It was a unique experience to be united with 99 other people who worked hard to realize their weight loss dreams. We were all on an emotional high, there to celebrate our accomplishments and hopefully inspire those in the television audience. As I took it all in, I felt so totally alive, empowered, grateful, and exhilarated. At 8:30 it was time to start taping, and Oprah walked onto the stage – beautifully elegant in a black dress. After years of seeing her on the TV screen, it was surreal to see her in real life; a delightful, captivating moment. After the introduction, the weight loss section of the audience held up our biggest size old clothes then dropped them to the floor to reveal our slim new selves. It was an uplifting hour, featuring four weight loss stories and a segment with Bob Greene.

At the show's end, our give-away was announced: a brand new bike

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from Schwinn! It will provide a great way to add variety to my exercise routine, and serve as a special reminder of this momentous day.

For me, the best surprise came next – Oprah would be taking group photos with us! Wow, I was going to be with her on stage after all. Afterward, I was able to say a quick “Thanks for all 25 years,” taking her hand as I did so.

The show aired May 10th, with just eleven more remaining. Watching it, having Oprah herself announce our success, gave me a greater appreciation of my accomplishment. I'm on an emotional high that should take me through the entire year.

True confession: I ate a piece of celebratory cake during the commercials.

For years I mourned having been so obese: what I missed, how I was judged for my size, the hurtful comments, the lack of self worth, the damage possibly done to my body, the loss of my career in dietetics. Now I can stand tall and celebrate every day in a truly meaningful way, with a healthy new body, new life, new hopes, and new dreams.

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Absolutely incredible!

- Bucket List additions: 3. Get over the *Oprah Show* ending.
- 4. Take the passion I have for helping others and land a position as a bariatric dietitian in a health and wellness center.
- 5. Continue living my best life. ●

Sally's two previous stories can be viewed on *WLS Lifestyles* website.



about sally...

Sally Cain, RD, LDN just recently attained her dream job as a community dietitian in health and wellness, contracted with Highmark Insurance. She has earned certificates of training in childhood, adolescent and adult weight management from the ADA and is a certified health & wellness coach through Wellcoaches Corporation, endorsed by the American College of Sports Medicine. Sally understands the struggle of obesity both personally and professionally, having lost 124 pounds with a healthy lifestyle/non-diet approach to weight loss. Passionate about the psychological and emotional aspects of weight control, she hopes to inspire others in their struggle with obesity. Sally can be contacted at elisal@comcast.net

