

## Breaking through with Weight Loss Surgery

### Thunderbolt

I just recently started yoga. A friend of mine sent me an e-mail saying that she had heard about Abby and her yoga classes. A woman in New York is doing a documentary about a group of women who have had weight loss surgery. She's documenting our progress. There's 10 of us in the Austin area who were fat women together. We've become smaller together and we really are our own support group. When I called Abby, it turns out there are so many of us who want to come to her classes we needed to have two classes, instead of just one.

I'm a business consultant for a software company. We develop insurance software for large insurance companies — I've been doing that for 16 years. My involvement with the size acceptance movement has been over more than 30 years. I've been involved with NAAFA, the National Association for the Advancement of Fat Americans; I was on their board of directors for a while and involved in the local group.

I was at odds with their position on weight loss surgery. They were opposed to it, although people's health issues and individual stories are so different. I made my own decision several years ago that my mobility issues were coming into question. I was over 50, my knees were starting to go. I had a tremendous amount of weight on me that I needed to get off. I made the decision for lap band surgery. My whole thing right now is for my health. It's not appearance, it's just so my mobility will still be intact. I'm not going to be in a wheelchair or a scooter! I had my surgery done in November of 2006 and I've lost about 115 pounds. And I'm not done yet.

I'm always going to be a large woman, and I'm okay with that, with my appearance and with my shape. But from a perspective of reality, being able to be mobile and having that quality of life that I want — because I still have a lot of stuff that I want to do. And I think that's what the yoga is going to help. Already I've



**Dawn, 57**



seen improvement with my knees and my flexibility. I've even been able to get up off the floor. You know, I think it's being centered, and knowing who you are and what you want out of life. Hopefully, the whole process of the yoga will enhance that.

People of size especially veer away from doing anything that's not of the norm. My suggestion is to try it. Don't be afraid.

People of size, they tend to get into a little box, and their comfort zone is in that little box. We need to try different things and take a risk. Because it's a very fearful thing being big out there in a small society. If people aren't aware that there's a societal bias that's going on, they've got their head in the sand. What Abby is doing, in breaking that stereotype, is really important for health, for piece of mind, for expanding new horizons, for meeting new people — for just the whole expansion of what needs to be done. ♥

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