

## **THIS 'N THAT** (part 1)

*by Nicky De Lange*

The past two columns I've written have centered on my recent weight reduction and the method that has enabled me to achieve it. In this final column I'd like to share with you some online sources of information and a few comments about what it has done to change my lifestyle.

First, just a little information about the English woman who originated Virtual Gastric Banding: her name is Sheila Granger, and her website is [www.hypnothoughts.com](http://www.hypnothoughts.com). She has trained other licensed hypnotists in her method, including Michael Schuman, B.C.H. (board certified hypnotist). That's who I chose for this exciting journey, and his website is [www.hypnomike.net](http://www.hypnomike.net).

But you need to know that there are only – at this time – four such trained hypnotists in the Houston/Galveston area. If you decide to pursue this unique form of weight reduction, you have to make the commitment to drive to Houston once a week for four consecutive weeks, followed by another visit two weeks later and one more visit a month after that.

But the really important commitment you must make is to work with the program, to be committed to changing your eating habits and lifestyle.

Just as people can over-ride gastric bypass surgery, you can defeat Virtual Gastric Band hypnosis. It's not magic. You don't just show up to be hypnotized and then go back to your old way of living.

Michael Schuman took me through the virtual surgery, spent a lot of time using regression hypnosis to find the triggers for my bad eating habits, and then he spent more time putting suggestions and new ideas into my subconscious mind to change my lifestyle for the better.

I'm very fortunate. I was able to take this amazing opportunity and run with it. When a good suggestion popped into my mind, like eating less and eating healthier, I did that. When I decided to walk every day for exercise, I did that too.

The hypnosis was what made all this easier. I have to admit I'm not a breakfast enthusiast. Previously, my idea of a good breakfast was chips and a candy bar. (I know, how dumb is that?!) Now I eat breakfast every day. Only now it's a scrambled egg (one) & some fresh fruit. Other days I swap the scrambled egg for a one-egg omelet or two strips of turkey bacon.

I started out walking 30 minutes a day. I'm currently up to an hour a day (three miles). My friend, the gal who first told me about Virtual Gastric Banding, opted to join a gym, which she faithfully goes to at least three days a week.

Each person finds the best way individually to implement the need to exercise. You could swim, jog, take up aerobics or whatever you can and will do.

As for what to eat, most folks know what is healthy and what isn't. People ask me what I can or cannot eat on my "diet." I AM NOT ON A DIET. I can eat whatever I choose, but thanks to hypnosis, I make much healthier choices now.

Mike Schuman also gives his clients two CDs. These are basically self-hypnosis CDs, and I play one of them every single day. It reinforces all the good suggestions I've received during those first appointments while under hypnosis. I firmly believe this has helped me form good habits and self-control.

My goal is to reduce my starting weight by 40-50 pounds. I'm half-way there. But my more important goal is to maintain that weight reduction the rest of my life. This isn't a diet. It's a journey and a lifestyle change. I frequently remind myself that "nothing tastes as good as being thin feels."

## **THIS 'N THAT** (part 2)

*by Nicky De Lange*

It's been quite a journey, but I reached my goal weight last week. Eleven months, almost to the day. And since I wrote in this column about how I was going to achieve this, I feel it's only right to share my weight reduction trip with you.

First of all, I reduced my weight by 45 pounds. My original goal was 50 pounds, but during a medical checkup, my doctor suggested 43 less pounds was what I should actually weigh. I rounded it off to 45, just so I'd have a two-pound leeway.

For those who missed my original column, I elected to reduce my size by Virtual Gastric Band Hypnosis. This is a process in which the client is hypnotized by someone trained in this method, which was developed about seven years ago.

It involves four weekly appointments, followed by another appointment two weeks later, and then one final one a month after that. The hypnotist takes your mind through the actual process you would undergo if you were to have real gastric band surgery. There's no pain, but you genuinely feel like you have undergone the surgery. Your mind is convinced that a gastric band now makes the top of your stomach about the size of a golf ball, tennis ball or racquet ball (depending on how much weight you need to reduce).

You also receive plenty of positive suggestions to help you eat healthier and exercise more. I like to tell people you pay for a "virtual" gastric band, but the hypnotist throws in a free backbone that enables you to eat less and do more.

My progress was, from the very beginning, slow but steady. I took off around eight pounds in the first four weeks, then continued to see anywhere from four to seven pounds vanish each month. There were the inevitable "plateaus," common to any weight reduction effort when your body is adjusting to this new way of life.

I began this lifestyle change (as I like to call it) in early October of 2012. On the path to achieving that 45-pound reduction, I had to get past my birthday (I lo-o-o-ve birthday cake!), Thanksgiving, Chanukah and a cruise in January. Those events slowed my progress down a little but not significantly. This was a journey, not a race.

As it became apparent that I was actually losing weight, people kept asking what diet I was on. The hypnotist I saw, Michael Schuman, B.C.H., does not give you a diet. He just programs your brain to want to eat healthy foods and exercise regularly. There's no magic to it. He didn't wave a wand over me and make me 45 pounds slimmer. I wish he could. It would have been instant gratification.

But I would have missed out on an amazing learning experience. I've learned to eat more slowly, eat a lot less junky foods, find ways to fix healthy meals that actually taste good, drink a lot more water and walk three miles a day.

You don't have to walk. You can swim, jog, do aerobics, play tennis or whatever you are most likely to do on a regular basis. You just have to do it consistently.

Next week I'll share some insights I learned along the way to reaching my goal, as well as how I plan to keep those 45 pounds off permanently. Stay tuned.

## THIS 'N THAT (part 3)

*by Nicky De Lange*

Last week I had the pleasure of telling you that after 11 months, I'd made my goal weight. I'm 45 pounds lighter and much happier about how I look and feel.

This week I promised to share some things I learned during this lifestyle change/journey. I hope they are as helpful for those of you reading this as they were for me.

First, before you start out to change your life habits for the better, get yourself a support group. My spouse and my friends were wonderful, cheering me on and telling me what a good job I was doing.

If you have family members or friends who tend to be negative, spend as little time with them as possible. You know who I mean: the ones that will say, "you'll put that weight right back on," or "that method won't work," or "you don't look like you've lost weight to me."

These are what I call toxic people. If they're also battling a weight problem, they don't want you to succeed because that negates all the excuses they hide behind. Or they may fear they'll be left behind, forever fat. You constitute a threat to them.

Celebrate all the small triumphs along the way: the first ten pounds off, the clothes you can get into that were too tight a couple of months ago, the ability to resist food temptations. You have to be your own cheerleader. This is a journey, not a sprint. There will be plateaus as well as progress.

Remind yourself often that you're NOT on a diet. You're choosing to live a healthy life. I had so many people ask, "What diet are you on?" My answer was, "I'm not on a diet, I'm making a lifestyle change. I eat right, I exercise and I plan to continue this way after I've reduced my weight."

The one comment I heard from everyone was, "I've been on every diet there is - I always gain the weight back." That's because when people go on a diet, they focus on dropping a certain number of pounds. That's the only goal. The minute they achieve it, the diet's over and they return to eating too much and quit exercising.

Virtual Gastric Band Hypnosis is not a diet. It's a tool to help you achieve the weight you want to be by changing bad habits for good ones. It works well if you work with it.

I learned to plan my meals ahead. If I was going out for dinner, I made sure I ate a healthy veggie lunch that day. You can eat a lot of veggies, feel satisfied, and save some unused calories to spend at a restaurant.

A key component in weight reduction is portion control. I really paid attention to my stomach. When my virtual gastric band said I'd had enough to eat, I listened to it. (Most of the time, anyway. The few times I didn't, I definitely felt over-fed.)

If you're wondering why I didn't have a "real" gastric band or bypass done instead, consider the following information I spotted in a magazine article recently.

It said, ["Afterwards] you'll follow a liquid diet for the first few months. To keep weight off and avoid complications, you have to stick to a strict diet and exercise plan."

If you are able "to stick to a strict diet and exercise plan," why have surgery? And three months on a liquid diet? No thanks!

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For more info on Virtual Gastric Banding, Google it. Not all hypnotists are trained in this method, so check all that out. Right now there are only a few board certified hypnotists doing this, and they're in the Houston area. I chose Michael Schuman, B.C.H. and I am very happy I did.