

Corey's Story – I Am My Data Source

When I think about nutritional harm reduction, the words “uncomfortable but doable” come to mind. I’ve listened to so many people in my Suppers group share their diet failure stories, and a common theme seems to be setting ourselves up for failure by taking on too much at once. I could identify with that. If a change is going to throw me into deprivation mode, it’s sure to fail before long.

So I asked myself, “What did it feel like when I decided to make a change and succeeded?”

The first word that popped up was “uncomfortable”. All anticipated changes have placed me on some kind of an edge. If there isn’t a little edgy feeling like I’m grinding new pathways instead of staying in the lines of the entrenched pathways, it’s not change. But every time I’ve succeeded at a solid change, the anxiety that comes up has been manageable. So there is also a comfortable feeling that tells me, “I can do this”.

At Suppers people sometimes bring in articles or send e-mails around on health subjects related to blood sugar. The first two months, I just took in the program and the information but made no changes except to accept certain feelings like mourning in anticipation of what was to come.

By the time I started setting goals for change, I was ready to start making some additions and subtractions. I had a clear intention just based on what I’d read and heard at meetings: High fructose corn syrup was the first thing to go. The plan was to eat two pieces of fruit a day and explore the treats made with natural sweeteners, like cookies from the health food store. When the words, “not good enough,” popped up, I cast them out. I’d been programmed to believe that sugar is sugar and going organic is just some fancy kind of denial. But I knew that if I tried to get off my favorite junk food *and* lower my sugar intake all at the same time, I’d fail.

Adding two fruits and subtracting HFCS felt exactly right for me, a little sad, but also comforting because I knew I could do it if I didn’t have to give up all sweets at the same time.

One of the best things I’m getting out of the Suppers program is confidence in my own feelings to guide me. My feelings are important data. If I can stare at an anticipated small change and feel, “I can do this,” it’s not a small change. It’s a roadmap to success! Turning my life and my health around is a string of little successes that -- taken together -- are really big because success leads to more success. Each time I choose a change wisely, I succeed and my confidence in my roadmap -- my own feelings -- gets stronger.