

Introduction

*Chris "SparkGuy" Downie,
founder and CEO of SparkPeople.com*

Meet Erin. She's thirty and lives in Florida. Happily engaged and recently promoted at work, she loves her life. She wakes up feeling great, rarely stops moving throughout her waking hours, and goes to sleep each night with a smile on her face. Life isn't perfect, but every day feels better than the last, she says.

Erin is so committed to this life that it's hard for her to remember what it was like before, when she weighed almost twice what she does now. When she had little energy to stay awake after work and all she wanted to do on her days off was sleep. When she was in excruciating pain from even the smallest physical efforts and walking around the block seemed like torture. When she looked in the mirror and didn't recognize the woman she'd become and didn't know how to change her life.

She wanted to marry the love of her life, raise babies together, and do all the fun things she could only watch from afar. When she moved to Florida from New Jersey, she was excited about the year-round sun, access to the beach, and all the theme parks and outdoor festivals. But most of the time, she stayed inside or came home early because she was tired and in pain. Life was passing her by, and she felt helpless. Looking back now on the day she decided to change everything, it feels like a dream—a nightmare—but she's grateful for it. Looking back, the worst day of her life was also among the best, because it was the first day of the rest of her life.

The harness was stuck. No matter what she did, Erin couldn't fasten the safety belt around her middle. She held her breath, sucked in her stomach,

and tried wiggling in her seat. Her fiancé, JT, then tried, but to no avail. People were laughing and pointing, and the line was backing up. The roller-coaster operator came over to see what was wrong.

It was the day after Erin's longtime boyfriend had proposed to her, and they were at a Florida theme park to celebrate. The joy that hadn't left her face since he got down on one knee was replaced by fear and panic. Finally, it clasped.

Her humiliation turned to relief and then terror as the ride began. Was the harness secure? Would it hold her weight, or would she plummet to her death on what should have been a day of celebration? The ride lasted a mere three minutes, but every moment felt like an eternity. She held her breath, gripped her fiancé's hand, and prayed for it to be over. It soon was, and her giddiness returned, until they picked up the photos taken on the ride. Her stomach dropped as she looked at the woman in the photo. She knew she had gained weight, but really? That was what she looked like?

I look like a pillow stuffed into a wastebasket, she thought. Right then and there, she knew something had to change. She and JT wanted to start a family, but Erin asked herself, *How can I take care of kids if I can't take care of myself?*

After years of trying maple-syrup cleanses, all-meat fad diets, and every diet pill in the pharmacy, she was ready to lose the weight for good. No more quick fixes or searches for an instant cure.

This is it, she told herself. *It has to be the right way. Nothing ever worked before because I didn't do it the right way.*

"How to live a healthy life," she typed into her browser; she was not going to look into diets. SparkPeople.com popped up in her search results and she joined immediately. She got started on her new life and never looked back.

"I started slow, didn't change all my habits at once," she said. Instead of downing two liters of cola—up to 878 calories a day—she drank water. She added one new, healthy habit at a time, adding more new ones when the existing ones felt easy. This new way of living wasn't about restriction, as she had feared. It was about *freedom*. She could make all the healthy choices she wanted, with real results. She was excited about this new life.

Six months after finding SparkPeople, Erin had lost several pants sizes, had broken her after-work fast-food habit, and felt more confident than

ever. She had shattered her initial goals and was well on her way to reaching more. She was motivated, and she was committed. But not *that* day. That day, she was terrified. She and JT had returned to their favorite amusement park, and she was about to ride the roller coaster where she nearly got stuck the day after their engagement. Her palms sweated and she struggled to catch her breath. She panicked as doubts flooded her mind: *What if I still can't fit? What if I still need help getting in? What if people laugh?*

JT held her hand and looked her in the eyes. "I'm so proud of you," he said. She squeezed her eyes shut and reached for the buckle. *Click!* It snapped, without effort. Erin exhaled and looked at JT. "Told you so," he said.

Those next three minutes were the best of her life. With the man she loved next to her, the one who'd been by her side no matter what size she was, she was now literally flying high without a care in the world. She was full of energy and felt like she could do anything. She laughed, thinking how a roller-coaster ride represented the journey that had brought her full circle in just six months.

When Erin saw the photos, she began to cry. There was a woman who fit comfortably into the seat. There was a woman who was happy. There was a woman who had succeeded. "I realized how my effort had resulted in this wonderful moment," she said. "I am prouder of myself than I ever have been before. Prouder than the day I graduated high school. Prouder than the day I got my college degree. Prouder than the day I got a promotion. And why? Because I always knew I could do those things. But losing the weight? That was something I never thought I could do. But I did do it. And that feeling of accomplishment—more than just how I look—boosts my self-esteem more than I ever could have imagined."

You know how we all say "someday, I'll . . ." and for many of us "someday" is code for "never"? Erin was one of those people, but with her new, healthy lifestyle, she is actually taking on those "someday" goals one at a time, with energy left over for everything else life brings her way.

Almost five years later, Erin is 117 pounds lighter. She is at a healthy weight for the first time since childhood, and she's at the weight she's been trying to reach since age fourteen. Erin was promoted at work to a position that has her on her feet all day. She spends her weekends with JT, exploring Florida, not sitting on the couch. She has energy to do what she needs

to do to stay healthy, such as exercise, and lives her life to the fullest. When she has a rough day or her enthusiasm wanes, to boost her motivation she thinks back to those two roller-coaster rides. For Erin, this new life is fun!

Erin used to think of weight loss as being on or off the diet bandwagon. Now, she uses an analogy that's common among SparkPeople members: losing weight is a journey, not a destination. And with the Spark Solution, you can get started quickly and on the right path, which keeps your motivation levels high.

Erin likes to visualize the journey as a trail through the most scenic countryside she can imagine. To get to a healthy weight, she walked a while, ran sometimes, and encountered hills and even a few plateaus. This road will always be there, and you can move at your own pace. Even "if you stop to smell the roses, have a picnic, or rest," she says, you won't be left behind or suddenly find that your path has disappeared.

Those first two weeks, Erin said, were crucial to her success. Though Erin started with small steps, she saw big changes in her energy levels, motivation, and metabolism. She discovered a new way to think about weight loss, which made all the difference in her overall success. And she learned how to avoid the event that most likely leads to failure with weight loss: giving up. She didn't give up when she ate a cookie, because she knew it wouldn't negate the days of healthy choices she had made. (She can now eat a cookie without guilt.) She didn't quit when walking around the block left her out of breath. (She's training to run her first 5K race.) And she didn't turn back. She was building momentum even in her first days on the plan, and she knew she would lose the weight this time. She's now comfortably maintaining her goal weight.

Healthy living is about living! "I realized how *good* it felt," Erin says. Two weeks from now, you'll say the same thing.

Welcome to the Spark Solution, the complete two-week diet program to jump-start weight loss and total body health. Whether you want to lose 10 pounds, 50 pounds, or 100 pounds, this book is going to change how you think about weight loss. It will set you up for a lifetime of healthy living by helping change the way you think about weight loss and setting goals that will lead to long-term success.

At SparkPeople, we believe that how you lose weight matters, and how you *start* to lose weight has a huge impact on your short- and long-term

success. We surveyed our most successful “losers” to prove it. We learned what those successful people did in their first two weeks and, more importantly, what those who failed did in *their* first two weeks. We documented what to do and what not to do and built that into this program. Starting out with a proven easy-to-use program and building no-fail tactics into your first two weeks puts you at a great advantage for success. We will help you reach your goals, and you’ll have fun while doing it. These next two weeks matter. These next two weeks will change your life.

Over the next fourteen days, you’ll follow the Spark Solution plan, developed by the experts at SparkPeople.com, one of the largest healthy-living and weight-loss destinations on the web, and based on the substantiated success of our members who have lost weight and kept it off. This program is bolstered by two groundbreaking surveys. The first reached out to thousands of members to find out what worked and what didn’t. The results were clear: Those who failed did so within the first two weeks, and we know what they did wrong. Those who succeeded were motivated from day one and even more motivated after two weeks on the program, thanks to the goals we helped them set. We’ll share what we learned from both groups.

From there, we asked a smaller, more elite group of successful members to tell us what helped them. It’s these members, like Erin, who share their stories and tips throughout this book. Like all of you, these members wanted to lose weight. Like many of you, they had tried to lose weight and quit, repeatedly. But when they came to SparkPeople, something changed. Something clicked. They built momentum, changed their mind-set about weight loss, and boosted their metabolism through simple swaps and healthy habits. Rather than giving up on their goals, they stayed motivated until they reached them—and then set more. Now we get to share their stories and the secrets to their success with you. They failed before ultimately achieving success, and now you get to glean the wisdom they acquired from those setbacks.

If you’ve had misstarts, if you’ve tried to diet but gave up, if you’ve lost weight and gained it back, finally there’s a way to get a fresh start without wasting time and energy. If you’re starting this journey for the first time, it will be the *only* time; for you, with the Spark Solution, there will be no *next* time.

Like Erin, our members have tried everything. Those soup diets didn't work. Skipping meals or restricting food during the day worked for a while, but their motivation quickly waned. They ended up right where they started, with no idea how to get excited to try again—until that last time, with SparkPeople. Their “experiments” with weight loss were over for good. They found the Holy Grail: sustainable weight-loss success.

Guessing and testing was fun in elementary school science class, but it's tedious when you're an adult trying to get yourself on the right track. You're busy. You don't have time for weight-loss tactics that don't work. We know that. These next two weeks are designed to jump-start your weight loss. Our plan provides you with everything you need: three meals a day plus two snacks, and a workout plan that can be catered to your lifestyle. The Spark Solution focuses on three overlapping areas:

1. The “Metabolic Makeover” is the crux of our meals and workouts. Our plan uses the best of what works to optimize your metabolism, giving you both the know-how and the drive to get started on the right track toward lasting change. We structured our plan to boost your metabolism every step of the way, from the frequency and amount you're eating to the types of workouts you're doing. Even the ingredients in our meals are part of your metabolic makeover and will help you optimize your body's potential without giving up foods you enjoy or going hungry. Many people start trying to lose weight by skipping meals, eating too few calories to sustain daily activities, and other actions that actually slow or interfere with their metabolism. To be successful, your body's metabolic processes—your ability to burn calories—needs to function optimally, to work with you not against you, as you begin your weight-loss plan.

2. The “Mind-Set Makeover” helps you look at healthy eating and exercise as a means to live life to the fullest, gain energy, and boost confidence. Beyond your body, we also tackle what many dieters report to be their number-one hurdle: the mind. We build on the results you'll see as you experience the metabolism makeover. We interpret the latest scientific research on weight loss and goal setting into simple actions that will help you reconsider how you think about healthy living. We focus on the positive, with tips from our members and experts, plus provide stats about what we've learned from those who've succeeded.

3. Finally, “Motivation and Momentum” focuses on building motivation and joins the other parts of the program in helping you build a strong foundation for your journey to better health and weight loss. On Day 1 of the plan, you press the reset button on your diet history and your battles with food. The past doesn’t count anymore. You make one healthy decision, which leads to another healthy decision and another and . . . you get the picture. Your program builds on previous days to create a tightly woven safety net. You will not fail or grind to a halt. We won’t let you. You won’t let you. Gone is the vicious cycle of dieting and guilt. In its place is a virtuous cycle of healthy living. Better nutrition begets easier and more frequent exercise, and vice versa, which boosts metabolism. The better you feel, the more motivated you are to keep reaching toward your goals, and the more you keep going, the better and more motivated you feel.

Throughout the book, we offer simple yet effective mind-set and motivation makeovers as ways to build even more momentum in these first two weeks, which will make healthy living easier and more enjoyable. This combination of metabolism, mind-set, and motivation is sure to spark you forward toward lasting weight loss and a healthy, energized life.

What Can Happen in Two Weeks?

Plenty. In two weeks you can . . .

- reduce your cravings, especially those for sugary and processed carbs;
- start to stabilize your blood sugar;
- positively affect your cholesterol levels;
- succeed at the first small steps you take, so your confidence grows;
- increase your momentum and motivation day by day;
- lose at least 4 to 6 pounds of body fat, not water weight;
- create a deficit of at least 14,000 calories;

Six Reasons You're Not Losing Weight Already

So many people try and fail when it comes to weight loss. What are they—and you—doing wrong? It's not a matter of willpower or not trying hard enough. You may be approaching weight loss in the wrong way. Do any of these scenarios sound familiar?

- 1. You use exercise as an excuse to eat more. You're eating back all the calories you burn, not creating any calorie deficit.*
- 2. You're not eating as healthfully as you think you are. You need to know exactly what you're eating—and how much—to really see the scale budge.*
- 3. You never change your exercise routine, walking the same three-mile loop four times a week or taking the same weight-lifting class every week. All exercise burns calories, but to achieve the results you want, you need to balance calorie-burning cardio with muscle-building strength training, and change it up.*
- 4. You're inconsistent, adhering to a rigid program for a few days, then—overwhelmed by cravings and run down from all the activity—you lose motivation and steadily revert to old habits. Or, to cope with what's going on inside your head, you down an entire bag of chips or box of cookies as a stress reliever, then you give up entirely. This cycle of feast or famine wreaks havoc on your metabolism and your motivation. Balance is key to sustainable weight loss.*
- 5. You're relying on exercise alone to lose weight. Diet and exercise are like soap and water—beneficial on their own, but to really achieve results you must have both.*
- 6. You're relying on unhealthy diet tactics for a quick fix. You skip meals, exclude entire food groups, or use diet pills to lose weight. Losing weight shouldn't compromise your health or well-being. For you to stick with it, weight loss has to be healthy and energizing, not exhausting.*

Are you guilty of any of the above weight-loss tactics? That might be why you're not losing weight, and that's exactly why you need the Spark Solution.

get fourteen chances to wake up and make today the best, healthiest day of your life; and

gain a new, positive outlook on life, one with the belief that you can finally reach your goals.

After two weeks of eating this way, you might notice that your hunger is under control, you no longer need that third cup of coffee in the morning, or you're actually eating—and enjoying—your vegetables!

After two weeks of exercising, you might find that you're huffing and puffing less or you can add another mile to your walk or another ten minutes on the elliptical. You will have more energy than you've had in some time.

Plus, with the Spark Solution's metabolic makeovers to boost your body's efficiency, our mind-set makeovers to change how you think about healthy living, and our Spark Solution recipes and workouts, you may also . . .

notice clearer skin and healthier nails,

have more energy for the activities you enjoy most,

start to feel satisfied rather than stuffed after meals,

feel better about yourself in ways you never thought possible, and

realize that this healthy living isn't so bad. In fact, it makes you feel great. And it's actually something you can live with for life.

All of that sounds good, right? We agree. But we also have to warn you that everyone is different—your results might be either more dramatic or subtle at first. Be patient. Remember that lasting weight comes off slowly and steadily. There is a big difference between how you put on the weight and how you'll take it off with this program. Unlike with most programs, which make you suffer before you see results, with our two-week jump start, you'll start to feel great right away, and you'll be much more likely to hit your ideal weight-loss goal over time, and stay there.

Imagine for a moment that all you needed to do was swallow a pill or make a wish and all your excess weight would be gone. What would keep

you from gaining the weight back? How would you deal with the underlying issues that caused your weight gain in the first place? Whether it's post-baby weight, the result of an injury, a side effect of an emotional wound, or day-to-day stress, those extra pounds provide wisdom as we shed them. We posed that same question to members in a precursor to our secrets-of-success survey and found that 75 percent of those who reached their goals would not wish away the weight or take a pill, while the ones who gave up were almost exactly the opposite: 72 percent wanted to take the easy way out.

With the Spark Solution, you don't need a magic pill. In just the first fourteen days, you'll gain the knowledge, confidence, and encouragement to keep going. You'll have achieved goals, with more on the horizon. You'll have both long-term and short-term plans. You'll know what to do when times get tough, when you're confronted by office candy jars or birthday cupcakes or diet saboteurs.

You'll look in the mirror and say to yourself, *This is not the only two weeks. This is the first two weeks of the rest of my life.*

Creating the Spark Solution

Based on more than ten years of experience working with more than fourteen million members and tens of thousands of people who have been successful at losing weight and documenting the foods and actions that got them there, the Spark Solution starts you on the path to long-term healthy living, or gets you back on the path if you've tried losing weight in the past. Our members track their food and their workouts, and we can see what works and what doesn't every day. Each month members add another twenty million entries to our database, which now numbers in the hundreds of millions. We packed in the best of what we know really works for weight loss and healthy living, along with the latest science and research on metabolism and motivation, to create the Spark Solution 14-Day Plan.

The SparkPeople community and program have been praised in studies at prestigious medical schools, and *Good Housekeeping* magazine called us "the online program that works." Though our plan comes to life through

the stories of those who've lost weight successfully, it's firmly rooted in science and backed by more than a decade of data.

This fourteen-day plan is specifically arranged to start you off on the right foot, from the time you wake up on Day 1. Each simple step, each well-timed meal, each boost of confidence from a small goal achieved will combine with what came before and build, over these two weeks, to gain momentum, boost metabolism, increase energy, and form a mind-set for success. Both what you do and how you think are critical in those first days and can mean the difference between quickly falling off the bandwagon or long-term success.

Advice from Those Who've Been Where You Are

Before those surveys, we knew we had a plan that worked, but we hadn't formally documented from a wide number of people who had successfully used our plan which aspects helped them the most. The number one take-away: Those who succeeded in the first two weeks didn't set out to change their entire lives, but attribute their ultimate success in reaching long-term weight-loss goals to the motivation they were able to sustain throughout those first fourteen days. The ones who failed lacked the motivation to keep going, even for just two weeks.

We're creating a new paradigm of weight loss: Be ready to change from Day 1, but you don't have to change your whole life all at once. Be committed to a healthy lifestyle versus a short-term diet, but you need only be prepared to take it one step and one goal at a time, at the pace that's right for you.

The Spark Solution does three things differently. First, we remove the pitfalls commonly associated with weight loss by creating a plan that wants you to succeed once and for all. We don't want return customers. We don't want you to "go on a diet . . . again." We want to help you reach your goals and be the healthiest you can be, starting now.

Second, we help you press the reset button. There's no place for self-loathing or negative thoughts about your body or your potential. Your inner skeptic is silenced, and your inner believer is awakened. Starting now, you will believe in yourself, because you can and you will do this.

And knowing that makes all the difference in your long-term potential for success. We hear over and over from our members who tell each other, "If I can do it, anyone can do it!" Accepting a new mind-set about weight loss will allow you to slowly build back your confidence until nothing can stop you, with your health and in other areas of life.

Third, we created our program to help you feel real results in just two weeks. You will feel better. You will lose weight. You will notice changes in your mind-set and your metabolism. You will feel satisfied, and you will feel energized. Your life will change. You'll have the energy to get off the couch and play with your kids, to wake up in the morning and start the day with a positive outlook, to be there for your partner, your friends, your coworkers and still have energy left for you.

Ours is a program based on *yes*. Yes to believing in yourself, not using self-loathing as a way to fuel weight loss. Yes to setting goals that you can reach, not challenging yourself to impossible weight-loss feats that end in failure. Yes to eating food that nourishes you and fuels your life, not restricting yourself so you end up overeating later. Yes even to enjoying dessert in right-size portions, not banishing certain foods from your life forever.

You're here because you want to change, just like those members we surveyed. What sets them apart from those who failed? They're ready to commit. They're in this. They know it will be a process, that little steps add up to big change. They take it one step at a time, and before long, they believe in themselves 100 percent. They finally let go of the old mentality that held them back.

Regardless of the kinds of changes they made, those weight-loss winners stuck with their changes and added more. Those members have banished the word *try* from their vocabulary and dived straight into the program with us. The hard part was short-lived, and any doubt was soon replaced with motivation; it's part of the mind-set makeover.

"It is not easy to change habits, but I just decided I was going to start with the things I needed to change the most—give up soda, exercise more, and monitor my calories—without making excuses," says Elizabeth, age thirty-two, of Virginia, who lost well over 100 pounds. "I just did it, and I saw results."

Those who succeed take weight loss seriously from the get-go, because they know what it's like to fail on fad diets, to waste money on gadgets that make lofty promises, and to feel unhappy in their own skin.

“The first two weeks of my new lifestyle were all about proving to myself that I could do it, that I could change and break old habits,” says thirty-three-year-old Lisa. And change she did. Lisa lost more than 5 pounds in those first two weeks, and more than 90 pounds overall.

“I love my new life, and I have surprised myself in so many ways,” Lisa wrote on SparkPeople.com. “I love how my body feels when I take care of it by putting good things in it. I don’t get sick as often. I love to be active, and every day I delight in the little things that I used to be unable to do—like not have to worry about needing a seat-belt extender on an airplane!” A working mom, Lisa had been overweight since childhood and was morbidly obese when she started with SparkPeople. Today she’s running half marathons while her two young daughters cheer her on. She sticks with SparkPeople because it works not only to lose the weight but also to keep it off.

For the first time, we surveyed the hundred or so people whose weight-loss stories we use to inspire others and spread the word about SparkPeople. They’ve been on the covers of national magazines, seen on morning TV news shows, and featured in books, blogs, and on our website. This all-star team lost more than 9,590 pounds combined, and most have kept the weight off. Every single one of them follows a healthy lifestyle rather than a diet, and it was that desire to be healthier that motivated them to lose the weight. Even better, they lost an average of 4.4 pounds in the first two weeks, and 43 percent lost more than 5 pounds in those first two weeks. A whopping 95 percent credit the first two weeks for setting the stage for their long-term success. Their responses were so strong and their results so impressive that we integrated them into this program, which combines nutrition and fitness plans from our experts with real-life tips, tricks, and stories from our most successful members.

With such impressive results, I bet you’re wondering what kind of torturous exercise and restrictive diet (yum, more bean sprouts!) we have planned. You’ll be elated to hear that you won’t go hungry, and you won’t be sweating for hours in the gym over the next two weeks. You don’t need a gym membership (most work out at home or outdoors), and you’ll be eating food that’s delicious, nutritious, and comforting.

Here, we’ve juxtaposed what the successful group did during the first two weeks against what those who gave up did instead:

The Questions	The Success Stories	The Quitters
Were they dieting or following a healthy lifestyle?	Zero percent thought of themselves as “on a diet”	34 percent thought of themselves as “on a diet”
How much weight did they lose in two weeks?	70 percent lost 4 pounds or more	44 percent lost less than a pound
Did they think they got off to a good start?	Yes	No
Did they consider certain foods to be “bad” and off-limits?	No	Yes
On Day 1, how high was their motivation?	63 percent felt they were very motivated	29 percent felt they were very motivated
By Day 14, how motivated were they?	73 percent remained very motivated	78 percent were neutral or unmotivated
How many tried to build momentum during those first two weeks?	Almost half built momentum	Only 15 percent tried
How many built a strong foundation?	More than half built a strong foundation of healthy habits	Again, only 15 percent
How many ate breakfast?	44 percent ate a healthy, filling breakfast	Only 19 percent ate any breakfast—mostly a small one, with no concern for healthiness
How many ate more protein?	35 percent	21 percent
How many drank more water?	89 percent	65 percent
How many slept more?	18 percent	15 percent
How many ate three meals a day?	28 percent	11 percent
How many ate more fiber?	29 percent	23 percent
How many ate more fruits and veggies?	73 percent	48 percent
How many ate more whole grains?	40 percent	18 percent
How many ate more low-fat dairy?	12 percent	3 percent
How many practiced portion control?	67 percent	24 percent

What's more important than this comparison is what the success stories *didn't* do: 80 percent didn't spend hours in the gym—they worked out for less time than those who failed; 78 percent didn't quit when they ate a cookie or had a second helping—they believed in eating everything in moderation; 100 percent didn't give up when their motivation waned—they took a long-term view. In the end, their top motivators entailed laying a strong foundation of healthy habits, feeling better about themselves, and feeling healthier. They all say they're still following a healthy lifestyle program today.

As you can see, getting healthy—and staying healthy—begins with three steps: change your diet, start working out, and take the small steps that lead you to believe you can do it. Just changing what you eat doesn't work, because it's only part of the plan. You also need to change your mind-set about weight loss and get moving. During those first two weeks, 72 percent of our success stories changed their diets *and* started exercising.

"I began to walk every day on my lunch break," says Tammy, who lost 37 pounds and has kept the weight off since 2008. You don't need to start out working out every day, but with your increases in energy, you probably will want to. Tammy also made simple food swaps, which made a big difference over time. "I replaced processed foods with whole foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. These steps gave me the ability to increase my healthy habits over time rather than saying I was on a diet. I wanted this to be a long-term change in how I looked at food and exercise. Most of all, I've learned an awful lot about myself: what motivates me, what I want out of life, what I need to do to get there."

It doesn't matter what you do, but you need to move most days. Most of our success stories exercise at least five days a week (for an average of 4.6 days), often in the morning so a busy day is no excuse to miss a workout (more than half work out in the morning). Does going from no exercise to daily exercise sound overwhelming? Don't worry. You can start from where you are to build your program. And you can start with a simple walk, or break up your workouts into shorter segments.

Remember Erin? She "hated" exercise and started with walking just a few minutes twice a week. Over the course of her 117-pound weight loss, she added in power walking, light jogging, swimming, step aerobics,

strength training, elliptical training, cardio DVDs, and yoga. She focused on what she really enjoyed, a list that kept expanding as she improved her fitness levels.

From our surveys we also learned that these individuals with amazing success stories don't rely only on the scale to measure progress; they notice how their clothes fit, how they feel, how much energy they have, and how many inches they've shed. One of Erin's early goals was to fit into a size 20 (now she's a size 8), and she rewarded herself not only for losing pounds but also for dropping pants sizes.

By Day 14, these winners believed in the path they were on, and that small steps would take them all the way to their ultimate goal. For the first time in a long time, they had hope, and they knew that the Spark Solution would help them get to where they wanted to be. They believed they could do it.

If they can do it, why can't you?

"I've realized the only way to do this is to change my lifestyle and to make healthy habits permanent," says Erin. She reached her goal over three years ago, and she's continuing to get stronger and healthier by setting new goals. Slow and steady is the way to build a sustainable weight-loss plan.

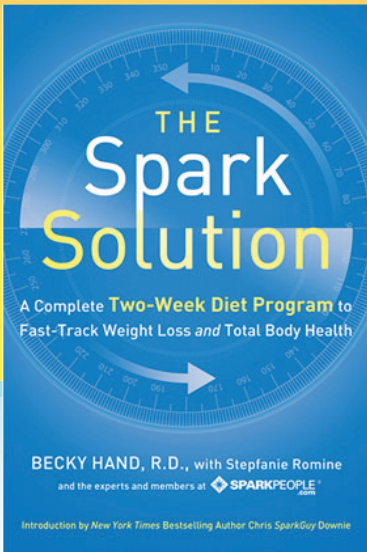
Even Erin's "permanent" healthy habits started with those first two weeks, so now let's learn how this book can help you achieve success the way she did.

Peek Inside *The Spark Solution*

The NEW Book from the experts at



**70+ Easy, Healthy Recipes PLUS
14 Days of 1,500-Calorie Eating Plans**



What people are saying:
“Quick and easy to make... more filling than regular pancakes. I wasn't looking for a snack mid-morning!”



Our Spark Swaps meals are packed with foods that will keep you satisfied while helping you burn calories!



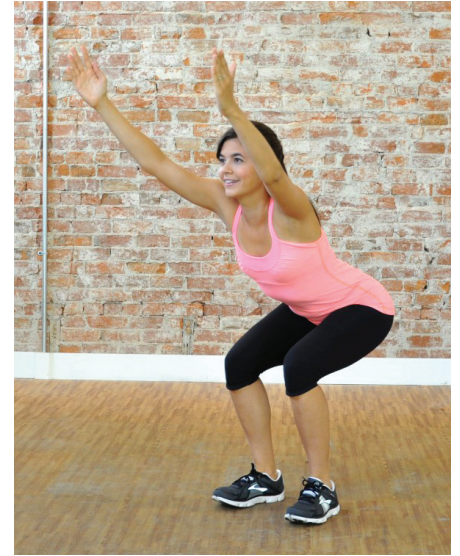
Most of these chef-created, family-friendly recipes are ready in 30 minutes—or less.

PLUS 2 Snacks a Day, All Designed to Beat Hunger and Boost Weight Loss

There's more...

Slim Down in Less Time with Our Spark Swaps Workouts

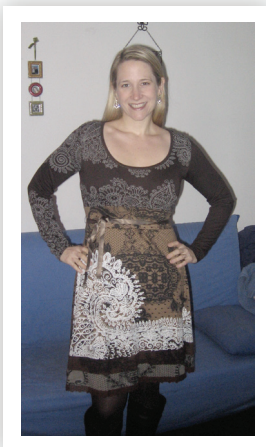
See REAL Results after TWO Weeks!



Workouts by  **SPARKPEOPLE**® Fitness Expert Coach Nicole

- Burn more calories in less time.
- Stop spending hours in the gym.
- Avoid pesky plateaus.
- Easily adjust the program to suit your needs.

Our Success Stories Share Their Weight-Loss Secrets



"It did get easier every day, and seeing big losses in the beginning was very motivating."

—**Kristina, 92 pounds lost**

"I have so much more confidence now than I used to. I credit SparkPeople for a lot of what I have accomplished."

—**Lisa, 83 pounds lost**