

My Intermittent Fasting Diet Diary

Good-bye Mrs Yoyo



Susan George

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This book is dedicated to every Mr and Mrs Yoyo. Thanks to Sally for inspiring me, to Terry for putting up with me and to Dr Michael Mosley for developing this healthy way of living.

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My Introduction to Intermittent Fasting.

1st March 2013

I noticed on Facebook that one of my friends in England had started a new diet called the 5:2 diet. I thought that it sounded like another fad diet but I wished her well and got on with my day.

19th March 2013

Today my friend, Sandy, had posted on Facebook that she had already lost over three pounds in weight on her new diet and she was still eating cake and chocolate some of the time. This grabbed my attention, could she really loose weight and still eat cake and chocolate?

I decided that I wanted to know more about this new diet so I contacted her and she sent me a link to a book and a BBC Horizon programme that was shown in August 2012.

I had not seen the programme so I watched it online on my laptop during my lunchbreak. The programme showed Dr Michael Mosley meeting various medical professionals who were investigating the health and weight loss benefits of something called intermittent fasting.

Dr Mosley followed some of the regimes and found that he was able to loose weight and improve his health by taking the idea of intermittent fasting and adapting it to suit his lifestyle. The result was his 5:2 diet. The idea being that you fast for two seperate days each week and only consume 500 calories for a woman or 600 calories for a man on your fasting day but you can eat normally for the other five days of the week.

I liked the idea of this new diet so I went online and ordered his book, The Fast Diet by Dr Michael Mosley and Mimi Spencer, so that I could learn more about the new eating plan.

I was not sure if it would work for me because I was struggling to cope with my menopause symptoms and found that I was suffering from strong mood swings and dizzy spells but I was intrigued. I emailed Sandy a few more times to understand how she had started the diet and decided that the sooner I tried my first fasting day the sooner I would know if I could actually live on 500 calories for one whole day.

Week One - Can I Do This Diet?

23rd March 2013

I decided to make this my first, fast day. It was a Saturday and I had no major commitments for the day. Normally I am the sort of person who needs to eat breakfast the moment I am out of bed, otherwise I tend to get the shakes but I was determined to get to mid day before eating anything so I had a black lemon tea and no food for breakfast.

I was pleasantly surprised that I was able to make it lunchtime without fainting. I drank lots of water and lemon tea and I was feeling real hunger in my stomach by lunchtime. I made myself two boiled eggs and ate them on a bed of lettuce with four cherry tomatoes and a slice of cucumber. I sat at the table with my husband Rob and my fifteen year old daughter Rose whilst they tucked into their lunch. It was good to eat with them so that our family routine was not disrupted.

After lunch I felt great for a while so I went into the garden and did some weeding. I was surprised that I was able to do things as I thought I might have to spend the day in bed. Suddenly at around three in the afternoon I felt very light headed and giddy. I felt afraid and thought that I was going to faint so I had a tiny bowl of red berries and a chopped up pear and a tea spoon of honey. Within a few moments I felt much better and carried on with my gardening.

My energy levels dipped again after about another two hours so I peeled a raw carrot and chopped it into pieces and slowly ate it. I was amazed at how good the raw carrot tasted. It was so sweet and gave me a tiny sugar rush. I also noticed that I had to keep popping to the toilet because I was drinking so much water to try and fill my empty stomach up.

Whilst I cooked the dinner I felt quite shaky so I sat and read a book until dinner time. I had five brussel sprouts, a spoonful of garden peas and cooked carrot for my tea. Rob and Rose had fish fingers with their vegetables but once again I was able to enjoy eating around the kitchen table so the social side of eating remained. After dinner I took my dog for a walk with my daughter and I was pleasantly surprised that I had enough energy to do my evening chores.

Later into the evening I felt very hungry indeed. I focused on watching the television and I had two crispbreads with a tiny amount of honey as my evening treat. I have to admit that the last few hours of the evening were challenging. Thankfully, Sandy had offered to be my 5:2 diet buddy so we emailed each other every few hours. She cheered me on and kept telling me that I could do this and she was such a help. I felt that if she was able to do it then I should be able to and so we both agreed to focus on our dream bodies during the tough times. I wanted to be able to wear strappy dresses in the summer without flabby arms so I kept that image in my head during the evening. I was very hungry and went to bed feeling very empty.

That night I was able to fall asleep really quickly which was a relief but I woke up every three hours and looked at the clock. I nearly got up at six in the morning because I was so hungry but I managed to get back to sleep until nine in the morning.

24th March 2013

It was Sunday so I had no pressure to get Rose to school. I was shaking with hunger and enjoyed a large bowl of porridge oats with fresh fruit and milk. As I had started to count calories on my fast day I decided to carry on counting on my normal days to get an idea of how much I was eating. I used to count calories on various diets in the past and I had bad memories of calorie counting books and charts. This time I had the internet so I went online and found a free site that I could write in my foods and the amounts and it calculated the calories for me. It was so easy. I used up nearly five hundred calories on my huge breakfast and that's when I realised just how large my portions had become.

I had blamed my weight gain on the menopause but the truth was that I had fallen into the trap of eating fairly healthy food but far too much of it! I think that I must have been regularly eating over three thousand calories a day, no wonder I was gaining weight week on week. As the day progressed I found that I was not as hungry as I would normally be and by the end of the day I felt satisfied and I had eaten a healthy two thousand calories.

In the book you are advised to eat normally but I knew that I had been over eating and felt in the right place inside my head to take back some control over my calorie intake. Two thousand calories a day was not a strict diet and allowed me space for a small bag of crisps or a slice of cake along with my normal favourite healthy foods. It just helped me to focus on the fact that I could be perfectly happy with a little bit less on my plate.

Rob was pleased that I was not being horrid to him, in fact, my mood was one of elation. I was so proud of myself for getting through my first fast day that I felt amazing. My stomach already felt flatter and I felt somehow released from food. My diet book had arrived in the post the previous day so I started to read it and realised that I had spaced my food out during the day and they recommended having at least twelve hours in the day without any food on your fast day. I planned to try that on my next fasting day.

26th March 2013

Today was my second fast day. The new challenge was that I had to be out of bed by six in the morning to drive Rose to the bus stop by seven. I had a cup of lemon tea and managed to drive the two miles there and back without any problem. I was concerned about my levels of concentration but I drove normally.

I had read in the book that it was very beneficial to workout during your fast so I did one hour of spinning on my home trainer bike on an empty stomach. To my surprise I easily completed my workout without any ill effects. I normally did an hour of spinning about four times per week so I was accustomed to this amount of exercise.

I had my shower and got on with my day. Since moving to France I had changed my lifestyle from working full time in a Corporate environment to being self-employed and working mainly from home on a part time basis. I had planned this fast day on a day that I was not working.

I did not need to eat until half past eleven when I became very light headed. I could not quite make it to lunch time but I had managed over twelve hours since my last meal. Once again I used eggs to

help fill me up for lunch. I would need to find some more meal ideas as I had the same tea again as well but I knew that I could do it.

I felt far more confident about my ability to go hungry this time and although my stomach rummled far more than on the first fast day I knew that it was a good sign. I was so impressed by the health benefits that were laid out in the book that I really wanted to make this part of my normal life.

Later in the day a friend of ours emailed us to say that they would be coming to France to stay in their holiday home and they invited us to meet up. It was our turn to cook them a meal so I offered them a date to come to visit us. Normally I would have mixed feelings about a meal because my will power was not very strong during dinner parties and on old diets that would mean no weight loss for about a week. This time I felt really happy because I booked them in on a feed day and I knew that I would have a fast day the following day.

Suddenly the guilt about enjoying food was gone. I put the next few fast days in my diary to ensure that I knew when they would be. I liked being able to plan like this and to work around my diary. I could see how this flexible approach could help me to stick to this regime.

Once again I had a fairly normal day. I had a friend over in the afternoon and we drank black lemon tea together. I walked the dog and collected Rose from the bus stop before enjoying my steamed vegetable tea. In the book it mentioned that it's good to clear out any tempting food from your home but I had a builder husband who needed lots of energy food and a teenage daughter who lived for chocolate so I still had to keep them fed as normal.

When I felt tempted to eat something I found that I could resist because I told myself that I would eat it tomorrow. I was only having to be strict around food for one day and that seemed to make my life so much easier.

Sandy emailed me a few times during the day and was very supportive. I finished reading the book and felt very positive about the prospect of losing a few stone by the summer.

I weighed myself before my first fast day and to my shock I was fourteen stone seven pounds. I'm five foot seven inches tall so I should be between ten to eleven stone to be healthy. I also took my measurements with a tape measure. My waist was thirty eight and a half inches. It said in the book that it's healthy to have your waist half the measurement of your height. So I was almost five inches too fat around the middle which was putting my health at risk.

The health benefits were very compelling so although I wanted to loose weight, the book had made me stop and think about my health. I had been blessed with good health to date but I knew that I could not keep on getting heavier without some future consequences. I could not wait for the day to end so that I could get up the next morning and weigh myself. It recommended only a weekly weigh in, in the book but I wanted to see if I had managed to shift the scales downwards. I certainly felt a bit thinner and less puffy, if you know what I mean.

Oh and I noticed another bonus, I had not experienced one hot flush all day! Was fasting good for reducing my menopausal symptoms? It just seemed to be all good news with just one day of strong will power required out of every five. I have to say that the prospect of three feeding days ahead of me felt like a treat. My initial fear of fasting was gone and my second day certainly was a lot easier.

At one point during the evening I did miss food from the point of view of habit. I liked my supper and would normally have a bowl of cereal just before going to bed. I knew that it was not good to eat just before bedtime but it had become my routine. I started to wonder how many extra calories I had been consuming in the past based on habit and routine? Would this new regime help me to break that cycle? Once again, although my stomach was very empty and I felt real hunger pangs, I fell asleep quite quickly. This time, I only awoke once during the night with a slight pain in the very lowest part of my stomach. I rolled over and cuddled into Rob. The warmth of his body acted like a comforting hot water bottle and the pain subsided. I fell back into a lovely sleep.

27th March 2013

The alarm clock woke me up at six o'clock and to my surprise, I did not feel hungry at all. I popped my dressing gown on and went downstairs to weigh myself. I had lost two pounds since Saturday! Part of me was thrilled but another part of me was hoping for some huge and probably unrealistic weight loss! I had a slight headache but not enough to take a pain killer.

I listened to my body and rather than eating a huge breakfast like I had the first day after my fast, I realised that I was not really hungry enough to eat yet. I wanted to see if I could last out until a little later in the morning as I wanted to try doing my spinning workout on an empty stomach again. It was a challenge I set myself so I had a lemon tea with extra fresh lemon juice in it for my first intake of the day.

Was it possible that after only two days of fasting I was learning to listen to my body and changing my eating habits for the better? My diet history was much like many women of my era. I was a slim child with an active childhood from the days of being out on my bike with my friends and playing outside all the time. As a young teenager I put on some weight but when I was fourteen I lost that naturally and was a size 10, tall and slender. I used to faint quite a lot as I was so busy enjoying youth club discos and going out with boys that I did not eat very much.

Once I began my first summer job at sixteen I put on a whole stone because I worked in a cafe and was given free meals. I lost that weight at college by cycling and eating less. Once I began work I put on a few stone but I was still quite slender. As for most women, it was my first pregnancy that shocked me.

I was so hungry all the time that I ate too many doughnuts and was a huge sixteen stone before the birth. I thought it was all baby fat so when I got on the scales after my son's birth and found that I was fifteen stone I was really upset. I had fat on my shoulders and a double chin. I was treated differently by strangers and I hated that feeling. I put myself on a strict calorie controlled diet and walked for one hour every day pushing my son James in his pushchair. I lost weight at two pounds per week until I reached ten stone and then I lost one pound a week and got down to nine and a half stone.

I was a size 10 again and people treated me with respect once more. That was an interesting experience. Anyway, when I returned to work full time I could not keep my calories as low and found that a few stone crept on but I was still about eleven stone when I fell pregnant with my daughter which was healthy for my height. I was very careful about not over eating during that pregnancy. I did more exercise and I was running around after James but I was still fifteen stone

just before the birth. I went on a diet after I finished breast feeding and managed to get down to ten and a half stone and I was happy with that.

Once again, when I returned to work I went up to around eleven to twelve stone. By the time Rose was six my weight had crept up to thirteen stone and I hated being larger so I went on a prepared shake, meal replacement diet. I lost the weight very fast but I had to stay on the shakes. I was back to eleven stone but it was expensive. We then moved to France and I went back onto real food and the weight piled back on. The new lifestyle meant that I was cooking more and entertaining a lot and once again my weight increased and I was back to up to fourteen stone after a few years.

I then tried Slimming World which worked well for me. I lost weight through careful eating and lots of exercise and got back to eleven stone once more. I was now in my mid forties and I was happy with that.

Well, Mrs Yoyo was still inside me and over the next five years the weight crept back on and takes me up to present day. Now at 50, this time I put even more weight on and after becoming menopausal and dizzy I found that food seemed to help me feel better although I could see the fat developing around my body once again.

This new diet feels different and for the first time I am listening to my body and not feeling deprived. I am intrigued to see if I can loose weight over the next few weeks as Easter is approaching which means chocolate and family feasts.

Well, I did my workout! I managed my normal one hour spinning on my indoor training bike followed by about five minutes on the power plate before I ate a healthy breakfast of red berries, a pear, one banana and low fat yogurt. That first meal after fasting tasted so good. I savoured every mouthful. I did feel very hungry half way through my workout but I had already learnt that hunger was not something that will build and build and that I could keep going and achieve my workout first. Suddenly I am not afraid of hunger like I was only one week ago.

I can see why this eating plan is not permitted for children, pregnant women or anyone with a previous eating disorder. The new feeling of control around food might not last but I can understand how one could become addicted to the buzz from the control aspect of this regime. With Easter on it's way I don't think I am at risk of developing an unhealthy calorie restriction issue!

Last year I started to write little poems about my life situations and I wrote this one about being a yoyo dieter that I think explains the place my head was in when I wrote it:

Say Hello to Mrs Yoyo

I'd like you to meet Mrs Yoyo.

Bet I'm not the only one you know.

Please can you keep this a bit quiet,
but I can't stick to any diet.

Yes I follow the rules at the start,
Writing my weight loss onto a chart.

I begin with healthy things to eat.
But day by day, I add my own treat.

I try to take the route of fitness
but every time I get bored witless.

I want to be fit, slender and slim
yet my diets become rather grim.

How to keep cake temptation at bay?
Or make healthy choices every day?

I search for the right regime for me.
Is moderation really the key?

So I live with weight high and weight low.
Will I always be Mrs Yoyo?

I wonder if this eating programme will break this cycle for me? Only time will tell.

28th March 2013

Something new happened to me today. I collected Rose from school at lunchtime as she did not have any lessons in the afternoon and as we had a meeting in the afternoon we needed to grab some lunch. We went into a supermarket and I looked at all the lovely sandwiches on offer when a prepared salad caught my eye. It had on the label the fact that it only contained three hundred calories and it looked fresh and inviting.

I weighed up my options and thought that as today was a feed day I could choose sandwiches but because I did not feel that I had to have the salad I actually chose the salad. My daughter chose some sliced pork and some chocolate and a drinking yogurt and we both ate our meal in the car as we waited for our appointment. I enjoyed my salad and had three cubes of chocolate for my pudding.

I think that I am getting my head around why this diet works from inside my head. I knew that I could choose sandwiches, crisps and cakes for my lunch if I wanted to and because I was not being restricted like other diets, I actually chose the more healthy option. It was not about will power but about feeling that I had a choice. It's like being offered a win, win situation.

I do hope that this will continue because I am feeling slimmer already. I put on an outfit this morning and it was not as tight as it normally was and that's after just under one week on this new eating regime. I feel so positive and optimistic and I'm even looking forward to my next fast day on Saturday, how strange is that?

As well as writing little poems, I also write positive affirmations to help my clients from my Life Coaching work. I decided to write some positive affirmations to help me and Sandy to get through our fast days, here are some of them: How To Succeed Every Fast Day

Positive Affirmations for Successful Intermittent Fasting on the 5:2 Diet

I enjoy the challenge of every fast day.

I have amazing self-control and will-power.

I love the health benefits I gain from intermittent fasting.
I feel elated at the end of each fast day.
I know that I am on a healthy weight management programme.
I feel positive about short term hunger.
I love knowing that I can eat normally on five days of the week.
I am strong, fit and healthy.
My skin is radiant and glowing.
I feel fully awake and refreshed.
I love my new freedom from old food habits.
I embrace my rumbling tummy.
I can feel my stomach shrinking.
I am reconnecting with my body's nutritional needs.
My fast days empower me and fill me with positive emotions.
I love the health benefits I gain from intermittent fasting.
I sleep soundly in the knowledge that I am taking care of my health.
I have a new appreciation of food.
Water is my delicious friend.
Thank you for the amazing feeling of mind over matter on fast days.
If I can do this, I can do anything.

29th March 2013

I managed to do my workout this morning and had a healthy breakfast but I was troubled by a throbbing headache. I drank lots of water but decided that I needed more help so I took a table for some pain relief. I don't know if the headache was due to the lack of sugar in my new diet or just one of those things. One good thing this morning was that I put on a jumper that I had not work for a while as it was so tight on me but today I felt good in it. My stomach was still protruding but nothing as much as it was before the diet so that lifted my spirits.

During the afternoon I went to work at a pampering event in a client's home. There were lots of homemade cakes on the table and I decided to treat myself so over the course of a long afternoon I had one small chocolate cornflake cake and three very small squares of shortbread. I still felt guilty eating cakes but I knew that I had a fast day coming up and that the whole point of this diet is to eat well on the feed days. Time will tell what the scales say tomorrow at my weigh in to mark the end of my very first week on this eating plan.

Week Two - Wow, I Didn't Faint!

30th March 2013

This is my third fast day. I know that I am counting them at the moment and I hope that this will become such a natural part of my life that I will accept them as normal soon.

Well I got on the scale this morning and I have lost two pounds! It's not the huge weight loss that I was hoping for but it's realistic and if I can lose two pounds per week for a while then I will soon reduce my weight. My first goal is to go from the obese label to simply overweight and then, eventually to healthy weight!

The other really good news this morning is to be found from my trusty tape measure.

My bust was 44 inches, now it's 43.8 inches

My waist was 38.5 inches, now it's 38 inches

My hips were 46 inches, now they are 45.5 inches

My lower hips were 45 inches, now they are 44.5 inches

My upper thighs were 26.5 inches, now they are 26.5 inches

My lower thighs were 19.4 inches, now they are 19 inches

My upper arms were 13.5 inches, now they are 13.4 inches

That is a very real difference in my actual size. Plus, my double chin is smaller and my face appears to be less 'puffy and watery', if you know what I mean. So the feeling of my clothes being more comfortable is based on fact and not my imagination.

I feel very positive about my fast day today because I have the evidence now that what I am doing is helping me. I am not even panicking about my empty stomach and waves of hunger. I'm just ignoring it and getting on with my day. Plus, I am definitely experiencing less hot flushes and other menopausal symptoms. I'm just loving this way of eating!

I had a great day. I went out in the afternoon after my tiny lunch. I took my daughter to a local cafe for an Easter fayre where there were chocolate Easter eggs and delicious cakes. I felt so in control as I ordered a black tea and sat at the table whilst Rose tucked into a chocolate cup cake. I am finding it easy to just say no rather than trying to find the lowest calorie option. I was hungry by dinner time and ate my steamed vegetables with great delight.

Later in the evening, whilst I was watching television I had this immense sensation of joy. It came over me like a wave. I realised that I had not even thought about food. These fast days free me from choices for some reason and make me feel liberated from the chore of eating normal meals. It's an amazingly good feeling!

2nd April 2013

Well, I was a bit of a naughty girl for two days over Easter. I went to my sister's French house and ate very well on Easter Sunday and then they came to our house on the holiday Monday and I ate loads again. I also ate chocolate on both days and did not count any calories over the two days. I did not like feeling out of control again but in my mind I was thinking that it's Easter and I want to enjoy chocolate!

So today is my fast day and I am so pleased because I feel less guilty about all the chocolate that I ate. I am seriously considering eating 2000 calories tomorrow and then maybe having an extra fast day on Thursday, eat 2000 calories on Friday, then fast again on the Saturday to give my diet a boost.

I will not commit to it yet but wait and see how I feel. I seem to feel so good on my fast days that I could get addicted to this!

So today has been an easy fasting day. I have been so busy that I have hardly had time to register any hunger. It does appear that every fast day gets easier. I don't feel panic when I get light headed or hunger pangs because I know that they will pass and that I can live very easily on my 500 careful calories. I do hope this trend continues.

During the evening Sandy emailed me and told me all about her BMI which was now coming down so I decided to go online and calculate mine. When I started the diet I weighed an embarrassing 203lbs which made my BMI 30.9 = obese!!!

So last Saturday I weighed 201lbs so my BMI was down to 30.6. My first target is to not be obese!

Oh my God, what a little piggy I have been! Never mind, I'm onto it now and there's no point in beating myself up.

3rd April 2013

Once I had got my head around my BMI and the shock of being truly obese, I decided to do the maths on how many calories I should be eating each day. On the same internet site I found a section to put in my height and weight and it then told me that I needed to eat just under 2500 calories per day to maintain my current weight and to reduce this by 20% to 2000 calories per day to achieve a healthy weekly weight loss of one to two pounds per week. So I decided to stick to my 2000 calories per day on my five eating days, plus with only 500 calories per fasting day on two days of the week, the maths told me that I will lose weight each week.

When I was out shopping at my local supermarket I decided to treat myself to a new pair of digital kitchen scales. My old ones were visually very attractive but not very accurate. I had decided that if I was going to commit to counting calories every day then I needed to be certain about my weights and measures.

As I undressed and prepared to go to bed I noticed my body in the mirror. I was rather disappointed as I had a saggy tummy. Whilst I was at my full weight my skin was taut over my bulges by now the bulges were emptying and I was left with a saggy bit of skin which looked even worse than before! I told Rob and he was so encouraging and reminded me that I had done this before and found my body looking crinkled and empty but he knew that it would tighten back over time and it was happening

because I was losing fat from my middle. I fell asleep feeling good about my changing shape and vowed to keep up my keep fit regime to ensure that my skin caught up with the loss of fat!

I came home and weighed out my lunch and found that I felt really in control knowing exactly how much I was eating. I managed to stay just below my 2000 calories limit by the end of the day and I felt amazing.

4th April 2013

Sandy emailed me to let me know that she was starting to see benefits in her clothes. She was able to do up the zipper in her boots that she had not been able to wear for a while and she was able to fully zip up a skirt that she had been using a pin to keep together. She was about four weeks ahead of me from starting the intermittent fasting diet and she was giving me so much hope. As she said to me, they were only small triumphs but every step along the way to regaining a healthy body should be celebrated. I was looking forward to having some of those moments soon.

5th April 2013

First thing in the morning I completed half of my spinning on my indoor bike trainer when I decided that I would have a go at doing an exercise DVD that a friend had given me some time ago. It was a combination of yoga and pilates and when I tried to do it a few months ago I was not very flexible and found it very difficult. I laid my yoga mat on the floor in the living room in front of the television and then completed the whole one hour session. I had to do some of the poses that were designed for beginners as I was not as fit as some of the presenters but I managed to do the whole thing. I could feel my body being toned and I loved the feeling of health and fitness that came over me. I was certainly reducing the bloating of my body and now that I was getting saggy bits on my stomach I wanted to ensure that my body would become toned and firm.

I allowed myself one thousand calories for my breakfast and lunch as we had friends coming over in the evening for a dinner party and I wanted to be able to eat with them.

I was so proud of myself during the meal. Although I did not know how many calories I consumed, I made a point of eating very slowly whilst chatting so that no one would notice that I was eating less. I stopped eating well before my stomach felt full and I made a low calorie fruit dessert that I chose to eat and refrained from having a slice of the raspberry tart that everyone else ate. I even had two quality chocolates at the end of the meal so that I did not feel deprived in any way. I went to bed very late after clearing up and I felt nicely full but not bloated.

Week Three - This Really Is Working!

6th April 2013

I had a lovely lay in so I did not actually get downstairs until nearly eleven o'clock. I was having my fifth fast day and it was always easier if I started a fast day with a long lay in bed.

I weighed myself and to my delight I had lost another two pounds. I took my body measurements and found that I had lost another half inch off my waist, hips, bum and even my thighs were starting to reduce in girth.

I felt so happy knowing that this intermittent fasting way of eating along with the calorie counting was really working for me, Mrs Menopausal woman who had struggled with her weight for years. I was so happy that I wrote this poem to celebrate:

Oh Menopause

Oh Menopause, Oh Menopause,
just when did you begin?
I used to be so composed,
so cool, so calm, so slim.

Oh Menopause, Oh Menopause,
you took me by surprise.
You stole away my joie de vivre,
my sleep, my sparkling eyes.

Oh Menopause, oh Menopause,
you gave me belly fat.
You gave me gloomy thoughts,
now I'm barmy as a bat.

Oh Menopause, Oh Menopause,
me you will not defeat!
I'm sure I will recover
from the endless nights of heat.

Oh Menopause, Oh Menopause,
just when will you disappear?
I can't wait to return to me,
but when, is not so clear.

During the course of the day I began to think about my clothes. I had not worn a pair of jeans for most of the winter because my old ones were too tight for me and I did not want to buy the next size up so I bought some flexible leggings and lived in those with my boots and long jumpers for

the whole of the winter. I was looking forward to losing a few more pounds and then I would try my jeans on again.

I had been successful a few years ago in losing weight and managed to lose three stone at that time so I bought myself a whole new summer wardrobe of small clothes. Luckily I had kept all of those clothes in the hope that I might be able to wear them again and although I had about three stone to loose before they would fit me, this was looking like an achievable goal and something to work towards for the summer.

Suddenly, my life felt full of new hope. I had enjoyed family meals and social occasions over the past two weeks but still lost weight so maybe this diet was really going to work for me and my lifestyle.

Once again I found it easier than ever to stick to my fasting regime. It was only during the evening that I became more hungry so I filled my stomach up with a can of diet fizzy drink which had no calories in it. I knew that it was full of other chemicals that were not great for my body but it did the trick, gave me a boost and got me through the rest of the evening without cheating.

Luckily, I don't miss alcoholic drinks as I gave up alcohol eighteen months ago as it gave me severe hot flushes and sleepless nights at the start of my menopause. I also gave up caffeine at the same time so this has made my life easier as I don't waste any calories on drinks and save them all up for the joy of food!

7th April 2013

I woke up after a very good night's sleep. My fasting the day before had not effected my sleep and I was not particularly hungry when I got out of bed. I had a healthy breakfast of fruit and diet yogurt before I went back upstairs for my shower.

I decided to try on some of my clothes to see how my small amount of size reduction had effected my wardrobe. I started with my swimsuit. I had not been swimming for over a year because I felt too large and my swimsuit no longer fitted me. I struggled to pull it up my body by it got stuck at my thighs and was still too small. I was not too disheartened because it was now two sizes too small for me.

I needed a swimsuit because I had booked a holiday to go to Barcelona in early May with a bunch of my old school girlfriends to celebrate our 50th birthdays. I did not want to have to buy a new swimsuit now that I was losing weight so the race was on to see if I could reduce my size enough over the next few weeks.

I then tried on two summer dresses that I had also not worn since spring last year. I had tried one of them on a few weeks ago and even with my husband's help, the zipper at the back would not meet. This time he helped me and it zipped up without any resistance! The other dress was the same. I was thrilled. I now had two summer dresses that I could take to Barcelona with me and within three weeks they should be really comfortable to wear.

I felt so motivated now that I could see a difference so I tried on my white, cropped jeans that I did not wear at all last year. I just about managed to get the zipper and button done up but I had a huge mushroom, muffin top. I vowed to try them on each week just in case they would fit me in time

for my holiday, if not I would have to take my cropped leggings instead as there was no way I was going to buy larger sized clothes now!

Whilst I was dressing and undressing in my various garments Rob noticed a mole on my leg and on my back. I had grown quite a few little moles over the last few years to the point where I went to my doctor to have them checked out. My doctor was quite happy that they were just normal moles and that I was a moley person so I thought no more about them. Well, after two weeks on this diet, these moles are going all dry and the one on my back looks like it is going to come off.

I know that it said in the book about the fasting diet that whilst you are fasting your body goes into repair mode which is very beneficial for you. I wonder if this is a sign that my body is changing in other ways as well?

8th April 2013

Last night I struggled to get to sleep because I was so hungry. Although yesterday was not a fasting day, I only ate about 1800 calories and I could not decide what to eat with my final few calories so I went to bed feeling hungry. I knew that I could eat if I really needed to but I was so determined to get into my swimsuit soon.

I woke up feeling hungry and had my breakfast before I took Rose to the bus stop. I came home and did an hour of spinning on my bike but I really struggled with it. My mind and body were not in the mood and I was so hungry that I had a mid-morning snack and then a hearty lunch. I remembered that tinned tuna was low in calories and I had some in the cupboard so I ate that with a jacket potatoe and I finally began to feel full at last.

Rose phoned me at lunchtime and asked if I could collect her from college as she was not feeling very well. By the evening I decided that I was not feeling right either and I had a little nap in the chair in front of the television like a little old lady. I managed to stick to my 2000 calories but it was a real struggle.

9th April 2013

Normally Tuesdays were my fasting days but I really did not feel very well today and I had an important conference to attend in the morning and a meal booked with friends in the evening so I decided to eat normally today and make tomorrow my fast day instead. Even if I did not have so much in my diary today I don't think that I could have fasted. I had a 'hot tummy' and a head ache and I craved a milky cereal breakfast which helped to settle my stomach.

The conference had a buffet lunch provided and I would find that virtually impossible on a fast day so I was grateful that the diet had this flexibility to move the fast days around to suit me.

The conference I attended went very well and my stomach rumbled rather a lot as the meeting drew to a close. Food was served in the foyer and it was very posh nibbles, caviar toasts, smoked salmon canapés and chicken and prune kababs. I ate a few nibbles and most of them were very healthy. When they brought out the desserts they were also finger food sizes and I only ate one. I felt very proud of myself.

That evening I went with Rob and Rose to a friend's house for an evening meal. I did not show the same restraint as I had at lunchtime and tucked into a hearty, homecooked meal with a large serving

of fresh cream trifle and a shared chocolate Easter egg to round off the evening. I felt full but I still did not eat as much as I would have done before starting the diet. I went to sleep with a lovely full tummy which was a nice feeling as I knew I had another fast day ahead of me the next day.

10th April 2013

So today was my first fast day on a Wednesday. It was probably one of my most difficult fast days to date. I felt hungry half way through the morning so I had to eat something before my lunch which was a shame but I felt too light headed not to eat. I only had one cracker with some honey on it but it helped me out. I ate my normal lunch of two poached eggs on a bed of lettuce and then I felt much better.

My parents arrived after lunch to spend three weeks with us. They still lived in England but normally came out to stay in our holiday cottage for three week trips each year. I gave them lunch and enjoyed a cup of green tea with them whilst they tucked into French bread and cheeses.

I cooked an evening meal for the whole family, including my parents. I cooked some poached fish in a holondaise sauce with fresh, steamed vegetables and potatoes and I only ate the veg and fish so that I felt included in the meal. It all worked rather well but I had eaten all my calories by then so I could not have a snack in the evening. I went to bed feeling really hungry but once again, I did it!

11th April 2013

I had my breakfast the minute I got out of bed as I was so in need of food. I went to work all day and I was very good. I worked at a lady's house who was holding one of our pampering events and she had made lots of lovely cakes and biscuits. I was very proud of myself as normally I eat quite a few cakes throughout the day at these events but this time I had a small lunch and only one small slice of cake. I was very hungry by the time I got home and I had a good helping of dinner. I loved the fact that I had eaten some cake so that I did not feel deprived but I did have the will-power to stick to my sensible portion sizes.

The best part of the day was when two separate regular clients commented on my figure. One asked if I had lost weight because my double chin was gone and the other noticed that my stomach was much smaller. Those two comments were like nectar and gave me such a boost to stay on track.

12th April 2013

I put on my large belt over my flowing top and leggings and I found that I had to put it on the smallest hole. I looked at myself in the mirror and I could see the difference in my chin and my stomach. I was still obese but I was definitely getting smaller. It was wonderful to see and feel such quick results and this was helping me to stick to the regime and keep wanting to eat less and complete my fast days properly.

Week Four - Dropped One Dress Size!

13th April 2013

I jumped out of bed with a spring in my step because I was keen to get on the scales. Once again I was blessed with a two pound weight loss for the week. I got the tape measure out and found that another slither of me was missing all down my body. It felt almost too good to be true. I had lost six pounds in only three weeks and I was not making my life a misery in the process. Even Rob looked pleased and said that it was a relatively easy diet compared to some that I had embarked upon.

Another good thing about this diet was the fact that it was not expensive in any way. Because I was eating less food our shopping bill had fallen. On my two fast days I ate so little that it was a cheaper way to live. I had been on previous diets that required expensive shakes or high protein products but with this one I was simply eating my normal foods, just much less of them!

Today was a fast day and I embraced it fully. I went to work in the morning and did not eat until half past one. I was starving by then and felt rather ratty but I was fine once I had eaten. We had visitors come over in the afternoon but I sat and had a cup of herbal tea and a chat with them whilst they tucked into some chocolate biscuits but I did not mind in the least.

Later that evening, after I had eaten my tea of steamed vegetables and a tiny slice of smoked trout, I felt really, really hungry. I emailed Sandy and told her how very hungry I was feeling but I did not cave in and eat anything. I soon fell asleep and forgot all about my hunger pangs.

14th April 2013

At last, spring had arrived and the rain had stopped. I went for a bike ride with my father on my new road racer. I was accustomed to spinning in my living room and now that I was outside I had the wind to contend with along with hills and even the declines were hard work on my arms. My father had been a keen cyclist all his life and he loved to cycle during his holidays with us in France. He left me standing at every hill until he taught me some new techniques on how to climb a hill on my bike and then I was able to keep up with him.

I enjoyed a hearty lunch after my ride and once I had showered I decided to try on some more summer clothes. The temperature had risen to twenty seven degrees so I needed cooler clothes to wear. I tried on some summer tops with my cut off jeans and I looked so fat. Although I had lost nearly half a stone, I was only back to the weight that I started to winter with and most of my summer clothes were still far too small. I tried not to be downhearted and put on my white cropped jeans that almost fitted me with a floaty top so that you could not see my muffin top!

During the afternoon the whole family took my parents to some local fishing lakes and we had a lovely walk with the dog. We stopped outside a cafe and had icecreams in the sunshine and it was wonderful. I knew that I had enough calories to eat the icecream and I kept focusing on the fact that

the summer was ahead of me and hopefully I would be a bit smaller each week and be able to show off my arms and legs once more.

15th April 2013

I woke up feeling very hungry and my upper arms hurt. The cycling the day before had made me use my arms in a new way, especially when I was climbing up hills and my arms were now aching. I was hopeful that this meant that the cycling would help tone up my arms and remove my bat wings.

I went for another bike ride but this time I met my dad half way round as I could not keep up with him. He was seventy eight years old but he was such a fit cyclist that I realised that I was slowing him down. I enjoyed the slower ride out on my own and once I joined my father I worked harder to keep up with him.

When I finished my bike ride I could hardly walk. My spinning in the house had not fully prepared me for real road cycling and I decided to have a rest the next day.

I kept to my 2000 calories all day but I still felt more hungry than normal. I went for a nice long walk during the evening with my parents and my dog and came home and had a small supper with my remaining calories. I wondered if I was more hungry due to all the fresh air and hard cycling I had done over the last two days?

16th April 2013

I had a lie in as Rose was on her Easter holidays from college and as it was a fast day I wanted to make the day as short as possible. I was quite hungry in the morning so I tried something new. It was a beef oxo cube which I put into boiling water and had as a beef broth. It was only 7 calories and very salty and it made me feel like I had eaten something savoury. It helped me get through to lunchtime when I had my normal two poached eggs on a bed of lettuce with cucumber, tomatoes and a raw carrot.

In the afternoon I went out with my parents and we did some shopping which was nice. When I returned home I was so hungry I almost forgot it was a fast day and I nearly ate something. I remembered just in time so I peeled a raw carrot and ate that and had a mint tea to try and keep me going until dinner time.

19th April 2013

The sun was shining and it was a stunning, spring day so my father invited me out for another bike ride with him. This time he knew that I would be a lot slower than him and he waited for me. He still pushed my capabilities but I did not feel so slow. We went for a two hour ride with just one small rest in the middle for me to take some photos.

I felt absolutely fantastic for the whole ride. Near the end my legs were burning but I felt confident that I could complete the circuit. I was very hungry afterwards but a French friend of mine called in when I arrived home so I had a mug of tea with her and managed to last until lunchtime for any food.

I had invited my parents to have lunch with us because I had bought some clams in sauce for Christmas and they were still in the freezer and needed to be eaten up. My parents loved sea food

so I cooked them for a treat. Because I was so hungry I also had potatoes, coleslaw and baked beans and salad with them and I felt that I had eaten too much. I did not know the calorific value of the clams so I did my best to estimate them.

I went food shopping in the afternoon and Maltesers were on offer in a big bag. They are my favourite chocolates so I bought them. I have to admit to eating rather a lot of them as I kept snacking on them over the day and thinking that I had done lots of exercise so it was alright. I lost count of my calories over the day. I did not like the feeling of being out of control but I hoped that the scales would still be kind to me.

Week Five - Steady Weight Loss

20th April 2013

I could not wait to get on the scales this morning as I felt so slim when I woke up. I felt a little disappointed as I had lost just over one pound in weight. I measured my body and once again I had lost half an inch off my belly and hips and a quarter of an inch off everywhere else but I beat myself up about the Maltesers and for loosing count of my calories on my feed days.

It was more difficult for me to be strict about my calorie intake with my parents staying for their holidays with us but I really wanted to keep the momentum going. I felt that I was starting to slip back into my old snacking habits so I vowed to keep more control. At least it was a fast day today so I would get the taste of Maltesers out of my system.

The good news was that I had still lost weight and inches and that needed to be celebrated. I looked at my weekly weight chart that I had kept for years and it was last May when I was this weight so I had lost almost one year's of snacking damage already. That cheered me up no end.

After my shower, I got dressed and managed to wear a pair of denim cropped jeans that I had not been able to wear for the last year. It was like having new clothes every day as I kept shrinking and being able to wear some old favourites.

My son had been very poorly last summer and I felt that I had now removed all the weight that I gained whilst I visited him in hospital and cared for him during his recovery. At that time I was so concerned for his health that I did not have time to cook carefully or count calories. Now I felt that I was putting that dreadful time behind me and I was healing from the experience in a very positive and visible way.

I hardly even noticed that it was a fast day because I felt back in control and so much slimmer. My face and chin appeared to show the biggest change in me which was great as that's what most people saw first.

21st April 2013

Oh my goodness, what a contrast in my eating since yesterday. My parents, Rob and myself were invited to a friend's house for a meal with him as his house warming dinner party. I was very careful about how much I ate during the day but I had still consumed at least one thousand calories before the evening meal came round.

When we arrived at his house the meal was still cooking so we had drinks and chatted for a while. I'm not very good at eating late and by the time the meal was cooked it was far later into the evening than I would normally eat and I was very hungry by then.

He had cooked a lovely pork casserole with fresh vegetables, potatoes and his own, homemade bread. I had two servings of the meal as I was so hungry and I ate bread for the first time in over

four weeks. He had not prepared a dessert due to his diabetes but he served a cheese course with his lovely bread. I cut a chunk of blue cheese which tasted divine and I forgot all about my diet and ended up having a few slices of bread with lots of cheese.

When I arrived home I went to bed and I had so much trouble getting to sleep. I felt sick and full of strong cheese. I woke up in the middle of the night and tried to be sick. I still felt so full and cross with myself for eating so much cheese and bread. I eventually fell back to sleep and vowed to myself to have more control at dinner parties. I could not eat the amounts that I used to and it actually had made me feel quite ill.

23rd April 2013

I had a busy diary planned for the day so I was thinking of moving my fast day to Wednesday but when I woke up I decided that I would give it a go today, even though I would be working.

It was a bright, sunny, spring morning and my first task was to take my car to the garage for some repairs. Rob followed me in his Land Rover and brought me back home again. I then quickly swept through and gave the bathrooms a quick clean and another viewer was coming to see our house in the morning.

I was holding my first pampering event at my house during the afternoon so my next task was to bake some cakes. Rose helped me and did her usual job of licking the spoons. I was very good and did not dip my finger in the cake mixture. When the house viewers arrived the whole property smelt of fresh baking and the woman commented on the lovely smell. I did not do that intentionally but I knew that it would help with the first impressions of the house.

As I had a working afternoon ahead of me I boiled three eggs which I ate to keep me going in between clients. I was not able to eat my tea until after seven in the evening by which time I was very hungry so I decided to weigh out some porridge oats which I had in hot water with a tiny sprinkle of sugar which was delicious. I went to bed hungry but thrilled that I had managed a fast day with work included.

24th April 2013

I tried to be good with my eating today but we had a viewer come to look at our house and he stayed for well into the lunch time so by the time I had my lunch I was so hungry that I ate more than I needed.

That evening, Rob and I were invited out to have dinner with some of his building work clients and they cooked us a wonderful meal. We had a starter of soup and I took just one slice of French bread with that, the main meal was gammon with veg and potatoes so I only took two small slices of gammon. The cheese course came round and I took one small slice of soft cheese and one small slice of French bread. I tried very hard not to eat too much cheese and I was not over full. They then dished up the dessert which was a slice of Christmas pudding with clotted cream!

Well, I did not even eat Christmas pudding at Christmas but I could hardly sit and look at my plate so I ate it and it was dark, rich and delicious. I had no idea how many calories the meal added up to but I drank water all evening which helped me to feel less bloated. I came home and slept well and did not beat myself up as I ate as little as I could without appearing rude.

25th April 2013

The viewer wanted to have a second look at our house so once again I did not have time for any exercise but needed to keep the house clean instead. This week was looking positive for a possible house sale but not so good for my weight loss or fitness regime.

The viewer stayed for about an hour and a half again and then within minutes of leaving the estate agent returned to discuss an offer with us. We were thrilled and spent more time going through the process so once again, lunch was even later than normal. I decided that I could only do my best this week with my diet and at least we had managed to sell our house which meant that we could move forward with our plans and move into the next house we were currently renovating.

26th April 2013

The week had flown past at lightening speed. I was trying to enjoy my parents company which made me busier than normal and then we had quite a few viewers for our house which involved me doing more cleaning so I did not have time for hardly any exercise all week. I was trying not to freak out about it and managed to walk to dog each day so at least I was doing something.

During the week we received an offer on our house from a Frenchman who was a special needs school teacher who needed to move into the area ready for a new job in September. We agreed a price with him and we all signed the paperwork during the morning at the estate agents office. I was so excited that I hardly ate normally all week and so I was hopeful of a good weight loss from this week but then I'd had those two huge meals at dinner parties so I was fearful that I might not have any weight loss at all.

Week Six - Real Life Got in the Way

27th April 2013

I went straight on the scales when I woke up. I did not feel that I had lost much weight and indeed, I had lost just under one pound and there was no change in my measurements. Although I had been good on my two fast days, I had lost control on the other days. With the lack of exercise and two dinner parties on top, it had not been a great week for my diet. I consoled myself with the fact that it had not been a normal week and that I had still lost a small amount of weight. I had my holiday coming up this week so I decided to do my best and then get really back into the diet upon my return from Barcelona.

Today was a fast day again and next week Rose would be back to college and my parents would return to England I could return to my routine for a while.

I had a lovely day and although I was very hungry in the evening, I remained strict with my five hundred calories. During the afternoon I took my parents, Rose and my friend Lizzy to the theatre for a holiday treat. We saw the local amateur dramatic society perform Calender Girls and it was wonderful. I had given Lizzy The Fast Diet book to borrow and she had already started the diet too. It was her second fast day so we sat together with rumbling tummies. During the interval we had a cup of black tea whilst Rose tucked into a slice of chocolate cake. Lizzy and I both resisted the cake and as it came with the tea we wrapped ours up and took them home for our husbands to eat instead.

I was so pleased that my best friend in France was now on the diet with me. She also lent the book to another friend of ours so we were spreading the word.

28th April 2013

I woke up thinking about my swimsuit so I got out of bed and tried it on. It fitted me and it looked pretty good. I still had very wobbly legs but my body looked much smaller in my lycra swimsuit. I had tried it on a few weeks ago and panicked as it did not fit me and I needed one for the holiday. I still had another fast day to go before my trip and if I could only be good and keep control of my calories on the other days I could still loose another pound or so before my holiday. It was such a boost to get into my swimsuit and it would mean that I would be able to enjoy the hotel pool whilst I was away as well.

That evening I kissed my parents farewell as they would leave during the early hours of the morning to drive up to St Malo to catch the ferry back to England. I had enjoyed my time with them but now that they were going back I was looking forward to having my old routine back and hopefully loosing two pounds a week again.

29th April 2013

It felt great to get up at six in the morning and Rose was up without any problem. After I had taken her to the bus stop I got back on my bike and did an hour of spinning in the living room. I caught up with loads of washing and ironing and had a good, normal day at home.

30th April 2013

I was up early ready to take Rose to the bus stop now that her spring holiday was over but I did not feel too good when I got up. I was going to have a fast day but I felt incredibly hungry and light headed so I decided to change my fast day to the next day. I felt that I had failed myself as I just could not face fasting for some reason. I hoped that I would have the resolve to go for it the next day.

By the end of the day I was thrilled that I had changed my mind and had a normal eating day. The weather had taken a turn for the worse so Rob was not able to go to work for clients so we drove to Cholet and bought all the lovely new tiles for the new bathroom along with the last few plumbing bits so that Rob could complete the bathroom whilst I was away on my little holiday.

1st May 2013

It was a bank holiday in France so I had a lay in and got up at about nine o'clock. I knew straight away that I could fast today and that made me feel good.

I succeeded and had an easy fasting day. I was so pleased that I had postponed my fast and I felt that this would be a good tip for me for the future, if I needed to change my fast days in future then I would do so with confidence.

6th May 2013

Well, I arrived home late last night after my wonderful trip to Barcelona where I met up with six of my old school friends. We all stayed in the same hotel and had a few days in the sun, celebrating our 50th birthdays together. I had a wonderful and relaxing short break and I enjoyed all the experiences that the city and the beach had to offer me which mainly included sight seeing, paddling in the sea, socialising and eating.

I did not even attempt to reduce my eating during the holiday as the whole weekend was about celebrations and socialising so I embraced the delicious local foods in the knowledge that I would get straight back into my fasting diet upon my return to my normal life. I did not weigh myself when I arrived home but decided to leave that for another week and have my normal weigh in on the following Saturday.

Unfortunately I did not use the swimming pool as it was not quite warm enough to be swimming on the roof terrace pool of the hotel but I did do a huge amount of walking around the city which was very enjoyable. I was so pleased that I had started my diet before my holiday because my large summer dresses fitted nicely and I knew that I could fit into my swimsuit if I needed to.

I began the day with a cup of lemon tea and found it easy to fast. I had eaten so many large meals over the weekend that it felt good to get back in touch with my hunger again. I was thrilled to have discovered the fasting diet and hoped to get in another fast day during the week so that I had not actually lost a fast day over the whole week including my holiday.

7th May 2013

Yesterday was the easiest fast day so far. I must have filled myself up so much over the course of my weekend away that I rarely even felt any hunger pangs at all. It was a great feeling to know that I was able to get straight back into fasting after my break as on past diets I used to struggle after a holiday to be good again. I was not particularly hungry all day today either but I ate my full 2000 calories as I planned to fast again the very next day.

It would be the first time that I had fasted with only one eating day in between so I was intrigued to see how it would feel.

8th May 2013

It was another bank holiday in France which meant that Rose was home for the day so I was able to lay in bed until nine in the morning which always helped a fast day if I did not have an early start to my day. I was not hungry when I woke up so I had my lemon tea and got on with my day.

Well the day starting off well enough and I had my eggs and some crackers for lunch but during the afternoon I became much hungrier than normal so I decided to have a cereal bar for my snack which only left me the minimum of 150 calories for the rest of the day. I was helping Rob do some painting and decorating on our new house which seemed to sap my energy and I really struggled with not just hunger but weakness as well.

I cooked dinner early for the whole family and I ate my small portion and tried to fill up on lemon tea.

During the evening I became very weak and not very nice to live with. Poor Rob asked me to never have two fast days in the same week with only one eating day in between, ever again as I was not any fun to live with. I have to admit that I felt so strange, weak and weedy that I gave in and had a diet yogurt with a sprinkle of sweet breakfast cereal in it to end my hungry day. I was about 60 calories over my 500 and it was the first time that I had exceeded my calories on a fast day.

I was a little bit disappointed with myself but I had such a busy week following my holiday that I did not have any other days that I felt that I could fast one which was why I had two so close together. I also agreed with Rob and hoped that I would not try that again.

9th May 2013

I had a pamper day all day today with a very packed diary and I was so pleased that I could eat normally all day. I was very hungry all day and lost count of my calories but I was so relieved that I had managed to squeeze two fast days into my busy week.

Week Seven - Holiday Blues

11th May 2013

I woke up and went straight downstairs to jump on the scales. My weight was exactly the same as it had been before I went on holiday so that meant that I had passed two weeks, both with two fasts in them, without any weight loss at all.

It also meant that I had not put any weight on which was amazing when I considered just how many calories per day I must have eaten on my four days of holiday.

I then got my tape measure out and measured myself. All my measurements were the same except my arms which had lost a tiny amount. I noted down my weight on my chart and decided that all in all that was a good result. Holidays were always a bad time for my diets and often I would become totally derailed after a holiday and put back all that I had lost on other diets

So today would be the first fast day for the next week and I would keep going and try and see some weight loss this week.

Thankfully, the day turned out to be one of my easy fast days. Rob reported back to my that I appeared to be normal all day and all evening so he was relieved. I had my faith restored in my ability to keep to the 500 calories once more and I felt back in control once again. It was a great feeling.

15th May 2013

I had eaten normally for the last two days and I was happy to fast again today. I was up early with Rose and I had managed to get back into my regular exercise routine of spinning on my bike, followed by some time on my cross trainer and power plate. I felt so much better for returning to my routine and I was blessed with another relatively easy fast day.

I carried on with my normal jobs all day and even had my annual meeting with my accountant to complete our tax return and I felt fully in control and normal all day. I actually enjoyed that feeling of having heightened perception which I had not felt for a while.

On the clothes front, I put a pair of trousers on that I was not able to wear before the diet as I could not do the zipper up. I now had no muffin top coming over the waistband and I realised how fast my figure was changing. That gave me a real boost and helped me to be good and stick to my 500 calories all day.

I also changed my normal foods for a fast day and instead of having two eggs for my lunch I had a small fish cake and two fish fingers. I found that after eating all that protein I lasted until seven in the evening for my evening meal of 50 grammes of oats with water and cinamon which kept me topped up until bed time. Perhaps eating fish at lunchtime was worth doing again.

Week Eight - Goodbye Mrs Obese, Hello Mrs Overweight

18th May 2013

I just wanted to share with you a real triumph for me this week.

After the disappointment of staying the same weight for the last two weeks I have shifted 3 pounds this week, yippee!

I have been back to my totally normal routine. Two fast days, five healthy eating normal days of around 2000 calories, five days of spinning exercise and yoga with no huge meals or special events.

I'm so pleased as my holiday made me feel a bit derailed. What's great is that we know we can get back on the waggon after a blow out and keep going.

I have hit my first target and I am no longer obese, only overweight. That makes a huge difference inside my head as to how I feel myself.

At yoga this week, my teacher commented on my shape change and how I was able to do old poses in a more stretchy way. The main difference for my yoga practice is the reduction of my huge belly. I have now the space to stretch without a massive lump in the way!

I'm so loving this process and I'm so thankful to Sandy for introducing me to this diet.

I'm fasting today as normal, I do love my routine!

19th May 2013

I woke up with a slight headache but I did not feel very hungry although I had woken in the middle of the night feeling very much in need of food. I resisted the temptation and ended another successful fast day.

I made myself a healthy breakfast of fruits and yogurt and decided to pop my keep fit clothes on and have a workout as it was pouring with rain outside and so a nice Sunday walk with the dog was not looking very appealing.

I reflected on my weight loss journey so far as I looked in the mirror at my wobbly tummy and cellulite thighs. I was still overweight and a large lady but I had achieved a fantastic milestone by fasting my way out of the dangerous, obese range. This goal was a great one to have behind me and my new target was to get right down to 154 pounds, a very healthy weight for my height. I began at 203 pounds, I was now 192 pounds and I had 38 pounds to go. It actually felt like an achievable target and I gave myself no timescale. My plan was to keep fasting two days a week, do my workouts and enjoy healthy food and sensible portions the rest of the time.

The rewards were being delivered to me in the form of my previous clothes being too big and the sense of achievement as I dropped another dress size into clothes I used to love wearing.

I also noticed that I had more energy and my range of movement within my joints had improved too. It was worth going without too many calories twice a week to feel this good.

22nd May 2013

I felt great when I woke up. I fasted yesterday and found that it was one of my easiest fasting days with just a few hunger pangs during the evening. I was finding that the two fish fingers and one fishcake at lunchtime was keeping me full for longer than my eggs and then my tiny bowl of oats in the evening kept me topped up until bedtime.

Although it was quite boring, I was quite happy to stick to my new formula for my fasting days as it was making my life easier and it was a good use of my 500 calories.

I had a great workout after I dropped Rose at the bus stop. I had so much more energy and I could work out much harder than before. After my shower I put a pair of trousers and a summer blouse on and I had no muffin top. The sleeves were not pulling and cutting off my blood supply in my arms anymore and I felt so good. I knew I still had a long way to go but I was enjoying the journey.

23rd May 2013

I went to my yoga class in the morning and enjoyed the strong stretches and poses. On the way home my friend Lizzy and I went to the local café to treat ourselves to a light lunch. We were both very good and declined the cakes. Lizzy chose a jacket potatoe with tuna whilst I had a pesto and cheese wrap with some salad and a mint tea. We had a good old natter over our lunch and I was very full and really did not need a cake.

Before I started the fasting diet I would have eaten the wrap and then had a large slice of cake to follow but now that I was focused on calories I knew how loaded a slice of cake could be so I was perfectly happy to not have a sweet at all.

After our meal we popped into a new clothes shop that had opened in our village. They had some summer dresses on display so I decided to try on a few dresses to my joy I had dropped yet another dress size. That made two dress sizes gone since starting the diet. I bought a strappy, summer maxi dress and it fitted me well enough to wear as soon as the occasion came along. It had been years since I had enjoyed clothes shopping and I was thrilled with my new purchase and how slender it made me look. Although I was still very overweight, I could clearly see the improvement in my body shape.

24th May 2013

I had the pleasure of working at a local golf club today. They invited me to a Ladies' Day where they had various stall holders selling gifts and treats along with myself and my beautician friend who provided pampering treatments. I dressed up smartly for the event and I felt so much more confident for having an improved figure. I was so busy that I had very little time to eat and I found that I was fine with having a long gap in between my meals although I was very hungry when I arrived home and had a good evening meal to make up for it.

Week Nine - I'm Looking Different and Feeling Great

25th May 2013

I could not wait to jump on the scales again for my weekly weigh in and to my delight I had lost another two pounds. I was only one pound away from losing my first stone and I felt so proud of myself. I noticed that my tummy was a bit saggy and empty and needed to be more toned so I decided to have a yoga workout instead of spinning on my bike and it helped me to feel more flexible. I resolved to do more yoga now that I was shrinking and needed to firm up parts of my body.

I also tried on a few summer dresses and I found that things that I had not work for two years were nearly fitting me and should look good in just a few more weeks. I loved the feeling of making steady, real progress and I embraced my Saturday fast with enthusiasm.

I had no problem fasting all day and I ate my new regime of two fish fingers and a fish cake for lunch followed by a tiny bowl of porridge oats in the evening. I was able to do a few hours weeding in the garden as well as some packing towards our housemove and I just loved the feeling that I was losing weight in a safe and dependable way.

26th May 2013

I went to my sister's holiday home with Rose to visit my sister and her family whilst they were in France for the week. She cooked us a lovely lunch and an evening meal which we ate outside in their sunny garden surrounded by birdsong and the scent of her roses. It was a magical day and I did not worry about what I was eating, this was a treat day.

28th May 2013

I was very good and had my normal, Tuesday fast which went well. I was feeling good.

29th May 2013

My sister and her family came to visit us for the day and I cooked two lovely meals and we all tucked in. I was careful not to eat too much but I had lost count of calories by lunchtime and hoped that my fast days would be able to compensate for the two days feasting with my family.

30th May 2013

I had Rose home from Lycee. She had a dreadful cold and I was starting to feel that I was beginning to catch it too. I struggled to do my spinning in the morning and totally forgot to count calories all day.

31st May 2013

Rose got up ready to go to Lycee as it was her last official day of term before she started her four weeks of work experience. Unfortunately she was sick in the bathroom was not in any state to go in. I struggled to do a few minutes of spinning but I felt dizzy so I gave up. I took Rose to the doctor and got a sick note. During the afternoon I really could have done with a good sleep but I had booked a hair cut in town so I drove in and got my hair done. I then called into Rose's Lycee and handed in her books and her sick note.

I was pleased to get home and rest and did not even have the energy to walk the dog. I was so hungry that I did not know what I had eaten all day again.

Week Ten - A Bit of a Setback

1st June 2013

I felt really ill when I woke up. I went downstairs and jumped on the scales and I was not surprised to see that I had gained weight. I had put on just over half a pound so nothing dreadful but I had experienced my first real set back, a weight gain.

I had earache, my head was pounding and I felt sick so I really did not mind having a fast day as I did not fancy food anyway. I got through the day but I did have a few more calories than my normal five hundred as I was so hungry and weak in the evening. I ate some sprouts, carrots and a tiny slice of chicken on top of my normal fast day foods so it was nothing naughty but I just wanted to get through the day and get back into my bed.

2nd June 2013

I was disappointed with myself for losing control and gaining weight last week. It showed me that I had to combine my workouts with my fast days and my calorie controlled eating on the other days if I wanted to succeed. I had to complete all three tasks each week to guarantee a weight reduction and I had been shown that I could not cheat in any way. I felt slightly better so I started to count calories again for a normal eating day and did a small workout in the morning to make me feel better and more in control again.

However, that lunchtime we were invited out for lunch in a posh restaurant with our gite guests to celebrate their wedding anniversary. I did my best to choose the most healthy options from the three course meal but I did eat all of my food and enjoyed the meal immensely.

3rd June 2013

My normal routine was gone for the summer. Rose had four weeks of work experience and needed me to drive her there and back everyday. I could have got up really early and completed my workout but I was so tired so I got out of bed later and drove her to work. I then managed a small workout but nothing like my normal routine. I hoped that this would be enough exercise to shift some weight.

4th June 2013

I had my normal fast day for a Tuesday. I took Rose into her work experience and then drove James into Niort, our nearest city, to the hospital ready for an operation. I helped him to get settle in his room and then came home in time for my tiny bowl of porridge. I knew that this could be a difficult week for me with him in hospital and Rose at work but I was determined to keep eating healthily.

5th June 2013

James had his operation today so I had lunch at home and then drove into Niort to sit with him. I took myself a healthy sandwich which I ate in his room whilst he came around. I stayed with him

until later in the evening and when I came home I needed a chocolate fix. His operation had been a success and my son was now on the road to recovery but I did need a bit of comfort food to help me cope.

6th June 2013

Rob and Rose came into the hospital with me to visit James. We spent most of the afternoon with him and then we went out to dinner for a treat whilst his friends stayed by his bedside. We went to an American restaurant that Rose and Rob loved to visit. Once again, I chose the fish course and a small sweet so I felt that I had made reasonably healthy choices. I did not over stretch my stomach during the meal and as usual, I had no alcohol either.

7th June 2013

James was on the mend so I felt that I could have a good workout in the morning before visiting him in the afternoon. Once again I took my own food in with me for my evening meal to try and regulate my calorie intake.

Week Eleven - Another Weight Gain

8th June 2013

I felt slimmer when I woke up so I popped on the scales only to find that I had gained a tiny amount of weight yet again. I felt that I had lost two weeks of fasting days. I realised that I was going to have to work a lot harder at this diet now. I was very determined and was not going to give up. I told myself that at least I had gained the health benefits of the two fast days each week, even if I had not lost any weight as a result of them. I wrote my weight gain on my chart and got on with my next fast day as if nothing had happened.

I was kind to myself because my routine had gone with Rose needing me to drive her around more and my emotional rollercoaster of James being in hospital. At least the damage was minor.

9th June 2013

I was a new woman, I counted calories all day and I did not allow myself to forget my goal. I really wanted to ensure that I was back to losing weight again so I made time to do my workout even though I was falling behind with my paperwork and other jobs whilst I was visiting James every day in the hospital.

Last summer he had to have four operations over three months which was a difficult time for me and my family. I gained quite a lot of weight over that time as I was comfort eating, lost control of my routine and found myself caring for my son at home for a lot of the summer as well. I was determined that the same thing was not going to happen this summer.

11th June 2013

I went to work today and I was very good and took my own sandwiches. I did eat a tiny slice of cake but otherwise I remained focused. I moved my fast day to the next day as I could not face fasting whilst working all day and visiting James in the evening.

12th June 2013

I was very good and completed my fast day on a Wednesday this week. It felt odd but at least I was still in control. Whilst I was driving into the hospital to visit James he called me on my mobile and told me that he was able to come home. I was so happy. We would both be free of the hospital so I collected him and came straight back home. I cooked him his favourite roast chicken dinner and had some myself with a few vegetables to celebrate his return. I might have gone over my 500 hundred calories by a few but I was happy with that.

13th June 2013

With James home I did not have to find the time to visit him in hospital and he was so well he did not need me to help him too much at home was I was able to go to my yoga class again.

14th June 2013

I struggled to find an outfit that fitted me when I got dressed. I felt a lot thinner and the jeans I wanted to wear kept sliding down off my waist and were uncomfortable which was a great sign.

I managed to do a full one hour's workout in the morning which made me feel really back into my routine again.

Week Twelve - At Last, My First Stone Is Gone.

15th June 2013

I really did feel so much slimmer when I woke up but I was not counting my chickens too early so I jumped on the scales and found that I had managed a really good weight loss. I was now 13 stone 6 pounds so I had lost my first full stone plus one pound. I took my body measurements and found that I had lost almost another half inch off my tummy, hips and bottom since my last set of measurements.

I felt so pleased with myself now that I was back on track. I knew that I would have to keep reducing my calories as I lost more weight but it was becoming easier now that my stomach was adjusting to smaller portions.

I got on with my Saturday fast day as I cleaned the gite ready for the next round of holiday makers who were due to arrive later in the day.

James was so much better that he was almost fully recovered so I did not have to worry about his health effecting my eating anymore this summer. My next challenge was to remain focused as the summer gite guests and rounds of BBQ's began.

21st June 2013

Once I had driven Rose to her work experience I treated myself to a morning of exercise. I did an hour of spinning on my bike followed by some time on my cross trainer and power plate and finished the combination with some yoga poses. I felt great afterwards.

Week Thirteen - Another Steady Weight Loss.

22nd June 2013

After my good work out yesterday I woke up feeling slimmer again so I jumped on the scales and found that two more pounds were gone. I was so happy. I had my fast day as normal and got on with doing the gite changeover as one lots of guests left and the next one's arrived. I had a hungry day but it was worth it, the results were stunning and I felt so good on the inside as well as getting my figure to return.

28th June 2013

Rose went off to her work experience with a smile on her face as it was her last day and the first day of her long summer holiday.

Rob and I spent the day going through our clothes in preparation for our house move. We tried on everything and decided what to keep, what to re-cycle and what might sell at the second hand shop. I found so many clothes that were now too large for me and this time I was not going to keep them so they all left the house in one way or another. I found all my really small clothes and put them into storage for next summer when I felt confident they would fit me once more.

This left me with clothes in my wardrobe that actually fitted me at the moment. Rob commented on the fact that I had loads of clothes but I pointed out that although that appeared to be the case. I had four sizes in my collection and now the largest of those sizes no longer fitted me.

During the evening we had friends over for a final fancy meal in our house and to celebrate the summer holidays for our children. I cooked a meal that I was very proud of. I decided to bake scones for the first time in my life because I still had some clotted cream in the freezer so for sweet we had clotted cream and strawberry jam scones. I was very good with having small portions of the starter and the main meal but I have to confess to having three small scones at the end of the meal. I knew that I would pay for it on the scales the next day but it was my last blow out before moving house.

Week Fourteen - Revenge of the Clotted Cream

29th June 2013

I knew the moment that I jumped on the scales that I had scored a home goal with the clotted cream scones. I had increased my weight very slightly from last week. I was not too troubled by the scales as I had another good fast day whilst I helped Rob to move lots of items over to our new house.

As I fell asleep I had the idea of trying a new idea with my fasting during the school holidays. I always found the day that I had to be up early to get Rose to the bus stop the hardest of my two fast days per week but now that I had the holidays for two months I would be able to get up later. So I came up with a plan to try having one fast day followed by two eating days, followed by a fast day and then two more eating days again. This would move my fast days around more but during the school holidays I had no normal routine anyway.

I felt happy with this idea and could not wait to try it out and see what difference it would make.

Week Fifteen - Preparing to Move House

6th July 2013

I woke up really early as today was moving house day. I still went on my scales and to my delight I had lost two pounds. My new regime of one fast day followed by two eating days had worked.

Week Sixteen - Going in the Right Direction Again

13th July 2013

I found the scales and jumped on them to find that I had lost yet another two pounds. I could not find my diet record sheet anywhere so I made a new one. The busy week had not effected my diet and I was thrilled. I was down to 13 stone and I felt incredibly slim!

14th July 2013

The heat wave continued so James and I went out early on our bikes for a wonderful ride around the country lanes. I wore a strappy top with my cycling crop trousers and I felt good. Although I still had another stone and a half to lose my arms and shoulders had reduced dramatically and I felt confident enough to wear a strappy top at last.

I spent the afternoon gardening in the sunshine in my strappy suntop and I loved the feeling of the sun on my skin. It had been a couple of years since I had exposed my upper arms and back to the sun and it felt so very good.

15th July 2013

I fasted today, knowing that I was not going to fast for a week as I had my brother and his family coming to stay and I wanted to be able to join in with eating lovely meals with them. I was very strict and stuck to my 500 calories for the day. I had decided to allow myself to enjoy eating with the family whilst they were with us as I could go back onto my fasting days as soon as they left.

16th July 2013

My brother, his wife and my ten year old nephew and seven year old niece arrived in the afternoon and I cooked us a tasty barbeque which we all ate in the delightful back garden of our gite on the terrace, under the shade of our wooden pergola. I even treated myself to a chilled glass of rosé wine to celebrate our summer holiday with them.

My brother had driven to France in his new camper van and they parked up in the back garden of our renovation project. They were able to use the bathroom in the new house and then ate with us in the gite.

Although the back garden of the new house was still a building site they were quite happy as they were locked in with the gates so they felt safe and secure and were able to sleep with all their windows and doors open which was a treat.

They used the gite garden for relaxing in and eating in so it all worked out rather well.

17th July 2013

I went to work in the afternoon at the local café and my sister in law and niece came with me.

They were serving cream teas in the garden at the back of the café but I was very good and only ordered a sparkling water. I spent a very enjoyable afternoon and I wore my strappy, long, maxi dress for the first time in public. I felt very comfortable and I was so grateful that I had lost enough weight to expose my arms in time for the really hot weather.

That evening we had another large, family meal on the terrace with pudding, followed by a gentle walk around the country lanes with the family and our dog.

18th July 2013

I was up early and made a picnic. I drove my family in my car and my brother drove his family in his camper van and we went for a grand family day out at the Puy du Fou, the amazing theme park nearby. My niece and nephew loved the live shows and the performances, especially the falconry display. It was a baking hot day and we took one of those water spray cans that enabled us to spray a fine mist onto our skin every half hour or so which helped us to cool down.

We ate on the hoof as there were so many shows to pack into our day so we ended up eating whilst queueing for some shows but we were all very happy with that. I felt slightly faint a couple times from the heat but I kept drinking lots of water and ate little a often which helped.

Rob cooked us all pizza and chips for our evening meal which we all ate with gusto upon our late return to our gite.

19th July 2013

I went to work for the day and left the family to have a day out on their own. I took healthy sandwiches again as I was working at the local golf club and did not want to be tempted to a bar meal and pudding. Thankfully the weather was slightly cooler which was better for my work. I had a good day and met some new clients.

I drove home and found that my sister in law had bought and prepared a lovely evening meal upon my return. Once again it was warm enough for us all to eat outside before having another walk. My niece loved walking our little dog around the country lanes whilst my nephew enjoyed finding and studying insects on our walks.

Week Seventeen - Coward

20th July 2013

It was an almost unbearable temperature today, it was so hot. I did not weigh myself and I knew that I had been eating three course meals every evening and I did not want to discourage myself so I decided to wait another week before getting back onto my scales.

I spent a lovely quiet morning with my sister in law and niece whilst Rob and my brother went out for a game of golf.

I cooked us all a lovely lunch and when the boys returned we all went to our local swimming pool to cool off in the water. The kids loved the flume and all the water sprays that they could play with whilst Rob and I enjoyed the chance to cool off and relax in the water. Rose did some amazing diving and a great time was had by all.

We called into the supermarket on the way home and bought some fresh prawns for our last evening meal together. We had one final walk around the lanes with Lottie before they went back to their camper van to sleep.

Sunday 21st July 2013

My brother and his family left us after breakfast and drove back to Caen to catch the ferry home to Portsmouth. I missed them the moment they left and our gite felt so quiet after all the chatter from the two children.

I had a lovely bike ride with James although it was hard work in the heat and I could not go as far as normal.

I took advantage of the heat and got on with lots of washing in the morning and then Rob and I had a lazy afternoon watching the Open golf championships on the telly along with the final day of the Tour de France where Chris Froome won the yellow jersey.

I decided to eat normally all day as we had so much yummy food in the fridge that I knew a fast day would be difficult so I classified today as the last day of my holiday and ate up the left overs.

Monday 22nd July 2013

I fasted today. I was concerned that it would be really hard after a whole week of eating but actually I found it really easy. I was ready for a fast day and I actually enjoyed it. It was still very hot and so I felt better not having a full stomach in the heat. We had a nice, ordinary day with Rob getting back to work on the house, James went back to his tutoring job, Rose pottered on her computer and I got all the ironing and paperwork done.

Tuesday 23rd July 2013

I woke up to the sound of thunder as a welcome storm arrived with some rain which helped to take the edge off the high temperatures. It felt good to wake up with a flatter stomach again although I still had a way to go to get back to how I felt before my brother's visit.

I was hoping to have a bike ride but I did some yoga instead as I did not fancy riding in the rain.

Wednesday 24th July 2013

I fasted again today. I had promised Rob that I would not do an alternate fasting and eating day again after my horrid mood following my Barcelona holiday but I wanted to try it again and today it worked. I was able to work in the afternoon and I had a normal day without being nasty to anyone.

Friday 26th July 2013

I fasted again to try out my new alternate fasting treatment and I managed another good day. Rob and I went shopping in the afternoon to buy a new washing machine and although it was incredibly hot in town I still got through the decision making process on 500 calories. Yippee!

Week Eighteen - Another New Idea is Working

Saturday 27th July 2013

I could not wait to jump on the scales in the morning as I felt so slim after my three fast days in the week. I had lost another pound in weight. I was hoping for more but the week of eating whilst my brother was over had taken some shifting. At least I was back on track with my fast days and I felt so good.

I went on a bike ride on my own in the morning as James needed to ride faster now that he was recovered from his operation. I wore my new lycra cycling shorts and close fitting cycling top for the first time and it made a huge difference to my comfort and my performance. I really felt the part and the tight fitting clothes cut down on any wind resistance which made my ride faster. I still had a few lumps and bumps on my body but I felt confident enough to be seen in public. I was loving my new found fitness and I felt better about my future health prospects too.

Rob and I went out in the evening for drinks and nibbles at a friend's house. We had not seen them for a few months and they commented on how much weight I had lost which made me feel very positive about my progress.

Sunday 28th July 2013

I fasted again today which I found fairly easy. I was pleasantly surprised that my new one day of fasting and one day off was alright. I was not too hungry and I was becoming addicted to the great feeling of not over eating on my fast days.

I went to the supermarket in the morning and bought loads of yummy food in preperation for my sister's visit the next day.

Since moving to France, I found that the summer holidays were a time when I used to pile on the pounds with so many lovely visitors coming to stay either with us or in our gite, I would find it impossible to resist all the delicious food available during the season. I was loving the fasting diet as it was helping me to still socialise and eat whilst losing weight. I still had some way to go to get through the summer but so far, so good.

Monday 29th July 2013

My stomach felt a little flatter again today so I tried on a dress that I used to wear when I was slimmer but it still was far too small for me. Although I had lost over a stone and a half, I still had a long way to go to be a healthy weight again. I put the dress back in my wardrobe and put on a size 16 skirt and top that fitted my nicely.

My sister came over to visit us today with her husband and youngest daughter. It was another baking hot day and we ate a delicious lunch together under the shade of our pergola. James, my sister and I took our dog for a long walk in the afternoon but then we had a bbq in the garden for our evening meal, complete with a dessert course. My sister had been following the intermittent fasting diet after I had told her about it and she had also lost a stone and a half in weight.

I told her how good she looked and she was beaming with joy. She honestly looked ten years younger than she had the year before and she was now enjoying wearing lots of beautiful clothes that had also been at the back of her wardrobe for the last few years.

What was wonderful was that we could both enjoy our time together and socialise with lovely meals in the knowledge that we would both fast again soon. I was so pleased to have been able to share this amazing eating plan with her.

Tuesday 30th July 2013

True to form, I fasted again today to make up for my feasting yesterday. It went well although I found the combination of a hot night and an empty stomach made it more difficult for me to fall asleep but I managed it eventually.

Wednesday 31st July 2013

I had a busy day planned. I had a (Kelly, the beautician that I worked with) over in the morning and we had lots of work to do regarding updating our publicity

That took longer than we had anticipated so she did not leave until nearly two in the afternoon. I had a client booked in for a treatment with me at half past two so I very quickly ate a small lunch before I continued with my day.

In the past, if I'd had to eat that late I would have fainted but thanks to the re-set button that this diet appeared to have switched on for me, I was able to keep working without fainting on so much less food. I was still loving the flexibility of this eating plan.

Thursday 1st August 2013

My sister was still in France, staying in her holiday home and I'd booked a day at the beach with her. I drove Rose and myself to the bridge at the Ile De Ré and met my sister and her family in the car park. We then all piled into their car to save on the toll bridge and had a fabulous day out with them. We had lunch in a very smart restaurant on the edge of the harbour in the shade, overlooking the expensive yachts that were bobbing about at their moorings.

We spent the afternoon wandering around the little shops and boutiques before we drove off and found a delightful, sandy beach. We put on our swimwear and my sister, neice and myself had a cooling swim in the Atlantic ocean. Rose paddled her toes as she did not enjoy swimming in the sea whilst my brother in law relaxed and sunbathed on the sand.

I had forgotten what an amazing feeling it was to float in salty water and I stayed in the sea for over half an hour. I dried whilst I sunbathed on the beach and then we all had an afternoon treat in the nearby café. I ordered a banana split which I enjoyed without any guilt.

We said our farewell's and I drove Rose and myself back home with sand between our toes and windswept hair. I stopped on the journey home and bought two ripe Charente melons for our supper.

I had felt confident to show my body off in my swimsuit and although I still had a few stone to lose, I felt slim enough to reveal my body on the beach and I was looking forward to next summer. This diet had given me the confidence to know that I would succeed and reach my goal weight.

Friday 2nd August 2013

I fasted again today to give me the chance to catch up from two days in the week of generous eating.

Week Nineteen - Steady Progress

Saturday 3rd August 2013

I jumped on the scales with some trepidation as I had enjoyed myself during my sister's visits but to my delight I had managed to shift just under a pound.

My weight loss had slowed down over the summer holidays and I still had some more friends due to visit who were generous eaters and great cooks so I decided to make a big effort for the next week before their arrival.

I had a good, long bike ride in the morning and I felt so fit, I was loving my journey to fitness and a slender body.

Sunday 4th August 2013

I made today another fast day and I decided to try a bike ride in the morning even though I had not eaten anything.

I managed a small bike ride without any problems although I was very hungry when I finally had my lunch.

The whole family were fed up of my fish fingers lunch on fast days so I cooked them a normal meal and I had some crackers with a low fat cheese for myself which seemed to fill me up until tea time.

I had my oats for my tea and kept to my calorie count with a diet coke to get me through the evening.

Wednesday 7th August 2013

It was another hot day so I decided to try on my shorts once again and to my delight I found that they just about fitted me and so I wore them with a long t-shirt. I checked in the mirror and my legs were not too lumpy. They were black, fairly long, cotton shorts in a size 16 but I felt so good to be back in a pair of shorts once again.

I decided to fast for my second time this week with the plan of fitting one more fast day in on Friday as well. I felt so motivated now that I could see and feel the difference this diet was making to my life.

I spent the day moving out of our gite and into our new house which was very tiring but I was thrilled that I completed the task on a fast day as well.

Friday 9th August 2013

I did squeeze in another fast day but I was very hungry in the evening and decided to eat an extra two hundred calories to help me sleep. I did not beat myself up as I'd worked so hard with moving out of the gite that I needed some extra energy.

Week Twenty - I'm Loving This!

Saturday 10th August 2013

I dug out my scales that were hiding in my new utility room and to my delight I had shifted another little pound of weight.

Rob and I spent most of the day cleaning the gite and doing the gardening in preparation for our next guests. In the evening we went out for dinner with some friends and sat outside for our meal. I enjoyed the home cooked food and managed to curb my tendency to overeat and stopped eating once I was full.

Sunday 11th August 2013

It was yet another hot day so I put on my shorts once again and they fitted me better than they had just a few days ago. I did not have time for a bike ride so Rob put my bike on the home trainer and I managed a quick spin instead which made me feel good. I spent the rest of the day finishing the gite changeover so that it was sparkling for our guests.

During early evening the whole family and myself took our dog for a walk up the lane and we met our gite guests enroute. They all got out of the car to greet us. They had been staying in our gite every summer for the last six years and had become very good friends.

Our friends noticed my weight loss immediately and asked me what I had been doing to look so good. They had not seen me since Christmas when I was very heavy and bloated. I was thrilled that they had noticed the change in my shape. They told me that it was not just my shape that had changed but that I looked so young and so well. I loved their comments and told them all about the fast diet.

We went to the gite with them and sat in the garden under the pergola and had a good catch up. We had some crisps and I was proud of myself as I had a few and then stopped eating them. We then had a small BBQ with the food I had bought in for them for supper and we chatted into the small hours as shooting stars gave us a display across the summer night's sky. Amazing.

Monday 12th August 2013

I decided to try and fast today and I felt really good when I woke up. I put on my cycling lycra and went off around the lanes on my bike. I did my normal ride to La Chapelle St Etienne and back and realised that I still had loads of energy so I kept going and added another few kilometers to my route. I tackled the hill of doom once again and this time I got about another twenty foot further up it before my heartbeat became unbearable and my legs could no longer turn the pedals.

I got off my bike and walked up the rest of the hill with a great feeling of achievement. I was determined that I would cycle up the steep hill eventually and at least I had made progress.

I cycled back home once I was on the flat and benefitted from a huge rush of endorphines for the rest of the day. I had my low fat cheese and crackers for lunch after my shower and got on with my day.

I loved our friends who were staying in the gite but they were generous with their hospitality and portions so my aim for the next three weeks was to not gain any weight whilst enjoying my time with them. I hoped to keep my cycling going during their stay and to watch my portion control whilst using fasting whenever possible. Only time would tell if this would work over the next three weeks!

Week Thirty - Lost 2 Stone

Saturday 19th October 2013

I have not written anything for the last ten weeks as my life has been very hectic. The summer holidays came and went and I did put on a few pounds at the end of the August whilst our friends stayed in the gite. I kept to my fast days for the first two weeks but by the last week we had so many invitations to summer BBQs and meals out that I did not have any fast days at all.

I then spent early September getting rid of the extra few pounds again which was a set back but at least I went straight back into fasting again. What I love about this way of eating it is so easy to get back into. I went back to normal eating, my spinning routine every morning and two fast days a week and the weight gradually kept reducing.

Today I was thrilled when I jumped on the scales and reached my two stone weight loss. I know that thirty weeks is a long time to lose two stone but my whole shape has changed in that time and my health and fitness have improved as well.

Living in rural France with periods of feasting with business clients, gite guests and friends makes for a lovely way of life but a very difficult lifestyle for weight management. Although my weight loss had been slow, it was real and I was now wearing wonderfully flattering jeans and figure hugging dresses.

I felt very positive as the autumn approached because it's a quieter time of the year for me and normally I do manage to lose some weight during the colder months as we have less guests. I was determined to lose another stone before next spring.

Week Thirty Three - Life Gets in the Way

Saturday 9th November 2013

I was nervous when I got on the scales this time because I had spent a week in England and I had missed a fast day as well. Rose had chosen to do her four weeks work experience in the UK so Rob and I took her over in the car at the end of the half term holiday and spent some fun days with our friends and family. We delivered Rose to our friend's house in Portishead and stayed with them for a few days to see Rose settled into her new role.

I had managed to find her a placement after weeks of phone calls to various graphic designers in the Bristol area. Thankfully the one that came back positive was only five minutes walk from our friend's house. She appeared to be so grown up when we left her to stay in England for four weeks.

I tried to eat smaller portions but I also made the decision to enjoy my holiday and I got straight back to fasting the first day I returned home.

One very positive sign was when I went to Marks and Spencers to buy some new jeans and I tried on the size 14s and they all fitted me first time! That was such a treat so I bought one pair of jeans and two new pairs of trousers for my work.

When I did have the courage to get back on the scales I had only gained about one pound which was not too bad.

Monday 11th November 2013

I did mean to get up early and do my work out every morning but with Rose away I stayed in bed most mornings and took advantage of the extra sleep. I also had every good intention of eating very low calorie meals whilst Rose was away but instead I found myself eating more naughty foods with Rob. I wanted Rose to come back so that I could find my normal routine again.

Friday 15th November 2013

I had a day out with my girl friends and we had lunch out because I did not have to dash back to collect Rose from Lycee. I did have all three courses. I was really struggling to keep to my healthy eating and I knew that I was going to England again to collect Rose so I lost my motivation to be really good for a while. I still had my two fast days per week but I was finding it hard with Rose away.

Week Thirty Six - Rose is Back

Saturday 30th November 2013

Rob and I went to England for five days and ended our trip by collecting Rose from her last work experience which was at my neice's husbands workshops near Dorchester. She stayed with my neice and her husband for the last week of her trip and used her graphic designer skills to work on publicity for their website.

During our trip we took my parents out for an early Christmas lunch as we would not see them this year at Christmas. I did not have a pudding but I piled up the vegetables and enjoyed turkey with all the trimmings. Rob and I managed to eat fairly normally for the rest of this trip which was good.

I was so happy to collect Rose. The four weeks in France had felt very strange without her. I was not ready for her to leave home yet and thankfully she was content to come back to France and live with us to continue with her studies. She had decided that she would like to live in England once her studies were completed which gave us about nineteen more months of living the life we had known as a family since having our first born twenty two years ago.

I knew that it was time for me to learn to adjust to my nest emptying and on some days I was filled with excitement at the prospect of my next stage of life but at other times I had felt very strange about it all.

At least Rose came back with us to France.

When I got on the scales I found that my weight had remained the same so at least I had not increased my weight over the whole work experience time.

Sunday 1st December 2013

My son James phoned first thing in the morning so check if we were back from England. He decided that he would pop back to visit us for the day and within a few hours he was back home as well. I cooked us all a roast chicken lunch and enjoyed the rare moment of having both my children at home again. I knew how precious this was and that it would not last for much longer. James brought all his clothes and linen washing with him but he put it all in the machine and tumble dryer so I didn't mind.

We all took the dog for a nice walk up the lane before James went back to Poitiers and Rose got ready to return to her normal routine at Lycee.

Monday 2nd December 2013

It felt good to get up at six in the morning again and once I had dropped Rose at the bus stop I was back to my workout regime of half an hour of spinning followed by half an hour on the cross trainer. I had blown up my power plate and it was beyond repair so Rob took it up to the dump. I did miss it but I was ready for more of a workout now and the cross trainer seemed to be toning my legs well.

I had not been outside on the road with my bike for some months now that it was winter. At least I had the spinning machine so that I could use my bike indoors whilst watching breakfast television.

Life felt normal again with Rose home and we returned to eating our normal foods again with my two fast days every week too.

Week Thirty Eight - Time to Work Harder!

Saturday 14th December 2013

I got on the scales this morning for my weekly weigh in and found that I was the lightest weight for me since February 2010. I was thrilled with my progress although over the last few months I had only shed a couple more pounds and I felt that I had reached a plateau. To cheer myself up I decided to measure myself as I had not done that for some time. To my surprise, I had not measured myself since June!

The results were as follows, compared to my start measurements:

My bust was 44 inches, now it's 39.5 inches

My waist was 38.5 inches, now it's 34 inches

My hips were 46 inches, now they are 41 inches

My lower hips were 45 inches, now they are 41 inches

My upper thighs were 26.5 inches, now they are 24 inches

My lower thighs were 19.4 inches, now they are 17.3 inches

My upper arms were 13.5 inches, now they are 11.8 inches

I did not feel like doing my normal work out of spinning and using the cross trainer as I was becoming rather bored of that so I did about half an hour of yoga on my mat in my bedroom instead. I needed to try and flatten my stomach and tone things up a bit more. After that I went into Rose's bedroom and she loaded up a Zumba workout on the Wii for me that I had borrowed from a friend to try out.

I did not know how to use the Wii so Rose showed me and I started to copy the dancer on the screen and I really enjoyed it. I used to enjoy dancing but when I hurt my heel I had to give up and now I felt strong and fit enough to have another go. I loved the moves and soon I was sweating and feeling great. I decided that I would buy the game from my friend as it was something new and different and might help me to shift the last stone.

Although it was only a week or so before Christmas it was a wonderful feeling to be approaching the festive season without feeling like a pudding.

My next challenge would be to keep fit and healthy during the Christmas period and try not to increase my weight!

Week Forty - Festive Foods

Saturday 28th December 2013

I am pleased to report that my Christmas week included two fast days as normal. I did indulge in some yummy festive foods and I did not have time for my full workouts so I am satisfied with the result of a tiny weight increase this week. In the past I have gained quite a few pounds over Christmas so this is a good result.

Wednesday 1st January 2014

Today I am fasting! I enjoyed a new year's eve party last night at our house and allowed myself to eat party foods and cake because I planned my next fast day for today. After today I plan to knuckle down to some serious calorie counting during my eating days to shift that last stone.

It does feel wonderful to start my new year with only one stone to lose instead of three stone like last year. I felt good all over the festive holiday period as my clothes fitted well and I still had a flat stomach.

Now it's time for the serious last push for 2014 and I find it's easier to diet in the new year as everyone else tends to start their diet now as well.

Happy New Year everyone! Here's to a slim, fit and healthy body in time for the spring sunshine!