

How a Stroke Led to Losing More Than 50 Pounds

A 1705 NACDD Success Story



**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
CHRONIC DISEASE DIRECTORS**

Promoting Health. Preventing Disease.

SUMMARY:

Without a “big why,” we will seldom achieve big goals. When one is overweight and has prediabetes, reaching good health requires a “big why.”

This is precisely where Melissa found herself. She had tried for years to lose weight and become healthy. Yet, each time she tried, she had fallen short.

In 2018, Melissa’s father suffered a debilitating stroke. As Melissa considered her father’s condition, it struck her, *“If I don’t change course, this will be me someday.”* It was then that Melissa was introduced to Hope 80/20’s virtual Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) course.

“I close with this story of the time I honored Melissa at a gathering of her peers. I confirmed with Melissa that the number of pounds she had lost was 52. But Melissa exclaimed, “No, I’ve lost 56 pounds!!” So never forget, “big goals require big whys!” - Mark West, Hope 80/20 CEO

CHALLENGE:

Reaching program participants like Melissa resulted in several key challenges that we had to overcome to be successful. First, how would we reach more individuals who, like Melissa, could benefit from our program? After experimenting with numerous marketing methods, we settled on partnering with large organizations who employed our target areas in Florida and Pennsylvania.

The key challenge of partnering with employers was getting to the decision-makers and then helping them to see the value of our program. Once employers selected us, we had to craft a user-friendly system for marketing to their employees. If it wasn’t simple, organizations would be reluctant to work with us. So, the goal was to make enrolling quick and easy.

But, the greatest obstacle we had to overcome was getting participants to continue to engage and participate. Enrolling was easy, but retention and engagement became our biggest challenge.

SOLUTION:

We made it simple for organizations to promote our virtual program by providing them custom marketing materials and hosting webinars for their employees. We also automated the enrollment process, qualifying and then enrolling eligible participants immediately into our virtual program. This step, alone, greatly streamlined the entire process.

But, the largest obstacle of all was how to get participation from students and retain them in the program. The efforts between our web design, marketing, and coaching teams proved successful in developing systems to proactively engage and retain participants.



RESULTS:

Putting great systems in place is of no value if the results they contribute to are not equally impactful. Thankfully, the results we realized from the solutions we developed were not only meaningful to our company, but more importantly, they were life changing for our participants.

Melissa lost more than 50 pounds by the time she completed our virtual DPP course. To this day, Melissa remains focused and energized; her achievement was not a short-term result, but rather a permanent lifestyle change. Overall, the average weight loss of the participants completing our virtual DPP course is 7%.

The employer we partnered with also was excited about the results achieved and invited Hope 80/20 to participate in their annual Diabetes Conference, where we had the opportunity to recognize Melissa in front of more than 100 of her peers.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY:

If you are involved in healthcare, you know that there is nothing more fulfilling than changing a life. When a person's "why" intersects with knowledge, support, and community, there is nothing that cannot be achieved, within the boundaries of humankind's capacity.

This is why Hope 80/20 exists, and no doubt, it's why your organization does as well. Changing lives drives us all. But it's key that the vehicle we are using is relevant to our clients' needs, particularly in their busy 21st century lives.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS:

As people's lives change, we must be willing to reevaluate our approaches if we desire to sustain success, since what worked yesterday may not work tomorrow.

We are passionate about the 24/7 virtual option since it enables us to deliver a much needed product around the hectic pace of schedules today. But, while we embrace this approach, we also realize that a virtual model can be perceived as "impersonal." So, it is incumbent on us to constantly evaluate and improve our approaches so as to offset the potential drawbacks to digital-based relationships.

So, success is never a destination, but rather it is merely a measurement of how well we are continuing to respond to the changing needs of our clients.