

Dedication pays off for Maria

Valley woman sheds 100 pounds

By PHILLIP FLORES
Reporter

Working out is tough for some but easy for others. Maria Lischke of Big Bear Lake has seen the up side of a gym membership, but agrees that it's not always a bowl of cherries. Lischke has shed 100 pounds since she joined Mountain Fitness Center Big Bear Lake.

She joined Big Bear's Biggest Loser when she first moved to Big Bear several years ago. "That's what got me started," Lischke said.

When Lischke started her workout program in 2008, she said it was low key. She went through cycles of being motivated and unmotivated during her first year-long membership.

Lischke has had weight problems her entire life and also battles multiple sclerosis. She wanted to increase her fitness and overall health. So in 2010, she purchased another year-long membership at Mountain Fitness Center ready to work.

"I started watching what I was eating," Lischke said. "I wore an arm band called BodyMedia FIT for an entire year."

The BodyMedia FIT arm band is an on-body monitoring system that tracks calo-

ries burned and sleep patterns. The user can input what he or she eats into a program, and it keeps track of weight loss.

"The arm band is what got me motivated to burn, burn, burn calories," Lischke said. "That's when I started wanting to go to the gym. It just kind of feeds on itself once you start seeing results."

After wearing the arm band and working out for a year, she lost 100 pounds. One of the hardest parts about starting was trying to eat healthy. "The beginning it's hard to go out and not eat what everyone else is eating," Lischke said. "But as you become more into working out, food becomes less of a hardship."

Ted Devito, owner of Mountain Fitness Center, has watched Lischke's progress during the past year. "She used to react to her struggles by eating," Devito said. "Then she completely shifted to talking with other gym members and working out very consistently."

Getting started wasn't easy, Lischke said. "There are days you just don't feel like it," she said. Lischke had a schedule she stuck to. Monday and Wednesday evenings she worked with a

personal trainer. Tuesdays and Thursdays she attended a Fit Moves class at Mountain Fitness Center.

When she wasn't with her personal trainer or in her classes, Lischke was at the gym on her own time. "I try to be in the gym six days a week, and I enjoyed it," she said.

Dedication is another hard part of sticking to a workout routine. "I was just dedicated," Lischke said. "I would get up and walk five miles around my neighborhood."

There are always excuses not to work out. "If it were snowing or icy I would still walk five miles," Lischke said. "It may not have been fast, but I still did it," she said.

"The emotion of her dedication is so powerful, you can taste it," Devito said.

Lischke offers a piece of advice to people trying to lose weight. "Don't be a slave to the scale, you can still get fit, work out and maintain positive results even though the scale says you aren't losing weight," Lischke said. "You can still get healthy and gain muscle by working out."

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BIG BEAR GRIZZLY



Maria Lischke's lifestyle is now an active one. She participated in the Endure the Bear Trail Run this summer.



All dressed up with someplace to go. Maria Lischke made fitness a priority and lost 100 pounds.