

# Success from surgery and training

In one of my past articles I mentioned one of my clients, Maureen Keenan, who had already lost almost 120 pounds from her gastric bypass surgery. Maureen had the surgery last June and was literally changing the way she looked almost daily. Maureen came to me at Gold's Gym because not only was she losing weight, but she wanted to make sure that she was building muscle. Maureen knew that in order to keep the fat burning working she had to build muscle.

Before meeting Maureen, I had little first-hand knowledge about bariatric surgery, but all of that was about to change. I quickly found out that Maureen was going to make sure her trainer, me, was going to understand everything she went through to get to this point in her life.

One of the most important aspects of Maureen's surgery, both pre and post, was a support group that she meets with every Thursday evening in Salisbury. As we trained I learned how she had to attend this support group months before her surgery. Now that the surgery was completed she continues to go. Dr. Sofronski from the Delmarva Bariatric Center in

Salisbury was Maureen's surgeon who performed her surgery. Maureen will always say, "Sofronski says this and Sofronski says that." I was totally impressed by his apparent overall interest in his patients. He strongly encourages them to start exercising within a few weeks after their surgery. He closely monitors his patient's eating patterns and meets monthly with each patient to measure body fat, body weight and muscle mass. Just from listening to Maureen talk about a patient's connection with Dr. Sofronski was nothing short of impressive.

Just a few weeks ago Maureen invited me to go with her on a Thursday night to speak to the support group about exercising and healthy eating. Maureen asked if we were going over in the Corvette. I said sure, as long as it isn't raining. As it turned out, Maureen and I had a great ride in the 'Vette taking back roads to the meeting in Salisbury.

When we arrived at the church in Salisbury where the support group meets at 5:30 p.m., the first thing I noticed was the lack of snacks. I guess I should have figured that one out for myself. There was bottled water for every-

one including a couple of bottles for me, the guest speaker. One of Dr. Sofronski's first gastric bypass patients, Mike Mercer, leads the support group. Mike is a tall, good-looking man in great shape who informed me that he used to wear size 62 pants. I could not believe it because the man now wears 34s.

Maureen introduced me to the group of approximately 25 people, both men and women, young and old, who had the surgery or who were about to have it. After I began speaking to the group, a young, well-built man came in and sat in the back and just listened. I then realized Dr. Michael Sofronski was in attendance. As I spoke on exercise and healthy eating I saw his look of, "Let's see what this guy has to say," turn to smiles and nods of agreement, because I was telling his patients exactly what he has been telling them.

Dr. Mike, as the patient's call him, agreed with and reconfirmed everything I was telling the group on health and fitness. Dr. Mike even went on to say what a positive influence a personal trainer had been in his life and career. After the presentation I had a



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chance to speak with Mike and I could instantly see why his patients hold him in such high regards. I can honestly say, Dr. Mike's interest in his patients and their lives was nothing short of inspirational. He is a credit to the medical community.

As far as Maureen, she is a model patient. I know for a fact that she does exactly what Dr. Mike says and I can honestly say that she works as hard as any client that I have. She will continue to succeed because that is her make up. She's bound and determined that the surgery was just one step towards a new person. She knows that the other steps she takes towards her final goals rests with her desire to do it. There is no doubt that the new Maureen Keenan is well on her way.

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