



A little end of the year introspection

Every year, as the last days of December begin to fade, I usually take a few moments to reflect on the year. It's been quite a year. I was promoted to Editor-in-Chief of this fine magazine. We're celebrating our 50th year of publishing the magazine and things are really looking up for 2012.

But it's not all been good news.

If you're a longtime reader of my column (thank you), you know I've written about my ongoing struggle to lose weight. A couple years back, I thought if I publically espoused my intentions with promises of updates on my progress it would shame me into success. It didn't work.

But if you've seen me recently, you might notice I'm a few pounds lighter.

I'm happy to report, since the end of February I've lost nearly 40 pounds. The question I get most often is, "How did you do it?" It's simple, really; I decided to eat less, eat more healthily and exercise regularly. No fad diets. Just a commitment to make the effort and stick with it.

Over the years, I've started exercise programs and diets; I've made promises to myself. But my countless attempts at losing weight were much like my father's at quitting smoking. As the old joke goes, quitting is easy; he did it dozens of times. It

wasn't until he was truly finally ready to quit smoking forever that he actually did so.

My catalyst came earlier this year (that February timeframe). I had been to the doctor and was waiting for some test results. They came while I was on the road at a show out West. My cell phone rang at about 6 a.m. "Mr. Jacobs," the doctor began, "you're a diabetic."

Talk about a wake-up call.

With the loving support of my wife (and my employer), I embarked on a new path. We started eating whole grains and more fruits and vegetables and stopped eating refined sugars. And we're now regulars at the gym.

I'm blessed. I don't currently need to treat this disease with medicine. My blood sugar levels have steadily declined thanks to my lifestyle changes. During my most recent appointment, the doctor told me I was still in the "risk" stage, but that's a lot better than where I was earlier in the year. I hope by my next appointment, in about three months, my numbers are even better.

I'm lucky. I got the diagnosis early and easier to do something about it.

Over the years, we've written many times about the importance of putting yourself and your family before the business. I'm lucky enough to work for a company that allows me to do that. Over the past several months I've had numerous doctors' appointments with nary a word from my superiors about my needing to leave early or come in a little late.

Of course, the job of putting out the magazine still had to get done each month. But I certainly didn't mind working at home on occasion (after finishing my workout at the gym) to make sure things ran smoothly.

I pledge that I will do my best in 2012 to get myself and this magazine in the best shape of our lives — and to stay that way. And whatever resolutions you make for the coming year, I wish you success. Have a happy and healthy new year.

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