

# Lighter and loving it

How this Brookhaven resident dropped 60 pounds without surgery

By Antonio Reis

**T**his time last year, Jill Johnson weighed 202 pounds. Today, her scale reads 139. And she did it the old-fashioned way, through changing her eating habits and incorporating regular exercise into her life. *Simply Buckhead* sat down with Johnson, director of site development at Metro PCS, to discuss her impressive campaign to take back her body.

**What was your lifestyle like before February?**

Oh gosh, the only things I ever did were go to work, eat dinner, watch an hour of TV, go to bed, wake up, then go to work again. That's what most of us do.

**How did that feel?**

I knew it was unhealthy. I knew what I needed to do to be healthy. I knew; I just never did it. I was incredibly busy, and still am—it was just a matter of getting the healthy choices into my day ... It got to the point where I didn't look in the mirror. I hid my mirror in my closet. I told my sister, "I don't know that person in the mirror." It was hard for me to dress that person, because I didn't know her. In 2009 I wrote in my journal, "I want to look in the mirror and like that person."

**What motivated you to finally get started with losing weight?**

I was fed up. I was methodical about it. I had tried Weight Watchers and the South Beach Diet. I liked South Beach, but all I ever did was cook. And if I don't have time to work out, I sure as heck don't have time to cook all day. I wanted something structured enough that said, "This is what you're going to eat and this is how you're going to eat it." I wanted something that would get me down to an ideal weight and help me maintain it the rest of my life. HMR (Health Management Resources) seemed perfect. There are three options to the diet. The most intense is the all-shakes plan—I call it a "shake detox." You stop everything you've been doing and for three weeks you eat only these shakes. There are no

Continued >>



Jill Johnson has lost 60 pounds since February through a combination of dieting, running and strength training. Here, she poses with her old size-18 jeans.

Joseph Aczel

## Johnson's Eating Plan

**5 a.m.**—Peanut butter protein bar before my workout.

**7:15 a.m.**—Banana before my shower.

**7:30 a.m.**—A vanilla-and-espresso shake after my shower.

**9:30 a.m.**—I enjoy a cup of fruit with pears, kiwi, whatever I want.

**Noon**—A lean protein with a big salad, or an HMR entrée with two cups of veggies.

**1 p.m.**—Another cup of fruit.

**2 p.m.**—Another shake or lean protein.

**3 p.m.**—I have a cup of raw vegetables.

**4 p.m.**—A frozen berry shake.

**5 p.m.**—One more cup of vegetables while I drive home.

**6:30 p.m.**—Another lean protein and vegetables before I exercise and go to bed.

pills, no surgery. Nothing invasive. But it rattled my cage for all intents and purposes.

**What about exercise? What is your workout routine like now?**

My workout routine begins on Monday around 4:30 a.m., when I get up for a 6-7 mile walk/run. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, I try to do some strength training. Right now I'm using Jillian Michael's *No More Trouble Zones*, which mixes cardio with strength training. On Wednesdays, I do "alternative" cardio, meaning something other than running that will work other muscles, like the elliptical. On Thursdays I add Pilates mat at Body Vision Studio in Brookhaven. I wrap the week up with another early morning run on Fridays. Now, I try to take Saturday and Sunday off, but it rarely happens. Body Vision has a great Saturday morning mat class that I just cannot pass up, and I frequently find myself either hiking or walking

around just to enjoy the sun.

**How have you stuck with your new lifestyle?**

I finally feel like I have control of something. I'm now reconnecting with sorority sisters and people I went to high school with. Before, I would have been unrecognizable.

I cheat once in a while. I like wine, and on Thanksgiving, I had to have a little peanut butter ball. But I'm still losing weight because I've trained myself. If I eat a few extra calories, I know I need to get on the elliptical and work it off.

**What's been the biggest challenge?**

You must stay focused all the time. I can't decide to take off for the weekend without thinking about it. I have to stay focused. I went to Walt Disney World during my all-shakes phase. I had to go around with a wireless handheld blender to make my shakes while I was walking around the park. Then last September, I went to Scotland. By

that time, I was done with the shakes, but I had to find a way to do fruits and vegetables. In the Highlands there really are no hotels, so I was staying in bed and breakfasts. Of course, no one has microwaves and they aren't really willing to cook your food in their kitchens. But I was lucky... the folks over there are big fans of tea, so every room has a teapot, almost all of them electric. You add hot water, flip the switch and it boils the water in this

pitcher, so I just tossed my veggies in with the water. Worked like a charm!

**What does the future look like for you?**

I want to learn to snowboard. My friend from New York is a big snowboarder. Now that I'm stronger and more flexible, I really want to learn how to do it. I need to buy more snow gear; my old set no longer fits me. I was a size 18, and now I'm a size 6.

*"I've trained myself. If I eat a few extra calories, I know I need to get on the elliptical and work it off."*



*Dazzling Smiles*

770-993-9217

LOCATED IN THE HEART OF BUCKHEAD

*Michaela McKenzie, DDS*

**FREE CUSTOM BLEACH TRAYS (\$350 VALUE) OR FREE COSMETIC VENEER CONSULTATION**

WITH COMPREHENSIVE EXAM, PERIODONTAL CHARTING, REGULAR CLEANING AND FULL MOUTH X-RAYS FOR **ONLY \$290.00**



**HAVE THAT DAZZLING SMILE YOU'VE ALWAYS DREAMED OF!**



**Speedpro Imaging**  
of Greater Atlanta

For all your business graphics and signage needs, including full vehicle wraps, Speedpro Imaging is committed to delivering top quality products and customer service.

**Trade Show Displays/Exhibits  
Banner Stands • Vehicle Wraps  
Large Format Posters  
Full Color Banners • Signage**

Contact us today to learn more:

**404-577-9090**

[www.speedprometroatlanta.com](http://www.speedprometroatlanta.com)

