

HUMOR

Bulk male

How I lost 60 pounds

Well, I finally did it. I lost 60 pounds. Actually, I lost it last year but haven't mentioned it in print for fear those pounds might come back and find me, like homing pigeons. Big, chubby homing pigeons.

People ask me all the time how I managed to lose nearly 30 percent of my body weight, and I can't resist screwing with their minds. "I'm doing the Bhutan Death March Workout," I'll say. "It's the new Taebo!" Or, "I'm sticking to a balanced regimen of Bingeing and Purging." Freaks 'em out every time.

I lie to them because no one wants to hear the truth: I simply ate less. I got this radical advice from my neighbor, Carrie Peacock, who is a personal chef, dietitian and all-around smart cookie, pardon the pun. "Losing weight is actually very simple," she said to me. "It's just like following a budget."

Now we all know how easy that is. Obviously, I'd been living beyond my means.

For me, it wasn't even a matter of needing to exercise more. I already worked out several times a week, but my muscles were well insulated by a protective fat coating, sort of the biological equivalent of bubble wrap.

Carrie suggested I look at what factors trigger my overeating. For the most part, I was a stress eater, but I also knew I ate when I was depressed.

Or happy. Or bored. Or because it was a day of the week that ended in "y."

Something had to change.

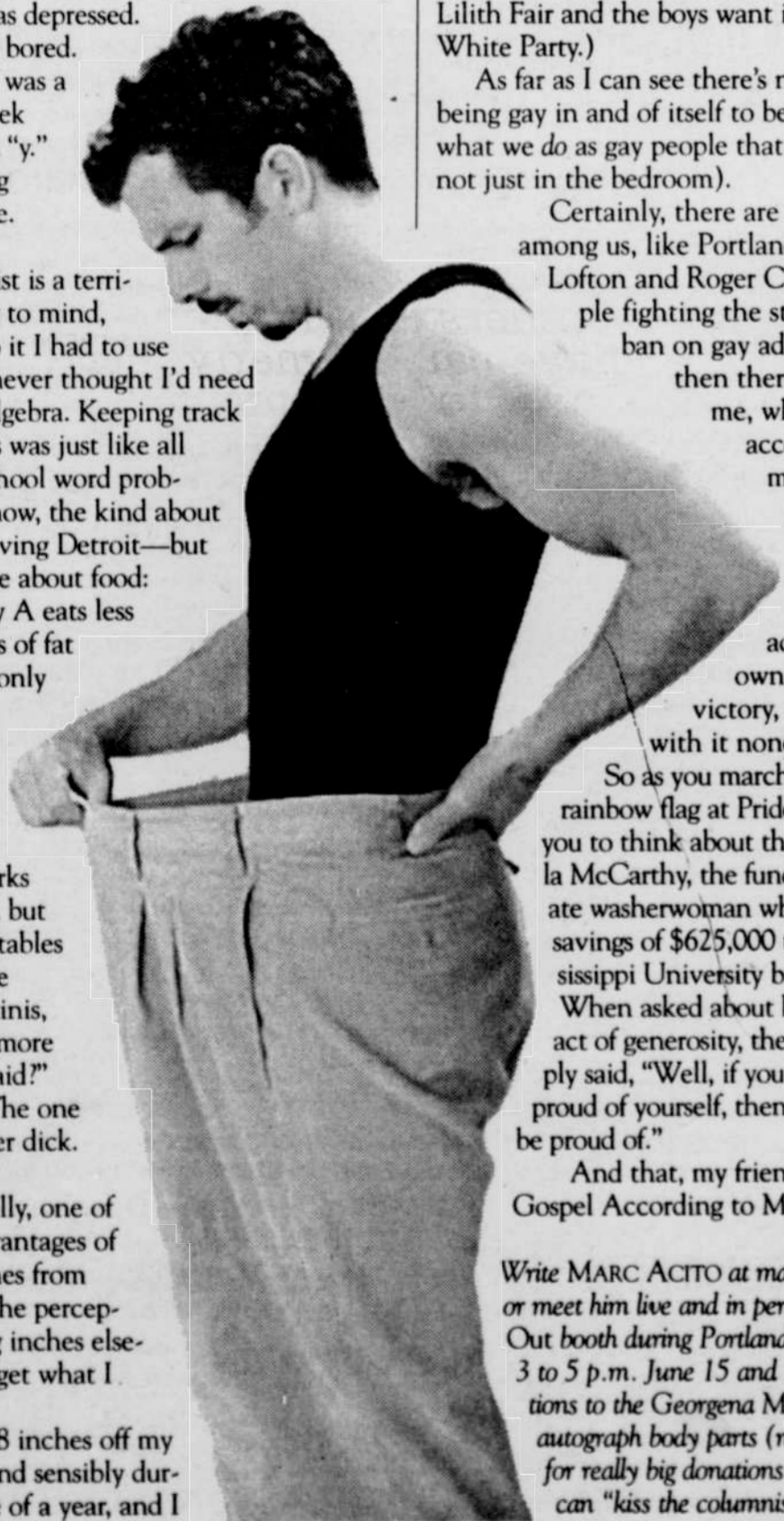
Now, a waist is a terrible thing to mind, but to do it I had to use something I never thought I'd need as an adult: algebra. Keeping track of my calories was just like all those high school word problems—you know, the kind about two trains leaving Detroit—but instead they're about food:

"If Gayboy A eats less than 10 grams of fat daily, but his only upper-body workout consists of blow-drying his hair, and Gayboy B works out every day, but the only vegetables he eats are the olives in martinis, which one is more likely to get laid?"

Answer: The one with the bigger dick. Duh.

(Incidentally, one of the major advantages of dropping inches from your waist is the perception of adding inches elsewhere, if you get what I mean.)

Me, I lost 8 inches off my waist slowly and sensibly during the course of a year, and I



THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARC
by Marc Acito



didn't complain once. That's right. I complained about 6,000 times. (And that was just the first day.)

I might look and feel better now, but I have not become one of those irritating types who say, "Oh, I'd rather eat an apple than a cookie!" Yeah, if the apple were in the mouth of a roasted pig, perhaps. And my sensible meals still look like kiddie portions to me.

So I completely understand those of you out there who have rejected the Do or Diet mentality and accept your bodies as they are. My favorites are those Hispanic guys who roll their T-shirts up over their bellies on hot days. They might look like they're in their ninth month, but that doesn't stop them. You gotta love that.

But I simply can't operate that way. I've always believed that achievement, not acceptance, builds self-esteem. I think that's one of the reasons why we have trouble as a community deciding what Gay Pride should be about. (That, and the fact that the girls want it to be Lilith Fair and the boys want it to be the White Party.)

As far as I can see there's nothing about being gay in and of itself to be proud of. It's what we do as gay people that matters (and not just in the bedroom).

Certainly, there are real-life heroes among us, like Portland's own Steve Lofton and Roger Croteau, the couple fighting the state of Florida's ban on gay adoption. And then there are people like me, whose major accomplishment is managing to look cute in a tank top. It's not much of an achievement, I admit, but it's my own little personal victory, and I'm pleased with it nonetheless.

So as you march and wave a rainbow flag at Pride this year, I ask you to think about the words of Oseola McCarthy, the functionally illiterate washerwoman who gave her life's savings of \$625,000 to Southern Mississippi University back in 1995.

When asked about her astonishing act of generosity, the 87-year-old simply said, "Well, if you want to feel proud of yourself, then do something to be proud of."

And that, my friends, is The Gospel According to Marc. ☐

Write MARC ACITO at marcacito@attbi.com or meet him live and in person at the Just Out booth during Portland Pride 2002 from 3 to 5 p.m. June 15 and 16. For contributions to the Georgena Moran fund, he will autograph body parts (not that one), and for really big donations, lucky visitors can "kiss the columnist."

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