

Taking Cooking Back

continued ▲ from front

pounds lighter and happier. Her secret: mindful dieting, cooking at home, control and awareness of the ingredients she eats, and habitual exercise.

As a product and survivor of childhood obesity and author of the blog, 'Farewell Fatso,' Mosley is delighted to share her journey with thousands of supporters. She believes she spent her entire life fat for a reason. "I was put in this body to share my story," she said. "And I hope it will inspire someone else." Growing up in the early 1980s, as a chubby-checked, sticky-fingered little girl gobbling up Hostess cupcakes and apple-filled pies in a seven-child household, Chrisea Mosley was the exception to obesity — fat, but oh-so cute.

Today, there are obese children everywhere-- not so cute. One in three American kids and nearly two-thirds of adults are obese or over weight, according to the U.S. Surgeon General, with rates climbing faster than McDonald's can plop another double-arch in strip malls across the country.

Mosley says she has never been "a normal-size person," but as an adolescent, she was plenty loved and never teased and people accepted her as fat. When she gradu-



PHOTO BY CARI HACHMANN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Using healthy ingredients she finds at her favorite local produce store, Chrisea Mosley has successfully changed her eating habits to drastically lose weight.

ated high school, she weighed 300 pounds. "It was who I was," she said.

College was a turning point. When Mosley decided to study journalism and move to Seattle with her 7-year-old daughter, she was 30 years out of shape and weighed 350

fits-all desk-chairs of her classrooms, making it an embarrassing ritual to have to call ahead and ask administration to switch her class to a disabled-friendly room.

In a moment of deep reflection, Mosley concluded, "I didn't want to be that person anymore." Unsat-

remained the same. However, with the help of surgery, Mosley's kept her weight at 300 pounds for the next five years.

Then, in a week's whirlwind of unfortunate events, she and her boyfriend broke up, she was laid off her job, and her car was stolen, and

As an obese child, Chrisea Mosley knew she was destined to be different. Now, the author to the blog 'Farewell Fatso' shares her journey of weight loss and commitment to eating healthy.

pounds. Moving around campus was like getting stuck in quicksand everyday-- she could barely climb stairs, walk, or breathe, and her knees ached.

Humiliation struck hard when she failed to squeeze into the one-size-

ified with her weight and uncontrollable eating habits, she decided to act quickly and had gastro bypass surgery in July 2004.

"It was like a drive through ATM approach," she said, "It was fast and involved no work," but her diet

nothing she hadn't already mentally surpassed.

Forced off her feet, Mosley could still do two things—rehab and tighten up her diet. Abiding by the magic rule, 23:1, which was offered by her trainer Steve Shore, one hour at the gym meant 23 hours fighting the temptation to overeat.

Toning her upper body and journaling her food intake, a limping Mosley feasted upon fruits, vegetables, and foods rich in protein. She lost 10 pounds. Realizing that eating healthier is half the struggle of weight loss, Mosley fine tuned her own raw foods cooked from scratch only and no boxed meals. "Diet is so key to all of this," she said.

Last year, Mosley began hosting cooking classes from home for her close friends. Now, on a mission to motivate the overweight to eat healthier, she plans to teach a monthly class at her favorite local shopping market, Chuck's in Vancouver.

Featuring "versatile foods" like lettuce wraps, Mosley shows how easy it is to eliminate carbs in a diet by using lettuce instead of a bun or tortilla, "I got P.F. Chang's beat," she said.

Now a fearless healthy food experimenter, Mosley says raw food is the solution, pre-packaged "crap" is the enemy, and "if it costs 99 cents, it's probably not good for you." On the top of her shopping list, fruits and vegetables; and on the never-eat list, carbonated beverages and basically, anything she doesn't make herself.

Though Mosley follows her diet 90 percent of the time, she isn't a complete health Nazi, "I don't want to abuse food again, but I do want to enjoy it," she said, admitting she ate 'some truffles' the night before. She uses real butter and cream, too.

Aware that today's generation has been spoon-fed a mentality of instant gratification and quick-fixes, Mosley realizes that making entire meals from scratch may seem time-consuming, but she says it's worth it.

Food-wise, she urges people to start small by making your own salad or seasoning from fresh vegetables or cooking whole foods like rice and quinoa. Shopping for healthier foods makes all the difference as well.

Mosley admits that what worked for her may not work for others, but she encourages those who desire a healthier mind and body to look inward, be truthful, and find a realistic commitment.

"There is no quick-fix," she says, "This, ladies and gentlemen, is hard work. And the weight, it's not magically coming off," she said. "But nobody can tell me it's not possible."

As an inspiration, Mosley hopes to continue telling her story to everyone who will listen. She plans to be a motivational speaker, continue her blog, and is currently co-authoring a book called, "Farewell Fatso."



Once 388 pounds, Chrisea Mosley, 38, conquered obesity with a strict regime of diet and exercise. She hopes to weigh less than 200 by age 40.

Mosley sank into a dark depression, popping pills and sleeping away her misery—until one wintery day, a voice from within told her to get up, go outside and take a walk.

The first day she walked 10 minutes and the next day, 20. Soon she began noticing a change, "My mind was clear and things looked differently," she said, "Outside, it was refreshing and cathartic."

Refusing to squander a replenished mind, Mosley began making adjustments in her life. In March 2010, she joined a gym. Soothing the abrupt transition of working out, she started with water aerobics, and soon found herself shaking off weight in Zumba, making new friends and having a blast.

Internally recharged, Mosley began documenting her journey in a blog, "Farewell Fatso." Her writing radiated a happier, healthier, and fat-free life-style, until another sudden mishap -- a car ran into her in a parking lot, and left her with a broken leg -- a physical setback, but

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