



Client Stories

TORI
EDWARDS

TORI'S STORY

Tori Edwards is the co-founder of a highly successful modelling agency in Central London. She has been a client of Bodyshot since October 2015.

This is her story.

THE PROBLEM

I'd come to a crossroads in my life where I knew that I was going to be diabetic within the next 10 years if I didn't change my diet and fitness. I hadn't done any exercise for most of my life, except for a bit of yoga and swimming here and there. But, generally, I never thought that I'd be into it.

Faced with that prospect, the fact that I had a very arthritic knee, and at a weight of 110 kilos, I felt like I had no other choice than to find someone to help me. I knew I had to grow up and look after myself. No one else could do it for me. I wanted to be around long enough to be a mum and enjoy life. Also, I wanted to let go of old habits and past feelings around food. Food was so emotional for me and a replacement for things I didn't have as a kid.

However, I wasn't sure whether I would like having someone telling me what to do. I was a bit apprehensive about the exercise. I was scared because I'd always been quite embarrassed about my body and doing exercise in front of anyone. I would never go to the gym because I could never bear anyone looking at me, thinking, "Oh, poor fat cow in the corner over there trying to lose some weight." I was scared because of that and fearful that it would just be a fad and that I'd be wasting my money again on another mad weight loss programme.

I was pre-diabetic, and went to see an endocrinologist for tests as I felt



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Happy. Awake. Energised.*



so sluggish. He confirmed I was insulin resistant and that there were things I could do to change that – including diet and cutting out certain things like sugar.

My knee was agony and I couldn't walk very far. It was really painful. I had a lot of lower back pain. I'd had one bout of bad back pain which lasted for about seven months and I was on Tramadol, which is a really heavy pain killer, for pretty much the entire time. I had lots of pain. I had pain in my feet. I had pain in my hips. I wasn't sleeping properly. I wasn't resting properly. I was agitated; an amalgamation of just not being content or happy.

MISTAKES MADE

I've tried lots of things over the years including different types of hypnosis and therapy. I'd never tried a personal trainer though. That was clearly the thing that I needed all along. I tried these crazy diets – the cabbage soup diet, and eliminating everything and saying, "I can't eat bread. I don't eat wheat anymore. I'm not having dairy anymore. I'm not having this." Whatever the fad was, I was always trying it. I never looked at the actual causes; that I wasn't exercising and eating the wrong kind of foods.

THE SOLUTION

The DNA test I had helped me form a healthy eating plan, and find out what the right kind of foods were for me, and that I'm not lactose intolerant. I was able to do the first two weeks without sugar and get over that because the meal plans worked. I think I was getting the right kind of foods at that time to stop me feeling those big spikes in blood sugar. The menus were integral to the beginning of the journey; it was a real crux to have those menus in place when my partner would ring me up and ask me what I wanted for dinner because he was a big part of this journey for me. He would often say, "What do you fancy from your DNA menu?"

I think the meal plans were the thing that aided me alongside being ready. You've got to be so organised in those first few



months with your meal plans otherwise you can so easily snack on the wrong things. I knew that if I didn't reduce salt for example, I would be like my dad who had a massive stroke at 62. If I continued with my diet the way it was, I would have problems with high blood pressure, which runs in our family.

The DNA test results showed me that I would respond much better to short bursts of high intensity exercise e.g. Tabata. I'd never be a distance runner or anything like that because of my knee, but that was useful to understand. Learning that I could do exercise like boxing, was very empowering.

THE OUTCOME

I started with Bodyshot in October 2015, and I've now lost a total of 30 kilos. I lost all that weight within a year.

I have no knee pain at all now. I have no back pain in the way that I had before. In the past a bout of bad back pain would last for around two weeks. I know the moment that I exercise, it all fixes itself pretty much straight away and it's nothing compared to how it used to be. I know that if it is twinging that the best thing to do for it is to actually exercise safely. That's a complete change of mindset. When I had blood tests done recently with the endocrinologist he said that I was his star pupil!

Having someone to exercise was integral. There were times in the beginning when I used to think, "Oh, I don't want to do it today." Nine times out of 10 I would do it because there's something about someone coming to the me and me paying the retainer each month. There's something psychological in that that works for me. It's not like you're just paying for one session. Knowing that I'm paying that and that I've got those sessions per week and that I've got to do it, that worked.

There's also nothing that feels better than having lost the weight. There's no food that can replace the way that I feel right now. It used to be that food really made me feel nurtured which I have now replaced with exercise, diet and health. Nothing feels better than being this fit. That's a real reminder. One of the things I remember was the metaphor of

the seven kilo medicine ball. When I lost my first few kilos and then got to seven kilos, knowing I'd lost the equivalent of one of those medicine balls was just huge to me.

Every time I pick up a dumbbell or am running around with a 15 kilo sandbag on my back around the garden, I think, it was no wonder my knee was in agony and I couldn't walk on it much. That was so significant; the amount of weight that was going through my body, on my hips. All those aches and pains.

Exercise has helped me with resilience and managing stress. It does get a lot of stuff out. A lot of your aggression and stuff like that. The boxing feels really good. With the charity boxing event (Tori did 12 rounds of boxing in a charity match with Bodyshot to raise money for a local charity), once I decided that it would be something I would do, I then got terrified and the fear started creeping in because I just didn't think I would be able to do that amount of exercise non-stop. I felt quite fearful and it was a massive hurdle to overcome. I had a few sleepless nights worrying that I wasn't going to be able to do it...but I did it...it was amazing. It was a great feeling having achieved it and to have raised money through this and my weight loss for a community project I was working on. I feel like I could probably do other stuff like that now.





WHAT NEXT?

I can't imagine life without exercise now. There's no going back. I've gone through painful hurdles and things that I never thought I'd be able to get over. Sometimes I feel like I can't believe this is me, even now. I know that it felt so unachievable before. Something has completely changed in my mind. There's no way that I will ever stop exercising. I love it now. I live for it, almost. I walk everywhere with a purpose now. Everything's changed.

If I can do it, anyone can do it because I was in such a bad state. Honestly, as I said, I'd never done any proper exercise. I was lazy with no motivation. I still have to pinch myself that I've come this far.

Going away was always a hurdle. I'd be taking two huge suitcases because I had everything to be comfortable. I'm going to New York now and I'm going for three days. I've got three outfits I know I'm going to wear. They fit me, they look good. That has been amazing.

Going out, which I do a lot with my work, that's been amazing. People are just dumbfounded because they've always seen me as Tori who's a good size 20; I used to be between a size 20 and 24. The big thing has been my little girl...I think that's been the most amazing because I was always very conscious that she could be leading a life that could end up the way that I had with my relationship to food and exercise. Her little face when she'd see me exercising and watching me lose the weight I think that's been the most amazing thing ever. When she saw me in the boxing ring she wanted to get in. She was shadow boxing in the ring because she'd seen me do it.

I know the mother/daughter relationship is a massive thing, especially with my relationship with food and exercise. I'm happier as well – my family's admiration of what I'd done and have achieved has been brilliant and a real driving force. It's important that we set examples for our kids. I had trouble with my mum when I was growing up and her relationship to indulgence and stuff was learnt behaviour that I adopted too. I really feel like I've broken that cycle and that feels like a massive achievement.

My advice to others would be to just do it. Just get on with it. It's part of your bloody grocery bill! It's part of your life. It's part of what you spend on yourself, which you need to, and it's important. We've all got to look after our health. I think of it like that. The amount of money I've saved on buying ridiculous clothes, because I was constantly trying to make myself feel better. It's just part of your maintenance bill. It's like paying your gas bill.

Three words to describe how I feel now after exercising?

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If you're interested in talking to Bodyshot about how we can help you, please get in touch with Leanne on **07401 441 818** or send an email to info@bodyshotperformance.com.



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