



# Success Stories

*Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.*

## *Mindfulness and Physical Activity Were His Keys*

*VETERAN MARK BARKER MAINTAINED MOTIVATION FOR HEALTH BEHAVIOR CHANGE WITH MOVE! AND HEALTHY TEACHING KITCHEN SESSIONS.*

The offerings at the Overton Brooks VA Medical Center in Shreveport, LA combined to create the perfect recipe for weight management success.



## *A Desire for Improved Health*

During a visit with his doctor, Mark Barker had a discussion that led to a recommendation to lose weight to improve his overall health. He decided to “put his best foot forward to lose weight on my own.” After what he called “minimal weight loss” working on his own, Mark began to work with with his local MOVE! Weight Management Program for Veterans team and the Healthy Teaching Kitchen. He was able to maximize his motivation and move through the health behavior changes that would lead to weight loss and ultimately improve his health.

### Helpful Hints

Mark shared that the MOVE! Veteran Workbook was especially helpful during his journey to better health. He specifically called out the “helpful hints” (*Teresa’s Tips, Tom’s Toolkit, Smart Alex, Hannah’s How-To*) in the workbook, which he says helped him stay motivated and provided him with “a lot of insight” along the way.

### Moving More

An important component of his plan to improve his health was increasing his physical activity. Mark took this to heart and shares that he was able to increase his activity through a combination of activities. “I also started increasing my activity by walking my dogs, using strength training (which also improved my mood) and exercise bands. I love walking my dogs. I enjoy it and feel less pain.”

### Mindful Meals

In addition to attending MOVE! group and individual sessions, Mark participated in his facility’s Healthy Teaching Kitchen activities. He says he learned how to monitor and control his portion sizes, reduce his sugar intake, and how to prepare healthier meals.

“What you put into MOVE! is what you get out of it.”

– Mark Barker



### Creating the Perfect Recipe

With his health as his motivation, Mark was able to create the perfect recipe for health and wellness. He says, “Being more active and mindful of intake is the key to weight loss.” Mark isn’t done yet. After losing 17 pounds in his first 4 months, he is working toward a long term goal of losing 45 pounds and maintaining his new, healthy lifestyle.