



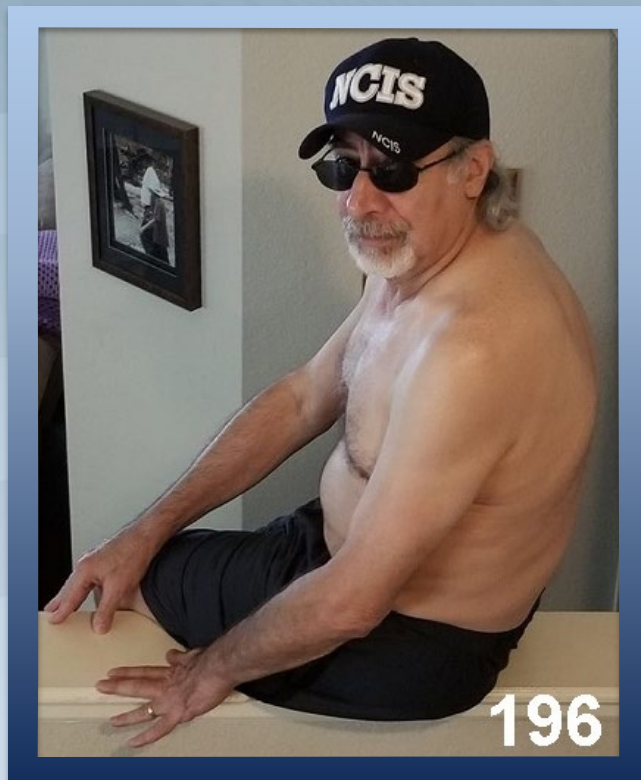
# Success Stories

*Healthy Living Matters. Prevention Works.*

## *He Who Didn't Hesitate, Lost — 25 Pounds, That Is!*

*VETERAN RALPH DeSTEFANO HAD TRIED SEVERAL TIMES TO LOSE WEIGHT ON HIS OWN— WITHOUT SUCCESS.*

Frustrated, Ralph turned to MOVE! for help. With the guidance of his VA MOVE! team in San Antonio, Texas, Ralph dove in. He cruised past his goal weight in just 9 weeks... and he's going for more!



### *What motivated you to try MOVE!?*

"I had struggled with my weight and pre-onset diabetes as far back as I can remember, getting worse since I retired to Texas in 2008. My heaviest weight was 245 pounds. My A1c was at 7.4, and I was on a daily regimen of metformin.

"Nothing seemed to work. I realized if I didn't get help, I would eventually be taking insulin and suffer from full-blown diabetes.

"I shared my concern with my mental health specialist. Seeing how frustrated I was in not being able to lose weight on my own, she suggested the MOVE! Program."

### *How was your MOVE! experience?*

“As soon as I started the group sessions with my MOVE! coordinator Cristina Elizondo, I knew I found the right place. Cristina created an atmosphere of both respect and dignity to all who attend her class. She presents the material not as a lecturer but as one who engages with the class for our input.

“Within the first week, I started losing weight using the tools she taught me. As the weeks went on, I learned how to shop for food in a healthier way, what foods I should stay away from, [and about] starting an exercise regimen and actually sticking with it.”

### *Will you share your achievements?*

“Nine weeks into the class, I met my original goal of 200 pounds. My weight dropped from 221 to 196, my A1c from 7.4 to 5.8. I am steadily losing weight on my way to my new goal of 180 before the end of the year.”

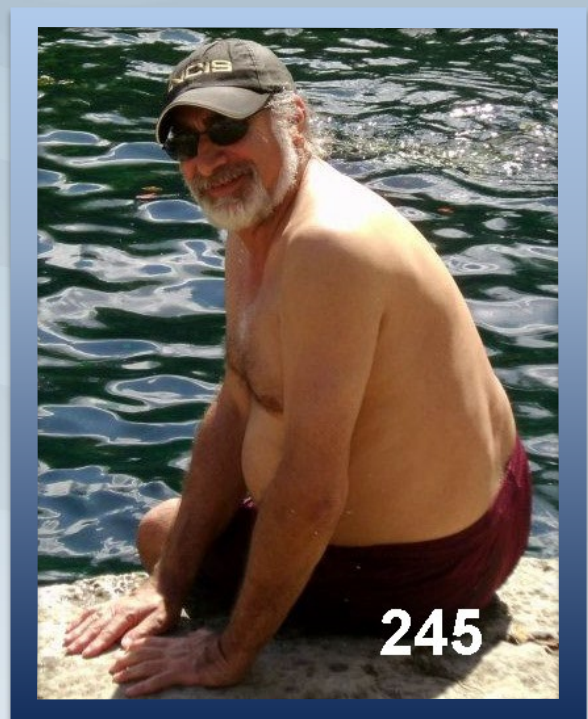
### *What changes did you make? How else has your life changed?*

“I take notice of what I eat and choose the healthier alternatives. I exercise four times a day. I also get between 6000 and 10,000 steps in a day.

“My life has improved in so many ways. I have more energy. I no longer take metformin to control my diabetes. And purchasing clothes two sizes smaller gives me a feeling of accomplishment I haven't felt in a decade.”

“[Don't] be hesitant—this program works, and you will feel so much better!”

– Ralph DeStefano



### *What would you like to tell other Veterans about MOVE!?*

“Take that first step and enroll, you won't regret it. The support from both your coordinator and fellow Veterans will blow you away.”