

He lost over 60 pounds: “This is me now.”

Smiles like this used to be rare for Sterling Warjack, age 21, standing with his mother, Patricia Warjack. He started losing weight two years ago. Family and friends say he jokes more and is more outgoing.



Meet Sterling Warjack (Shoshone-Bannock), age 21. If you went to high school with him, you would not recognize him today. He has lost over 60 pounds. Instead of a baggy pair of shorts and a triple X T-shirt, he wears Levis and a polo shirt. But the biggest difference is what he wears on his face: a smile.



Remembering high school is not fun for Sterling. He weighed 360 pounds. He tells it like it is: “High school is all about looking good.”

Sterling was quiet. He says for the four years of high school, he hardly talked to anyone. “I was isolated and depressed and angry all the time.”

He felt horrible. He was always tired, had frequent nose

bleeds, and an almost constant headache.

Then, two things happened. His cousin passed away from complications of diabetes. He was in his 40s. And, Sterling went to the doctor and found out he had very high blood pressure. Sterling made an appointment with Erin Brownley, the dietitian at the Shoshone- Bannock Clinic. “I was nervous about seeing Erin.

I thought she was going to be like a (fitness) trainer, break me down before she builds me up.”

Instead, Erin taught Sterling about his “red light foods” – chips, hamburgers, and pop. At the time Sterling was drinking five cans of pop a day, plus two energy drinks.

Slowly, he began to change his eating habits. “I gave up on fast food, McDonalds hamburgers.”



When Sterling first started being physically active, he joined a group of runners and found himself running four miles in the hills near his home!

“It was two miles up, two miles down. My heart was pounding. My legs were burning.”

Now Sterling walks and runs regularly. “It’s easier,” he says.





Lifting weights and boxing has helped Sterling feel better. “I used to sleep until three. Now I wake up at eight. I have much more energy.”

When he got a craving for some fast food, he started going to Arby’s or Subway for a sandwich, without chips, fries, or pop.

He started working out at the tribal gym. He started running and walking. He learned how to box. He weight trained. “It took me six weeks to start feeling better. But, I kept doing it because I knew it was going to work.” Sterling remembers feeling stronger and noticing that, every week, he was jogging faster.

Now, Sterling has lost over 60 pounds. A lot of his family and friends tell him he looks better. They tell him he’s funnier, tells more jokes, is more outgoing.

Sterling says his personality has changed. His self-esteem has gone up. “I have a new vision. I have hope for an active life. I have a goal to travel as a boxer. I feel awesome. The high school student, that was my negative side. This is me now.” ■

Here are steps Sterling used to lose over 60 pounds:

- 1. Met with health care staff to get a check up and found personal reasons why he wanted to lose weight and get healthy.**
- 2. Started meeting every week with a dietitian and followed her tips.**
- 3. Changed his eating habits, cut back on fast food, and stopped drinking pop and energy drinks.**
- 4. Started walking, jogging, weight training, and boxing.**
- 5. Keeps his eye on his goals to stay motivated: “I want to be healthy. I want to live a long time.”**

At first, Sterling was nervous about seeing Dietitian Erin Brownley.

Erin says people often think she is going to be negative. “Losing weight is a hard thing to do. I don’t lecture,” explains Erin.

Sterling quickly found out that Erin was there to give him information and support. “She’s nice!”



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