

Recommendation written by “Carrie” on February 13, 2014

I first opened the book *Thin Within* on a train winding through the countryside of Spain in April 2011. I knew after the book’s introduction that there was something better for me than diets. I so wanted to be free of dieting, of body image issues and of overeating and over-exercising. However, it took almost 2 years to finally find freedom. Over those 2 years, I tried to follow the keys to conscious eating only to fail and revisit diets or workout programs or special foods that would surely help me to lose weight.

Enter Heidi Bylsma. I started to follow her Bible study on her blog in March 2013. I still struggled with letting go of the diet mentality, but I started to see that freedom was possible for me. After a month or two of the Bible study, I decided to jump in with both feet and hire her to coach me for a few months. See, I felt God healing me and experienced the chains of bondage loosening, but it seemed I could not complete a day of eating only 0-5. I needed extra help - a tutor, a coach, a cheerleader, a teacher, a prayer warrior. She is all of these in one little dynamite package!

During our coaching, I learned to change my thinking. I turned around my thinking from focusing on my failures to seeing my successes. It was also incredibly helpful to report to her (via email) DAILY my accountability points (these ranged from prayer time, journaling, and eating 0-5 to sitting at the table, not eating in front of the tv, and having a praise fest). I loved our weekly phone calls – I just felt covered in her prayers and she gave me concrete, helpful tools and suggestions. She has truly been anointed by God to help lead His people out of condemnation, self-criticism and bondage to

the freedom and grace that is available for us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It has been about 6 months since Heidi coached me. I am free from the diet mentality. God answered that persistent prayer, but Heidi helped lead me to the freedom. I stay within my boundaries of 0-5 eating at almost every meal, every day. I don't remember the last time that I binged. If I overeat, it is only by a few bites. I rarely succumb (as I did every day before the coaching) to nighttime eating. I am living in greater intimacy with the Lord and loving His freedom, joy and peace. I do know the importance of daily submission, obedience, renewing of my mind and commitment to follow His boundaries. There is work involved, dying to self is required, but the reward is so sweet. I am thankful that Heidi was there to hold my hand through much of the transformation process.

Oh, you may wonder if I released weight. I can't tell you the number of pounds that I released because I stopped weighing myself a few years ago and don't know my starting weight. But, I dropped about a size and am at or very near my God given size. A recent peek at a scale showed me that I am only 5 pounds above my "happy maintenance" weight from 5 years ago – before I gained weight in part due to a medical issue. What I do know is that I was gaining weight or at a standstill prior to last spring. And now I have released weight and fit in my old clothes. The old clothes may fit, but there is a new, free, changed woman wearing them! If you have the opportunity and desire to hire Heidi as a coach, I strongly recommend it! I am forever grateful for her guidance, on the blog and in her coaching.