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The incredible journey pdf free

It was Thomas Jefferson's vision that enabled the journey of Lewis and Clark. He dreamed of discovering an all-water route through the continent to the Northwest Passage, the sea route through the Arctic Ocean that connects the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. His prime motivation was to advance trade and settlement, and he started making preparations for an expedition as early as 1792. His strongest incentive for westward expansion came in 1802, after he heard of Alexander McKenzie's overland journey across Canada. Fearing that the British might gain control of the Western territories, Jefferson sought funding for an American expedition to the Pacific -- this, in turn, led to the Louisiana Purchase [source: University of Virginia].On April 30, 1803, Jefferson signed the Louisiana Purchase, Treaty with France, undoubtedly the most important legacy of his presidency. He paid less than 3 cents an acre for the roughly 828,000-square-mile area, which doubled the size of the country [source: Encyclopedia Britannica]. The land stretched south from just above the Canadian border to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico, west to the Continental Divide in Colorado, and east to the Mississippi River. If it weren't for the Louisiana Purchase, the expedition of Lewis and Clark would not have been possible. Patients experience pain, extreme fatigue, cognitive issues, hair loss, and physical impairments, as well as facial rashes and painful joints. Because symptoms are common and fairly nonspecific, diagnosis can be delayed.Lupus occurs more often in women of childbearing age, but is also diagnosed in men, children, and youths. It is more common in women of color -- African American women, Latinas, Asians, Native Americans, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other Pacific Islander.Lupus can be fatal. About 10%-15% of lupus patients will die due to complications of the disease.Lupus is expensive. Annual direct care costs for lupus patients averaged over \$12,000 in 2008, according to one study (Arthritis Rheum. 2008 Dec 15; 59(12): 1788-1795), while productivity loss in working-age patients was estimated at over \$8,000.Questions remain regarding lupus. What causes lupus? Genes play a role, but so do environmental triggers and hormones. What can be done to stave off lupus nephritis, a common and potentially deadly comorbidity? What are potential targets for investigational therapeutics? What can patients do to mitigate against lupus symptoms and thrive despite their chronic disease? Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Sometimes, all it takes is a single decision to radically change the course of your life. For Lexi and Danny Reed, one decision led to an 18-month journey that completely redefined who they were as individuals and as a couple. After spending their entire lives stuck in a seemingly endless cycle of weight-related struggles, they decided to transform their lives for the better. The lessons they learned along the way are both inspirational and universally helpful. Ever since she was a young child, Lexi Reed struggled with her weight. No matter what new diet fad or trendy exercise regimen she tried, she couldn't keep the pounds from coming back. Through every up and down in her roller coaster battle, she tried to maintain a positive outlook on her life. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram At just 25 years old, Lexi weighed 392 pounds, and as her weight went up, her quality of life went down. She had always been a dreamer with big aspirations, but her excessive weight gain seemed to be an obstacle she couldn't overcome. As she struggled to find answers to her weight problems, Lexi found love. Danny Reed had been Lexi's best friend for a decade. He loved her for who she was, no matter how much weight she gained or lost. After a long friendship, they began dating and fell in love. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram However, their relationship came with a complication. Like Lexi, Danny struggled with his diet. He exercised very little and paid almost no attention to what he ate. It became clear very quickly that their love for each other wouldn't help them solve their issues with weight gain. Danny was just two years older than Lexi, and he weighed 280 pounds. As their relationship grew stronger, their health started to decline. Both lived inactive, sedentary lives and ate unhealthy diets before they met. Together, they fell into a pattern of mutual destruction. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram The more time they spent as a couple, the worse their habits seemed to become. For most meals, they went out to eat at restaurants, and all-you-can-eat buffets were among their favorite stops. When they did eat at home, they ordered take-out or delivery. They continued to add weight, and their health continued to worsen. Lexi believes the unhealthy habits she developed as an adult began in childhood. "Growing up, we never had a lot of money, and my parents never cooked," she said. "Processed foods were always easier to purchase than healthy foods." Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Convenience came with a cost. Food became Lexi's comfort. Even when she didn't need comfort, it was still her routine. She admits she and Danny would spend nights binge-watching television and binge-eating whatever food they ordered. "I was always an emotional eater, also, and no matter what the mood, food was always there for me," she said. Their unhealthy habits and excessive weight limited what Lexi and Danny could do as a couple. Poor physical condition prevented them from taking walks and riding bikes together. They couldn't go on hikes or spend time enjoying nature. Instead, they mostly stayed home and watched television. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Lexi always knew being overweight affected her life negatively. Even as she maintained a positive outlook on life, she knew she couldn't live the life she had always dreamed of unless she made radical changes. She desperately needed motivation, and she found it in an unexpected place. When Danny proposed to Lexi, she immediately accepted. "He never saw me as my size, asked me to change or made me feel as anything other than beautiful," Lexi wrote on Instagram. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Nonetheless, she knew she had to change her lifestyle when she weighed 485 pounds and couldn't find a wedding dress. "Nobody knew how to make me feel like a bride and not my size. Thank God, I was strong enough to know my worth and kept searching for my 34W dress, even though I questioned if I would ever find one," she wrote. After a long search, Lexi found her dress. She married Danny, and their wedding went off without a hitch. The couple was happy, but it created a whole new series of questions for Lexi related to her lifestyle. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Like many newlywed couples, she and Danny began discussing the prospect of one day having children. They both knew there could be serious health implications -- for both Lexi and the baby -- if they pursued that dream. Lexi harbored another dream as well, and she knew it was a dream she couldn't realize if she never lost weight. It wasn't just the big dreams in Lexi's life that her weight kept her from achieving. There were smaller dreams that paled in comparison to starting a family, but they still meant a lot to Lexi. She wanted to have children, but she wanted to pursue other experiences as well. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Ever since the Wizarding World of Harry Potter opened in Orlando, Lexi had dreamed of visiting. The problem was floo powder wasn't real, and she was too big to fit in an airplane seat. She was also too large to experience most of the rides in the park. As thoughts of starting a family and embarking on adventures across the country danced in her head, Lexi settled into married life with Danny. After a year of marriage, unfortunately, very little had changed. She continued to eat poorly, and her weight remained at unhealthy levels. Their routine of eating processed foods and binge-watching television continued. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Deep down inside, Lexi knew she needed to turn her life around, but she had no clue how to start. Little did she know that change was just around the corner. All she needed was a resolution. For some people, New Year's Resolutions are trivial promises meant to be broken. They pledge to make a change, but in a few weeks, they are back to their old habits. On New Year's Day in 2016, Lexi made a resolution to get her life and her health under control. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Fortunately, she wasn't alone in her resolution or on the journey that followed. Danny had promised to stay by her side, for better or for worse, and he vowed to always be there to support her. It took time for him to warm to the idea and get on board with his wife's New Year's Resolution, but he was ultimately all in. "At first the idea didn't sound great because it was always good going home, sitting down, eating and not having to worry about anything," Danny said. His love for his wife overcame his hesitation, however, and he was soon committed to Lexi's lifestyle change. Photo Courtesy: discoveringdanny/Instagram "It's a new year and something to work toward while helping Lexi out as well," Danny said, once he fully supported his wife's desire for change. He knew the journey would be easier for Lexi if he took every step with her. He also knew he could change his life for the better at the same time. Sometimes, the best motivation is financial. When Lexi and Danny's friends found out about their weight loss goals, they decided to make a wager among themselves. For a month, they would follow a strict set of rules: no eating out, no soda, no alcohol, no cheat meals and workouts of at least 30 minutes five times a week. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram The accountability provided by their friends and each other provided the platform Lexi and Danny needed to get started on their weight loss journey. Together, they took the first step in a long journey toward transforming their lives. With their goals set and their dreams at the front of their minds, Lexi and Danny began to alter the course of their lives. "We were fed up with the life that we were living and all the things that we weren't able to do together as a couple," Lexi said. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram They decided to part ways with their old, sedentary lifestyles and embark on a new path toward a healthier way of living. "We also feared if we didn't get our health under control, we would never be able to start a family," she added. The first step Lexi and Danny took was to join a local gym in Terre Haute, Indiana. Soon, they settled into a routine of going to the gym at least 30 minutes a day, every single day. Even at the gym, they had to overcome some obstacles. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Neither Lexi nor Danny knew much about exercise, and they didn't have a personal trainer to help them navigate the process. They relied purely on willpower and their shared motivation to shed pounds. Lexi battled severe joint pain as she tried to find an exercise regimen that worked for her at her starting weight. At 485 pounds, Lexi needed the right pieces of equipment for a successful workout. She needed something that would help her maximize her calorie burn without placing too much pressure on her joints. She also worried that other gym members would judge her. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Finally, she found the right place. "I started going there when I got a free trial and -- since it was never really crowded -- my machine faced the wall, so I didn't feel like everyone was watching me, and I found a machine called the CrossRamp that didn't hurt my joints at 485 pounds. I fell in love with it." Exercise is only part of the battle in any weight loss journey. In addition to their daily trips to the gym, Lexi and Danny started to reevaluate their diet and their eating habits. They could no longer eat at restaurants every night or order take-out to bring home. It was time to start preparing their own food. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Together, they began learning how to shop for healthy foods and prepare healthy meals at home. They learned which unhealthy foods to avoid -- bye, bye, frozen pizzas -- and started to cook food in their own kitchen. Lexi had never liked the term "diet." In her experience, a diet was a temporary change, not a lasting one. She was looking for a long-term, radical transformation. That meant she and Danny had to develop healthier habits that would last for the long haul. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram She didn't like the idea of eliminating her favorite dishes entirely from her life, so she took matters into her own hands. "I started taking the foods I loved and making healthier versions, so I no longer felt like I had to give up something or deprive [myself]," she said. The hardest part about making a drastic change in your life is doing it by yourself. Without accountability and support, transformation seems impossible. But Lexi had Danny, and Danny had Lexi. They were in this together, through thick and thin. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram When Lexi struggled, Danny was there to help her get back on track. When Danny was down, Lexi was there to lift his spirits. Together, they made it through a month, and they were starting to see the results firsthand. Eventually, their support system expanded. Their weight loss journey was about to change forever. Support is everything in the journey to losing weight. As Lexi and Danny continued their daily trips to the gym, they lost pounds and gained friends. Lexi started taking classes at the gym, where she met new people who were on a similar journey. Those people ultimately became her unwavering support system. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram "I love my Pulse class. I love dancing to my favorite music and not feeling like it's a workout. We can do a song full of squats, and even though my legs are burning, it's so much fun that I don't even notice," Lexi said. Lexi was gaining confidence and turning her previous fears into further motivation. She decided "if people were going to stare at me because of my weight, I was going to give them a reason to stare by being the hardest worker in the room." Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram She was diligent about her routine, counting every calorie she ate and never missing a workout. After a few months, she was losing as much as 20 pounds a week. Even when she hit a plateau, her newly formed good habits kept her on track and encouraged her to keep moving forward in her journey. As Lexi continued to lose weight, so did Danny. Her inspiration and influence kept him going, and he saw his health and weight change radically as he kept pace with his wife. His initial hesitation was long gone, and he fell into a positive pattern of good eating and good exercise. Photo Courtesy: discoveringdanny/Instagram After two years of consistent diet and rigorous workouts, Danny had dropped nearly 100 pounds. From a starting weight of 280 pounds, he weighed 190 pounds, and his overall health and well-being had never been better. His work was paying off in obvious ways. After 18 months, Lexi's transformation was incredible. The positive mindset she adopted at the beginning of her journey paid some big dividends, and her pride in who she was and what she was accomplishing served as further motivation. By May of 2018, Lexi had lost an unbelievable 312 pounds. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram She remembers a specific moment when she realized just how far she had come and how proud she was of herself. She and Danny returned to a favorite restaurant of theirs from their pre-lifestyle change days. When Lexi sat at their favorite table, her stomach no longer rested on the edge. It was a beautiful moment. Because her support system had been so vital to her turnaround, Lexi decided to create her own Instagram account. She felt it would not only increase her own access to a positive community of like-minded, health-conscious individuals, but it would also allow her to encourage others to start their own journeys. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Today, Lexi's account (@fatgirlfedup) has more than one million followers. Her feed consists of incredible before and after pictures as well as current photos of her workouts, meals and day-to-day lifestyle. In just a couple of years, Lexi and Danny completely turned their lives around. Thanks to her Instagram presence, Lexi and Danny's story went viral. Soon, it was everywhere on the internet, and television stations, newspapers and media outlets across the country approached them to tell their inspirational stories. Lexi and Danny appeared on an episode of Rachael Ray, showcasing their healthy cooking and eating habits. Photo Courtesy: Rachael Ray Show The spotlight hasn't changed the couple. Even though Lexi and Danny are now social media stars, they remain as humble as ever. They are grateful for the attention of the media, which motivates them to keep going. They also know their story motivates others to follow in their footsteps. Lexi and Danny's journey came full circle when they returned to the beach where Danny proposed. Since that day, they had lost more than 400 pounds combined, and their lives had changed in ways they never could have imagined. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram The beach was the perfect spot to celebrate their achievements. The day Danny proposed, Lexi weighed nearly 500 pounds, and a short walk on the beach left her winded. Years later, she returned to the spot and did something she never imagined would be possible. "We returned to that beach -- and ran down that beach!" Lexi said. The circles only got fuller for Lexi and Danny. The more weight they lost and the healthier they became, the more the world opened up for them. That included Lexi's desire to travel, specifically the trip she had always imagined taking to see the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios in Orlando. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram They fit comfortably in their seats on the plane to Florida and were able to enjoy every ride they wanted to experience. Most importantly, they did it the same way they lost more than 400 pounds: together. Every pound they shed brought them closer together. What Lexi appreciates most about her newfound state of health is the freedom she feels. Her health has never been better, mentally or physically. "I am grateful for every single day, and I am enjoying the journey," Lexi said. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram "Every day is a non-scale victory and a reminder of how far I've come. Like, I loved myself even at 485 pounds, but just to be able to wake up and do whatever I want to do and go wherever I want to go... I don't feel like I'm a prisoner in my own body anymore." Lexi now has a desire to inspire others with her story and to help them learn how to serve as inspirations for even more people. Besides posting pics of her own continuing journey, she often posts photos on her Instagram account featuring those who have undergone their own weight loss journeys. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram The key is to "start small -- small changes add up to big results -- and focus on each day, not how far you have to go." She also encourages others to avoid shortcuts and stay away from surgeries and diet pills. She did it naturally, and she believes others can too. The latest platform for Lexi and Danny to share their stories is YouTube. On their channel, they have continued to document their transformation from overweight to healthier than ever before. They offer encouragement and advice, discuss workout tips, provide recipes and encourage others to cook their own foods. Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram Lexi even earned an invitation to the 2018 Screen Actors' Guild Awards. "I learned how strong and capable I am as a person. I thought it would take me over three years to lose 300-plus pounds, but I was so determined and hardworking that I did it in two," she said. Lexi has never been happier. "There are no words to explain the feeling of saving your own life," Lexi said. "Going into 2018, I have nothing but a newfound happiness for this life I am living. I no longer am a prisoner in my own body, and instead of just existing in my own life, I'm finally alive." Photo Courtesy: fatgirlfedup/Instagram "Every day I wake up is a blessing. I'm so proud of how far I've come and this new life that I'm living. I saved my own life, and for that, there are no words -- only gratitude."

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