

## LIVING

# (Not So) FAT Chance

By DANIELLE ROBINSON  
CTW Features

**'Biggest Loser'**  
finalist  
**Julie Hadden**  
discusses what it  
takes to **BEAT**

In 2007, 34-year-old Julie Hadden was just one pound shy of being classified as morbidly obese and on the path to a lifetime of health problems. She needed a change, but after decades of failed dieting attempts, her hope was waning.

But change did come, shockingly, in the form of reality television. She was cast on the fourth season of NBC's "The Biggest Loser." While a measly eight pounds prevented her from walking away with the \$250,000 prize, she gained a new lease on life.

Two and a half years later and nearly 100 pounds lighter, Hadden — who recounts the journey in her book, "Fat Chance" (GuidepostsBooks, 2009) — now wishes she had believed in herself sooner. "I spent so

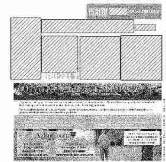
much time doubting myself, not just digging in," she says. "In retrospect, I could have done it at home. I just didn't believe I could."

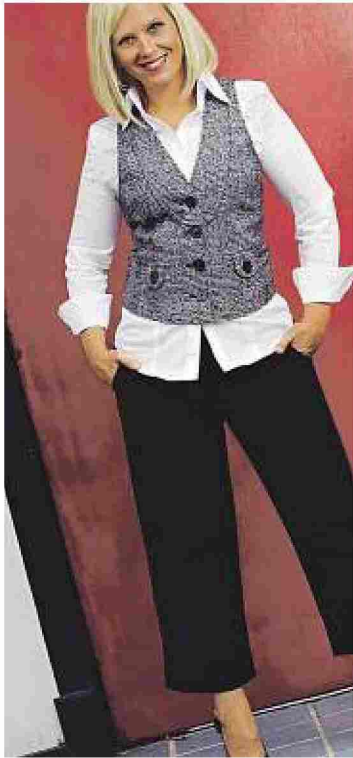
Here, Hadden shares some of the healthy diet pointers that led to her remarkable success.

## Knowledge Is Power

Looking back, Hadden realizes that she once knew very little about the consequences of a poor diet. "High fructose corn syrup and trans fats and enriched... I didn't know what [any of] it meant or what it was doing to my body," she says. "Knowledge gives you the strength to say, 'I'm not settling for that.'"

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## One Day to Indulge

Hadden allows one day of high calorie consumption per week, a practice that she was taught while on “The Biggest Loser.” “First of all, it keeps your metabolism guessing, and second, you never crave anything,” she says. “The only stipulation is it has to be real food, not Cheetos or something that’s full of nothing.”

## Food Is Not A Reward

While setting a weight loss or exercise goal, give yourself some positive reinforcement with a reward for your progress. “Get a pedicure or a manicure,” Hadden says. “Learn how to celebrate and socialize without food.”

## Little Changes Add Up

Hadden has tweaked her diet to eliminate unnecessary fats and empty calories. “Sometimes I feel like a snob when I go to a restaurant because there are just certain things I won’t put in my body anymore,” she says with a laugh. In baked goods, she replaces vegetable oil with applesauce. At breakfast, no yolks: she’ll only eat egg whites. Instead of white bread, she opts for hearty Ezekiel bread, made from sprouted whole grains. And fried foods? Forget about it.

## It Starts with You

Above all, Hadden maintains that the only way to fully commit to such a momentous undertaking is to unearth your self worth. “Before anybody can lose one ounce of weight, they have to believe that they’re worth the effort,” she says. “I had to make myself worth it. I had to say, ‘I have to be a priority.’”

