

# MISSION MAKEOVER

Month 3 | By Rachel Clayton. Photo by Barb Levant.



**//** I have learned about proper nutrition, proper exercise and how to dress my best. I feel as though I'm just hitting my stride in this third month...Just how it should be. **//**

## WEIGHING IN

### Virginia Wilkinson

Assistant Manager at The Bernadin

**Age:** 37

**Height:** 5'8"

**Weight:** Initial—227

**Now:** 207 lbs.

**Body fat:** 39.3 percent

**Now:** 31.1 percent

**Fitness level:** Initial, VO2 max of 32.0 (poor)

**Now:** 45.4 (superior)

**Total Loss:** 20 lbs., 20 inches



Three months ago we introduced Virginia Wilkinson, a 37-year-old professional looking to make a permanent lifestyle change. We set her up with Dr. Lauren Weiss, a nutritionist; Sharon Mehalek, a physical trainer; and Suzanne Newman, an image consultant, to help her achieve her goals. In a short time Virginia has certainly come a long way and she's certain that even without the help of her coaches, she'll be able to keep fit!

**PASSING THE TEST** Last month we caught Virginia just before she jetted off to Italy, nervous she wouldn't be able to resist the wine, pasta and other carb-laden fare. But armed with the knowledge she's gained over the past three months, Virginia says, "I definitely conquered my biggest obstacle: spending a week in Italy and NOT gaining weight. Who knew it could be done!? I ate fresh food, exercised and kept on track. We were staying in a town where there were stairs everywhere so that helped. I was very proud of myself."

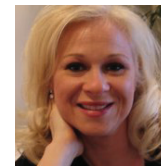
**A WELL-STOCKED CLOSET** After a major closet cleanout last month, Suzanne met Virginia at Bloomingdale's for a day of hard-core, closet-restock shopping. Four hours and a stop at Nordstrom later, Virginia had bags full of clothes she's excited to wear. "Suzanne was a great help!" Virginia exclaims. "I think I tried on a million pair of pants and tops, but I was able to get some great basic staple items that'll carry me through as I continue to lose weight. I normally hate to shop for clothes but doing it with Suzanne made it fun and productive!"

**OUT WITH THE OLD** Anyone who's tried a diet, lost weight and then, months later, seen it all creep back on, knows: A diet often works in the short term, but long-term weight loss or maintenance requires a complete lifestyle change. Fortunately, Virginia says the things her three coaches have taught her are now ingrained in her for good. "I can't believe how much I've changed my habits," Virginia says. "If you had told me three months ago, before I started this program, that I would be buying hummus and pitas—and paying Whole Foods prices—I would've said you were crazy!"

**LOOKING BACK, LESSONS LEARNED** Aside from the daily habits, Virginia's learned more important lessons. Although she met her superficial goal to lose 20 pounds, Virginia knows the number is just that: a number. "I have learned so much through this process I can't even list everything. I have learned about proper nutrition, proper exercise and how to dress my best," Virginia says. "I feel as though I'm just hitting my stride in this third month. The weight is coming off slow and steady, and according to Lauren and Sharon, that's just how it should be."

**GOING IT ALONE** Perhaps the greatest change is the confidence the past three months have imbued in Virginia. She's anxious to prove she can do it on her own. "I'm excited to use the tools I've learned and have no doubt I will have more success," Virginia asserts. "I know there'll be some bad days, but I also know I can't dwell on the negative. I need to be positive and continue on the right path. I'd also like to add that I'm so grateful for the support of Sharon, Lauren and Suzanne. They really are the best teachers ever!"

## COACH NOTES



### SUZANNE NEWMAN, Image Consultant with Find Fashion Happiness

For their day of power shopping, Suzanne arrived early and filled the dressing room at Bloomingdale's with clothes for Virginia to try on. Several strenuous hours later, the girls deemed the day a success having purchased:

- One pair of tailored (but not clingy) mid-rise black pants;
- One pair of cuffed cropped pants (to pair with her new boots);
- A merino wool, sleeveless dress, shell, and matching longer length jacket/cardigan;
- One thin ribbed turtleneck in a comfortable, cotton blend;
- One merino wool v-neck sweater;
- One black cotton shell;
- A beaded twin set with a low, but not-too-revealing neckline;

"All of these pieces are extremely versatile and can be used in a variety of ways for work, dress, or casual wear," Suzanne says. "For instance, Virginia can pair the beaded twin set with jeans and boots for a dressy/casual look or with her tailored pants to wear to work. By changing her accessories, she can adjust the look to suit whatever event she attends." To this end, Virginia had already purchased a pair of high-heeled faux suede boots, gold hoop earrings and pendant necklace that Suzanne says better suited Virginia's features than some of her go-to choker-style necklaces.

Although the spree was a success, Suzanne admits finding clothes that fit and flatter is a constant battle. "As do many women, Virginia continues to struggle with her body image," Suzanne says. "But knowing that at least 50 percent of women in this country are over a size 14, it's important for her to see herself in a new and more positive way." And Suzanne is certain that, "With a much more developed sense of her style, body, and more flattering choices, Virginia will continue to put herself together beautifully."

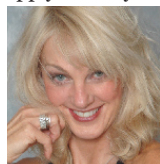


**DR. LAUREN WEISS, Certified Clinical Nutritionist**

Ask Dr. Weiss what she thinks about diets and she'll tell you one thing: they don't work. "Yes," she admits, "You may lose 10 pounds in a month, but with strict rules and restricted food choices, you don't really learn about eating healthfully." Plus, Dr. Weiss adds, "Most diets are one-size-fits-all. They don't

address the underlying chemical, hormonal and blood sugar conditions that contribute to weight gain and an inability to lose the weight."

That's why instead of looking at the past three months as a diet, Dr. Weiss taught Virginia to choose foods wisely. "The more nutritious foods she ate, the more satisfied she was," Dr. Weiss explains. "When I switched her from skim to 2 percent milk for breakfast, she thought I was some crazy nutritionist! But fat can be good for you in moderation, and help create a feeling of fullness, beating away those 10 AM hunger pangs." In fact, according to Dr. Weiss, Virginia's finally noticed a decrease in her cravings for high-fat and sugary foods. "Now, eating well feels like more of a habit and way of life, rather than effort," she says. "And so the beauty of her diet now, is that there is no 'diet' to fail. Virginia now has the tools to apply to every culinary situation."



**SHARON MEHALEK, Personal Trainer and General Manager of LifeStart at Riverpark Athletic Club**

According to Sharon, Virginia has lost weight, inches and fat at a healthy pace for a three month period; her strength, flexibility and cardiovascular gains were also right on target.

For the final leg of the makeover, Sharon switched up Virginia's routine, offering her different exercises for each body part and challenging new muscle fibers. Once again, Virginia showed Sharon she was committed to sticking to her resistance training regimen. "Virginia is so determined to get to her goal and make this a lifestyle change, that she continues to work extremely hard and perform every new exercise I challenge her with. Other than her almost two weeks away in Italy, Virginia has continued religiously in her strength training with me. She even brought some resistance bands along on vacation with a series of exercises to perform with them," Sharon says, clearly impressed with the mental strides Virginia—a non-exerciser three months ago—has made.

No longer just trainer and trainee, the two women have obviously formed a long-lasting bond. "Virginia is an incredible woman with an infectious personality!" Sharon beams. "She has put so much pressure on herself to succeed these past three months, and now she can hold her head high." Sharon continues, again echoing the sentiments of all the coaches, "I am so proud of Virginia! Virginia is a truly beautiful woman who continues to show incredible progress and determination in her quest to be the healthiest that she can be! She has a wonderful sense of humor...and I'll miss working with her." ■

**CONTACT THE COACHES:**

**Suzanne Newman:** 847.721.0607 or [suz1960@sbcglobal.net](mailto:suz1960@sbcglobal.net)

**Dr. Lauren Weiss:** 312.756.1778 or [dr Laurenweiss@yahoo.com](mailto:dr Laurenweiss@yahoo.com)

**Sharon Mehalek:** 312.627.0100 or [airobic@aol.com](mailto:airobic@aol.com)

## con•nec•tion (n)

1. What you are holding out for
2. What our male clients are holding out for
3. What we'll find for you

We have your Chicago prince charming!



### SELECTIVE SEARCH

[www.meetyourfuture.com](http://www.meetyourfuture.com)

Let us personally cherry-pick a man who will meet your highest expectations. We are the personal matchmakers to Chicago's most distinguished and commitment-minded bachelors – and they are wondering where you are! So if you are a single woman of substance and style make yourself known to us, we've got just the guy to connect you with.

Women Join Free – Fully confidential – 100% offline

## LAKEVIEW DERMATOLOGY AND LASER

- THERMAGE  
F.D.A. Approved "Non-Surgical Facelift"
- AESTHERA Photoneumatic Treatment  
acclaimed as "The fastest and least painful system of hair removal"
- AURORA I.P.L.  
for treatment of Rosacea
- SMOOTH BEAM LASER  
for treatment of severe acne
- PHOTODYNAMIC TREATMENT  
for treatment of resistant acne
- DIOLITE LASER  
for treatment of spider veins
- SCLEROTHERAPY  
for treatment of leg veins
- GENERAL DERMATOLOGY  
(Most insurance plans accepted)
- BOTOX • RESTYLANE • SCULPTRA • CAPTIQUE • COLLAGEN



\*Ask about Autumn Specials

3000 North Halsted Illinois Masonic Hospital  
Suite 801, Chicago  
**(773) 281-9200**

parking available

See our results on our website at [www.lakeviewderm.com](http://www.lakeviewderm.com)



**EUGENE MANDREA, M.D.**  
Board Certified Dermatologist