

## **“ENOUGH!”**

### ***How I Gained Control of My Mind, My Weight, My Life***

**DISCLAIMER! I am NOT A DOCTOR. I am simply telling my story and how things worked out for me. The way I did things may NOT be the way you should do it. There are many ways to conquer your vices, and we are all uniquely different - in so many ways.**

**After posting my journey to the public, I heard from a lot of people who were inspired to make some drastic changes in their own lives. Through email, text, Facebook postings and even personal conversations, I have also learned that stopping “cold turkey” can be dangerous.**

**I know a friend, personally, who quietly tried to stop drinking – cold turkey - like I did, and things got serious fast! After a day or so, the left side of his body went numb. They called the emergency room and were advised to drink a six pack of beer immediately, because they were about to have a heart attack from alcohol withdrawal complications.**

**I have also heard from many who know people who have died from alcohol withdrawals when they stopped drinking abruptly. Apparently, this is far more common than I ever would have imagined. If you even suspect you’re an extremely heavy drinker, I strongly suggest you work under a doctor’s care... and ratchet down your drinking habits *slowly*.**

**Please consider this as you read my story.**

#### **FORWARD**

My name is Mitch Stephen. I am no one special. I may have some special talents in certain fields of endeavor, but I will not be talking to you about those things today. Today, I’m a regular person who faced some pretty common challenges. In the pages that follow I would like to share my personal adversities involving alcohol, cigarettes, obesity, and my general lack of self-discipline. In these categories I have failed far more than I have succeeded, and it will be a long, long time before I can say I have mastered these challenges; however, I have begun the process of permanent change.

I’m writing this account of my journey **for one reason and one reason only**: I have noticed many people suffering. People are suffering consciously and unconsciously. I have been touched by those who have personally reached out to me on social media and in person, who claim to have been inspired by my personal transition as I exposed bits and pieces in my Facebook postings. It isn’t hard to imagine that many people struggle with the same issues. I figured, if people were interested, and I could help by sharing my story, then, I would share it. Many have asked for more details; intricate details, personal details. When asked, I take the time to share one-on-one. Every time I do, my story seems to help them. Their reply posts, text messages and

# “ENOUGH!”

emails confirm this, and I’m glad. So, if my story helps others decide to confront their weaknesses, I think I should put aside my pride and my privacy and tell my story.

As it turns out, **being transparent was harder than I thought**. It was, and still is, difficult for me to tell you everything because if I am going to tell YOU the truth, I have to get honest with myself first. By the end of this writing, I have come to a conclusion: I was a complete mess; way out of balance, for a long time; and I couldn’t see it. I thought I was just a normal “good ol’ boy.” Really, I was in deep water with very dangerous undercurrents. I was a high-functioning, big mess. Maybe that “high-functioning” part is what blinded me.

I am putting my story in writing so that it is readily available to anyone who wants to read it. I want the message to be consistent and accurate - *every time* – with the details I consider important, or that I might otherwise forget or pass over. I’m putting my story in writing, so it is available, 24/7/365, for those who want or need it; digitally deliverable even when I am asleep at [1000Houses.com/enough](http://1000Houses.com/enough). I am also voluntarily putting my story out there for those who never would have asked, for fear it may be too personal. For the record, it is personal.

Before I begin, I want to be perfectly clear about a few things.

I am completely aware of what I AM NOT and WHAT I’M NOT TRYING TO DO:

- #1. I am not a licensed doctor or psychiatrist and I have not spent my life studying or practicing anything I am about to talk to you about. I just started listening to others and started trying things that made sense to me.
- #2. I am not shooting to be on the cover of “Muscle Magazine.” The pictures of me looking progressively better are meant to encourage others. Please believe me when I tell you, “I’m under no illusions.”
- #3. I am not trying to tell you what YOU should do or HOW you should do it. I’m expressing what worked for me and how I came to my decisions. Take from it what you will.

What I AM is a guy staring “The Big 6 - 0” right in the face and thinking to himself, “I have about ten to fifteen really, really good years left... if - if - if - if... I change a few major things about how I’m living. If I don’t change these things, I’m pretty much headed downhill already, and well on my way to the bottom... and the end.”

At the moment of this writing, I have been alcohol-and-cigarette-free for well over 1 year and 9 months and I weigh 52lbs less than the day I started this journey. As I said early on, I have a long way to go before I can say I have actually *mastered* anything; however, things seem to be working in my favor, and I have a great, new, and exciting momentum... I am winning.

I don’t ever intend to return to where I came from. I intend to build an entirely new way of consuming liquid, a new way of eating, a new kind of routine, and a new lifestyle. I have done this with God, for I never could have done it without Him. It has made me closer to God. With my newly-resurrected discipline, I grow more and more confident that I can rid myself of the things God wishes me to rid myself of; those things He warned me about, but I did not listen. Perhaps the greatest

# “ENOUGH!”

achievement coming out of all of this is that I am starting to feel like I may even be able to be a Godlier man; and just like that, I am petrified all over again.

**Here is my story...**

## **A BRIEF HISTORY**

I began drinking in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I'll spare you the math: I've been a drinker for about 47 years. I was born and raised (for the most part) in Texas. I was raised in an era where fathers regularly let their little ones sip from their beer. In high school the teachers, coaches, parents, players and students all openly drank together at the weekend gatherings. I'm not endorsing it; I'm just saying, that's pretty much how it was. Back then parental theory was, "Those kids are going to find alcohol and drink with or without us. We may as well have them drink here, where we know they are safe." I have no doubt we kids would have drunk with or without them, because we *drank without them* every chance we got!

In my mid-twenties I started smoking a cigarette or two when I drank. I was a bartender, and I had a drink more evenings than not. My relationship with smoking stayed at the minor league level for a long time. I didn't have to *have* a cigarette when I drank, and a lot of times I didn't. Sometimes I'd go weeks without smoking. I could always put the cigarettes down, and for years people would ask, "How do you do that?" I never thought of it as something I would get addicted to.

In short, everything I deemed fun, from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade on until I was 57 years old, involved alcohol and an occasional round of cigarettes.

## **REALITY CHECK**

In my mid 50s I started tuning in to the idea of my own mortality. A lot of people I went to high school with are no longer with us, and they were dropping off at an *increased rate* that was beyond noticeable. I started noticing my aging parents. Every day, someone I loved, I idolized on TV, or from music /radio was kicking the bucket, and a lot of them were my age or younger... or not that much older than me. I began to take stock of myself.

I was in decent health "kinda"; meaning there was nothing broken at the moment, but I was under no illusions either. My problems were mounting, my energy was waning, my stamina was gone, my weight was over the top, my appearance was shot, my years were slipping by, and my life was not being lived to its fullest. My life was lacking something. It didn't take long to come to the conclusion that my chances, and the possibilities to correct these issues, were passing fast.

## **PROGRESSION**

I was sitting in Community Bible Church (CBC) when Pastor Robert Emmitt said something that resonated with me. He said, "Most vices start out fun and progress into burdens and then, often, into demons." It made sense. Bad habits tend to evolve slowly. Vices become habits, and we get good at the habits we persist in. I had gotten good at drinking and smoking. Really good! How did that happen?

Looking back, I would put the pieces of how it happened together, and here's what I figured out: as I gained more and more freedom, I indulged more and more. The alcohol was there from the very beginning, almost an everyday thing. At some point, the cigarettes dug into me. Cigarettes got bad

## “ENOUGH!”

between age 50 and 57. Two Crown Royal & soda waters and I'd kill for a pack of cigarettes. I didn't care how much I had to pay or what brand, but one thing was for sure, I was going to get my hands on a pack... and I was *gonna smoke 'em all* by the end of the night! This was the routine for about the last five, six, seven years before I quit. I never worried about my alcohol habit. What got me worried about my health was the cigarettes. Crazy, right?

Forty plus years of drinking never concerned me. First month of smoking a pack a night and was like, “This ain't cool.”

One thing that didn't happen... I never wanted a cigarette by itself. The only time I ever wanted to smoke, was when I was drinking. I don't know why, but the thought of having a cigarette by itself never appealed to me. If you saw me with a cigarette, I was drinking. The obvious problem? I drank often! I was drinking just about every day. Some days more than others, but I had a drink every day. I never woke up and said to myself, “I need a drink.” I never woke up in the morning and said to myself, “I need a cigarette.” I never wanted a drink until happy hour, and that went on for decades... until I started having a drink at lunch.

### HIGH-FUNCTIONING DRINKERS

I have always been a high-functioning drinker. There were lots of unspoken *drinking rules*: Late nights having fun and carrying on were no excuse for not getting up. My dad used to say, “If you're going to dance, you have to pay the fiddler.” I heard him every morning, in my head, after every long night. The day started at 6am, no matter how much you had to drink or what time you got to sleep. Another rule: if you make a promise or commitment while drinking, you honor it in the morning; no matter how much you regretted it. I hate it when people make excuses saying, “Well, I was drunk when I promised you that.” I was never that guy! I refused to be that guy! I learned early on not to let my sober mouth make excuses for my unsober promises. If things got promised, those promises got honored – period! I stayed with those rules all the way through, even as the progression of my vices moved forward. It got easier when I learned not to commit to things when I was drinking.

My decision to quit drinking had nothing to do with the typical *train wrecks*. No fights. No DWIs. No car crashes. No arrests. No public intoxication charges. No getting fired from jobs. No blackouts. No passing out. No falling down. No pissing in my pants. No drugs. No divorce. None of that happened to me. It could have, but by the grace of God, it didn't.

### MULTIPLE PROGRESSIONS

The problem was *progression*. Things just progressed, slowly; so slowly I didn't recognize anything alarming. And I'm not just talking about the progression of the vices. In my case, a lot of good things progressed as well, and just as slowly. It was that combination of both the *good* and the *bad* progressions that got me.

My financial success progressed slowly, creeping up, little by little, year after year. Along with that financial success, my personal freedoms progressed - slowly. Little by little, I could afford more and more luxuries. At some point, I could sleep in any time I wanted. I could take off work anytime I wanted. I could eat anytime. I could afford to eat anything I wanted. I could afford to drink anything I wanted: the finest whiskey, the vintage wines. I could start drinking any time during the day or night.

# “ENOUGH!”

I could pay to avoid sweating or physical labor... and so I did! When the pressure was on and the chips were down, I had great discipline.

When I was building my success and wealth from the bottom up, I was very disciplined. I had limits for myself. I had curfews for myself. I had a budget I had to live within. Once I achieved financial freedom all that slipped away – quietly. I didn’t recognize the need for a new kind of discipline. I got lazy on a lot of different levels. It was a silent kind of shift and I never heard the gears change; when discipline was NOT required to succeed in business, I lost all my self-discipline. That is exactly what happened.

## **When self-discipline was NOT required to succeed in business, I lost all my self-discipline.**

### **A DIFFERENT KIND OF DISCIPLINE**

As I stated, I was very disciplined about a lot of things; especially business things. I had, and still have, a great work ethic. I have always considered myself very fortunate that my success had come slowly – very slowly - painfully so. There is no great monetary windfall in my story. There is no avalanche of cash in my story. I became a little better, a little more knowledgeable, a little more connected, and a little less leveraged over a long period of time. With every passing year I became a little more successful, and more and more financially independent.

My personal liberties mirrored the growth of my financial freedom. I looked up one day and had no one to answer to, and it never dawned on me I needed a different kind of discipline to ride shotgun over things that had never really hurt me before. When did alcohol become dangerous? When did an occasional cigarette turn into a frickin’ pack a night? When did food become dangerous? I never had to guard against those things; or so I thought. Wrong!

### **HEALTH**

Between the drinking, the smoking, and the bad dietary habits, my acid reflux went out of control. I had to get up every morning between 2:30 and 3am to puke up a bucket of bile. Yellow, acid, horrible, burning bile. The yellowish fluid would eat the enamel off my teeth. Heaven forbid I was too asleep and upchucked in my mouth before I got out of bed. I’d almost suffocate... unable to take a breath from the fumes of that acid bile in my mouth and throat. It would truly put me in a panic, “Am I going to be able to take a breath?” My diet was bad enough. The alcohol was not helping at all. The increased nicotine all but guaranteed the acid reflux.

Everyone I talked to about my acid reflux would warn me, “That acid reflux will kill you Mitch!” Esophageal cancer is no joke, and everyone knew someone who had died of it or was dying of it as we spoke. It’s a horrible way to pass! I had no doubt I was headed in that direction – No doubt!

I blamed cigarettes because before I started smoking a pack a night my acid reflux wasn’t bad at all, but I don’t really know. It’s just a common-sense guess on my part. Whatever the case, I needed to create a new version of myself before it was too late. In my mind it was a life-or-death decision.

# “ENOUGH!”

## **Mitch 2.0**

### **I DECIDED TO QUIT SMOKING**

So, I decided I had to quit smoking. LOL! That was a joke! As I said before, “*Two drinks in and I’d kill for a pack of cigarettes!*” I couldn’t stop. I’d start out every day with the best intentions and then after my second bourbon and soda water... ¡vámonos! All my will power would fly out the window and I’d light up. Day after day I failed, except for those occasional days when I didn’t drink. If I didn’t drink, I didn’t smoke. I recognized that and I latched onto it. Night after night I’d be hovering over the toilet bowl throwing up; except for those nights I didn’t drink and smoke. I latched onto that as well.

I gave myself 30 days to stop smoking or things would have to escalate. I couldn’t stop smoking.

## **MITCH 2.1**

### **I DECIDE TO QUIT DRINKING**

One night before I wrecked my reflection in the toilet water, I had a heart-to-heart conversation with myself.

*“Mitch... There is no other choice. You know what you have to do. No matter what you do, you have to stop smoking. If you can’t stop smoking because drinking kills your willpower, then you have to stop drinking as well.”*

I had to stop smoking or things were going to get ugly. I knew in my heart I was too smart to be this stupid, yet I had held these vices for so long. I pushed the decision around the block a few days, but one day, sitting in a bar somewhere between Rocksprings and Canyon Lake, Texas, I made up my mind. Yep, you heard me right. I went into a bar to decide to stop drinking. True story. You can’t make this shit up!

There I sat, in the “Sisterdale Bar” on a Monday afternoon, staring at myself in the mirror behind the liquor shelf. There was literally no one there; even the bartender had to make a run, and I was completely by myself. I remember it being lonely. It was as if I was breaking up with a lover or about to say goodbye to an old friend - forever. That bar represented every bar I’d ever been to in my life.

**And there, on that bar stool, I decided to quit drinking!**

I have other habits that aren’t so damaging. One of those habits has been with me for a long, long time. I like to write songs. And while not every song is about something that touches me deeply, everything that touches me deeply eventually becomes a song. When I walked out of that bar, I parted ways with a guy I had known for 44 years. I had a lot of fun times with that guy. I was definitely going to miss that guy who drank. I penned “*SITTIN’ IN SISTERDALE*” while driving the rest of the way home.

***“Things are gonna change this time I swear  
Made my mind up sittin’ there***

# “ENOUGH!”

## *Sittin’ in Sisterdale”*

Writing is a tried-and-true form of meditation and healing. I am the author of three books, but make no mistake; I never intended to write the first book, *MY LIFE & 1,000 HOUSES: Failing Forward to Financial Freedom*. Something tragic happened and I mourned through my journaling.

How did I get here? What have I done? Why am I here? What do I do now? Where do I go from here? I was cataloging my life. I wrote over 1,200 pages and some people that knew what they were doing, got a hold of it and convinced me to make it into a book.

While writing a book was a relatively newer thing to me, I have been mending my broken fences by writing songs for over 45 years. You may or may not like my brand of music or songwriting and that’s fine. The point is, this has been a healing therapy for me for a longtime. Journaling or writing songs works for me. Writing heals me.

You can listen to the song by clicking the link below. It says what I wanted to say. This song marks the day I decided to quit drinking so I could quit smoking.

# "ENOUGH!"

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## "SITTIN' IN SISTERDALE"

Writer: Mitch Stephen

[http://www.reverbnation.com/open\\_graph/song/31425684](http://www.reverbnation.com/open_graph/song/31425684)

### VERSE I:

- Well, it's a one-horse town, it's Monday night
- And it's a wonder why this bar, even, turns on the lights

### VERSE II:

- I'm here by myself, in the mirror 'hind the liquor shelf
- And it's crazy, that a place like this might help a man find who he is
- Sittin' in Sisterdale

### CHORUS:

- I'm Sittin' in Sisterdale, at a bar with a wooden foot rail
- In the middle of "Where the Hell," but I'm right at home
- I'm drinking' a cold longneck, in the middle of a long back stretch
- Just listening to Merle Haggard sing ol' "Ramblin' Man"
- And wondrin' if that's who I am
- Sittin' in Sisterdale

### BRIDGE:

- It was the perfect situation, to have a private conversation with a fool
- And it was quite a revelation, to know the size of the decisions
- One could make here on these stools
- Sittin' in Sisterdale

### VERSE III:

- I'll have one last beer, then I'll be gone
- And we'll see if I arrive, at the conclusions I have drawn

### VERSE IV:

- Saddle up my truck, pull'er down in gear
- Take one last look around, so I'll remember when and where
- Things are going to change this time I swear, made my mind up sittin' there
- Sittin' in Sisterdale

### MODIFIED CHORUS:

- I'm Sittin' in Sisterdale, at a bar with a wooden foot rail
- In the middle of "where the Hell," but I'm right at home
- I'm drinking' a cold longneck, in the middle of a long back stretch
- Just listening to ol' George Strait sing "I Saw God Today"
- And wondrin' if the good Lord hears me pray
- Sittin' in Sisterdale

# “ENOUGH!”

## I WAS NOT ALONE

For years in advance of my decision(s) to change, I was praying to God, “Please dear Lord, take these vices away from me.” I feel strongly that HE is always with me. I asked HIM for hope. I asked HIM to show me a path. I asked HIM for courage. I asked HIM for strength. God was the first person I asked to be on my team when I proclaimed, “*Today is the day I stop!*” I talked to Him – directly! I asked Him to come with me, be with me, “Carry me if You have to Lord, drag me if You will”; all the way to a better place.

## THINGS I FEARED THE MOST

I used to ask myself, “Why am I afraid of quitting alcohol?” I didn’t know why I was afraid, but I knew I was afraid. Turns out, when I got to the bottom of it, I was afraid of a lot of things!

**Who Am I Without Alcohol?** I didn’t know who I would be without alcohol. It had always been *such a* part of my life, since youth. I was known as that *fun guy*. Was that all alcohol? Would I still be fun if I didn’t drink? Would it still be fun to go to the party?

**Can I Actually Quit by Myself?** Statistically, the odds were against me. I was deathly afraid I was going to fail. Fear of failure is very real. If I failed, I’d have to go to an entirely higher level. AA Meetings? Therapists? Re-programming Classes? Hypnotherapy? I wanted to beat this by myself, but everything I had heard said that drinkers at my level can’t stop on their own. **This was perhaps my biggest fear.** It would be very embarrassing for me to have to walk into a room and say, “Thiiiiis Mitch! ...and I’m an alcoholic!”

Furthermore, some of that whole process didn’t make sense to me. Everything I had learned about reinventing myself in the past said you DO NOT label yourself with words you don’t want to become.

Standing in a room in front of people and saying, “*Hi, my name is Mitch Stephen and I’m an alcoholic,*” goes against everything I’ve ever learned about the power of the mind.

Not only did this confuse me, it scared the hell out of me. I had already made up my mind that, if I ever ended up in a detox environment, I would announce myself in a fashion something along the lines of, “*Hi! My name is Mitch Stephen... and I am here to kick alcohol’s ass.*” Then again, maybe I wasn’t a true alcoholic and I’m speaking out of line. So, let’s do this, if AA is working for you, don’t change a thing.

Before I made my decision to quit, I had already developed a “plan B”. I had met a man named David Essel, through my podcasting endeavors ([1000Houses.com/podcasts](http://1000Houses.com/podcasts)).

He had a holistic approach to beating addictions, and he confirmed there were other ways to beat addiction. I had booked an interview with David under the guise of helping others, and I *was* trying to help others, but I was also doing some exploring for myself. At the end of the interview, I started to get emotional and a lump grew in my throat, making it hard to close out the interview. My getting emotional was yet another sign that I was ready to take on the challenge of moving away from

# “ENOUGH!”

alcohol. After meeting David, I knew where I was going if I couldn't beat the odds and kick my habits by myself. Some might say having a **Plan B** goes against the grain of positive thinking, but I needed to know exactly where to go if Plan A failed. After all, the overall objective, ultimately, was to succeed in quitting drinking and smoking... and it really didn't matter which plan worked, as long as *some* plan worked.

You can find my interview with David Essel at [1000Houses.com/essel](http://1000Houses.com/essel)

**Will I Lose Friends Over This?** Almost all of my friends drink and some of them smoke. How is that going to work when I stop drinking? Whom will I lose? I don't want to lose any of them. I want all of them to remain my friends. I began to take note of my friends who didn't drink. I found myself admiring the non-drinkers and noticed they were fun even though they weren't getting buzzed. They were always invited, as far as my friends and I were concerned, so this gave me confidence. The reality is, I needed to do what I needed to do. Again, to me, this was a life-or-death situation. So, if I lost some friends, I'd have to learn to live without them.

**Will I Still Be Invited to The Party?** Again, I didn't want to be left out. This seems trivial but it is one of my reoccurring fears. It shows up enough to conclude it's not trivial at all.

**Will I Lose my Creativity?** I had spent thousands of hours under the influence, solving problems, writing books, writing songs and generally reinventing myself and my businesses over and over again. We've all read about people that use substances to improve or conceive their mental visions. Has that been the case with me? Has alcohol been a positive magnifying influence in my creativity? Did alcohol assist in my ability to see and plan for the future? Turns out, it wasn't true for me. Alcohol did not improve me. Alcohol hurt me in these departments. I find I'm sharper without alcohol. I find I'm still fun without alcohol. I find I am very creative without alcohol. I find I'm still a visionary for my life without alcohol; but I wasn't sure back then.

## THE UPSIDE OF QUITTING SMOKING AND DRINKING

It may be a bit clouded at this point when you're reading of this, but I am very positive person. I instinctively knew, after doing a full accounting of my fears and the negatives, I also had to look at the list of positives that would be a result of not drinking and smoking. The positives were huge, but not all of them were so obvious at first. Let's start with the obvious.

**BETTER HEALTH:** It was a no-brainer. I was certain my acid reflux would stop, and it did; on the first day I quit! From the first day I went alcohol-and-smoke-free, my acid reflux ended... gone! Now I'm sure that internally, the problem wasn't completely solved overnight, but the throwing up ended the day I stopped, and the healing began. It goes without saying, and I needed no research to know, my liver and kidneys and all my other organs were going to be better off without the daily volume of poison. By quitting cigarettes my lungs, heart brain, and circulatory system - everything - would be better off. Again, I didn't have to do a lot of research on this. It goes without saying; and I didn't need a science degree to put a positive checkmark in these boxes.

**BETTER FINANCES:** I was spending a small fortune on these vices. I estimated I was spending at least \$2,000 to \$3,000 a month in bars. And it wasn't just my own consumption. I was notorious

## “ENOUGH!”

for picking up the tab. I was blessed in the financial department, and when I was having fun, I wanted everyone to have fun!

The spending on cigarettes is pretty simple. A pack a day at \$7.50 per pack for 30 days = \$250/month. In the overall picture it's not so much, however, the real price of smoking was ahead of me if I kept it up, and it would put my spending on alcohol to shame in a matter of time. Medical bills and down time would compound exponentially if I let it get that far, not to mention the possibility of death. No, \$250/mo. isn't a big concern, but the toll of fighting cancer can change the math immensely – overnight!

**MORE TIME:** I calculated I was spending 30 to 40 hours per week under the influence. There was always a happy hour meeting with alcohol. We'd show up at 4:30pm for the meeting and start with the drinks. The meeting would be over at 6 or 6:30pm. Then, since I was wound up, I'd hang around until 7 or 8pm and shoot the bull with the locals. Then, I'd have another drink on the hour drive home.

When I'd get home, it was time to get a refill and I'd watch some TV. I'd look up and it was 11:30pm. That's 4:30 to 11:30pm. Seven hours... in one day. That's 35 hours per week, not counting the weekend. Oh, and did I mention, I'd smoke an entire pack of 20 cigarettes in that same day? Yes! That is what I was doing... and calling it fun! Calling it “relaxation.” Looking at it right here, right now, it looks more like a slow form of suicide.

In the business/money department, I was, and still am, solid. It was the number of hours that struck me. When I finally calculated the hours, I started to see what a huge distraction drinking was. My companies were strong. I had built them right: slowly, over 20+ years. My cash flow was tremendous in anybody's book, and the discipline in the business department was stout as ever. I had built those companies for freedom; and freedom I had, but as I said previously, that freedom came with a tremendous increase of personal liberties. I wasn't handling my new liberties with the discipline I had always handled my business side. It was stunting my growth. I concluded I could not grow nor become *more* under the weight of these vices. I refuse to stop growing... and it has little to do with more money. I have higher reasons, a higher purpose, to grow into.

**LIABILITY:** I never got a DWI. I've never even been involved in an accident involving another car. I am a very safe driver, but here's the problem: if I were ever in an accident, and even if the accident were NOT MY FAULT, it was not going to matter if I blew over the “1-point-whatever”. I had pushed my luck for waaaay to long. I was growing weary of having to worry about such things so often. On top of all that, I have my concealed handgun license. That license and alcohol do not mix well! I was growing weary of worrying about that as well.

**BEING PRESENT :** My mom and dad were moving into their 80s. Dad was showing signs of dementia. My wife was twelve years into Parkinson's and I knew things would get progressively worse on all fronts. I was spending a lot of time in bars, socializing. I needed to be present in their lives. Those 30 to 40 hours per week could be put to much better use. Where I was choosing to be, for so many hours per week, is perhaps one of the most embarrassing things to me. As a dedicated drinker, I could not be present for those I loved and those who loved me.

# “ENOUGH!”

## THE NEW DRINK

I had heard you need to replace the alcoholic drink in your hand with some other kind of drink in your hand. That made sense to me. Both cigarettes and drinking have an “oral fixation” component to them. Not only are we attached to the addictive qualities of our vices, but we are also attached to the ritual that comes with them. The hand-to-mouth motion is something we attach to emotionally.

We’ve all seen people make the big mistake of choosing diet cokes or sugary drinks to replace their alcoholic drink. What’s the point of doing that? Have you seen the studies on Coke and Diet Coke and what they can do to your body when you get addicted to those drinks? It’s almost like jumping from the frying pan into the fire! So, I decided I’d replace my bourbon & soda water with unsweet tea. I decided this before my *quit day*. Later I would add sparkling water and freshly squeezed lemon juice to my menu and I now crave that beverage.

## MY LITTLE SECRET

As I mentioned early on, I was deathly afraid I would not be able to quit on my own. Because of this fear, I decided not to tell anyone I was going to attempt to stop drinking. I was very, *very* unsure of myself. I was going to attempt to stop drinking after 4-plus decades of drinking and I didn’t want, nor did I need, the pressure of failing in front of anyone. I had actually planned on failing a few times before I got this right. After all, that’s how I’d always done everything else. I would “fail forward” until I arrived at my destination. I wasn’t afraid to fail in the short run, as long as I didn’t fail in the long run. Furthermore, I didn’t want to talk to anyone about it. This was a personal decision - very personal! The only person I wanted to communicate with about it was God... and He had suited up for this challenge long before I ever really did anything about it. I had my plan B. If I failed more than 2 times in a row... I would move immediately to Plan B and call David Essel.

## D-DAY

I quit on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019. I quit drinking and I quit smoking – both at the same time – on the same day. Cold turkey! No weaning off, no patch, no countdown, no doctor, no psychologist, no AA meeting or sponsor, no support person and no support group.

Truth is, I’d had enough! I’d had enough of acid reflux vomiting. I’d had enough of the anxiety over the fact that I was killing myself. I’d had enough of the self-doubt. I’d had enough alcohol in my life for 10 lifetimes. It was time, and I knew it!

In Plan A, I was not going to hide from alcohol. I was not going to avoid bars or people who drank. I was going to go where I’d always gone, and do what I always did... I just wasn’t going to drink. If I wanted to be invited to the party, I had to be ok around alcohol. Plan B might have to be different, but this was Plan A: Stare the demons right in their faces and let the bitches know who’s in charge!

**The night before August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019** I brought a handle of Jim Beam and an open pack of cigarettes into my master bedroom. I set them both on the nightstand next to my bed. From then on, I’d start every morning the same way. I’d wake up, sit at the edge of my bed, turn to the bottle of Jim Beam and the pack of cigarettes, and then, with both hands, I’d flip-off the bottle and the pack! My left-hand middle finger flipping off the bottle on the left, and the right-hand middle finger flipping off the pack of cigarettes on the right. And I said the same thing to them every morning....

# “ENOUGH!”

“Fuck You Mother Fuckers!”

“FUUUUCK YOOOOOU!”

Sorry about the cuss words, but I promised you transparency, and for better or for worse, that is how I handled that bottle and that pack of cigs for about the next 20 days or so. **Every single morning, I let them know who was in charge of this mind and this body.** “I’m in charge, Bitches!” Every morning I tongue lashed the bottle and the box.

## THE TEARS

By the second week I was doing pretty good. I had gotten in the routine of having my unsweet tea in my hand. The first few days were the hardest because almost everything about my normal days and evenings changed. **Something else was happening as well.** I was crying at least once a day. It would come right out of the blue, without warning, and I’d have to run to the bathroom or duck out behind my car in the parking lot or something. It was freaking me out! I called David Essel for some explanation. David told me that I had been operating for over 40 years with this cushion between me and the real world. That cushion was alcohol. Now that I wasn’t drinking, **I was dealing with the world head-on, and without that cushion.** My body was adapting to this harder-hitting world and that’s why I was so emotional. He told me, “Whatever you do Mitch, do not to suppress your urges to cry.” His advice was, “Get it out! – Let it out!” I think of it as a *purging* and a *re-calibration* happening at the same time. David said it would likely pass within a week or so, and it did.

## WHAT TO DO WITH MYSELF?

The biggest problem was time. I had a huge amount of extra time on my hands. I was bored to death and completely lost. This is when I did the math to figure out that I was spending 30 to 40 hours a week in the bar socializing. I had so much time I literally didn’t know what to do with myself. I started thinking of how I was going to fill this time and burn this energy. I started thinking about going to a gym to work out. This scared the living hell out of me too. I hadn’t worked out in 35 years or more, and I knew, without a doubt, how out of shape I was... or so I thought. Turns out, I was in no shape at all.

## I SIGN UP AT THE GYM

I had so much time on my hands it was crazy. Thirty to forty hours per week is an incredible amount of time! I didn’t plan for that problem. I would almost revert back to my old habits because I had no Idea what else to do. If you are taking notes, be sure to write this down; figure out what you’re going to do in all that time you used to spend drinking. It’s important to figure this out ahead of time. It almost caused me to cave in!

Luckily, I decided to sign up at a local gym. After an initial consult with my friend, the owner, it was decided I would pay \$45 per session and I would come in two days per week for an hour. I told her to run my credit card whether I showed up or not. I needed to have a real commitment to show up, so I’d actually do it. Having a person waiting on me and being charged for the sessions, regardless of my attendance or not, forced me to etch the dates into my calendar. They became firm commitments.

**Another benefit to having a coach** is that, if you have a decent coach, you will always work out harder and do more with a coach than you would without. No doubt about it. When no one is holding you accountable, it’s just too easy to sneak out the back door while no one is looking. The gym I

# “ENOUGH!”

chose had a lot of elderly people there. It could look more like a physical therapy/rehabilitation gym rather than Gold’s Gym with iron plates lying around everywhere. I was so pitiful and out of shape that being in a real gym with a bunch of testosterone-laden heathens would have been embarrassing – seriously!

I remember thinking, when I walked out of my first session, “Ok, that took an hour. Only 7 hours left today to figure out what to do with.” The shameful truth is, I really had to rest for a few hours as well. So, it really took up more like 4 hours. My physical fitness was horrible. Have I said that already?

**I quit smoking and drinking for exactly 30 days and then I signed up for the gym and started working out.**

## THE NEW DIET

After 60 days of working out, I still hadn’t lost any weight. I knew what I was doing. I was substituting eating with my friends rather than drinking with them. Even if I went to the bar and drank sparkling water and lemon juice, I would order something to eat in place of the alcohol. I commented about it and my trainer, Lana, said I’d have to change my diet. **I told her I would never go on a diet.** She said I shouldn’t think of it as *diet* in the traditional sense: portion controls, calorie counting, etc., etc. She said I’d just have to change what I was eating. I’m thinking, “Great! Rice cakes and water!”

“So, what does that look like?” I asked. She said, “Just go low carb.” Again, I asked, “So what does that look like?” She advised I get on the internet and research Keto recipes. Little did I know, another world was about to open up to me. This new world of *healthy eating* would consume a lot of the extra hours I had picked up when I stopped drinking, and I really needed something to do with those hours. Eager for something to do, I dove in. That was the beginning of my weight loss journey.

## SUMMATION OF THIS AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT

All I started out to do was to quit smoking. Everything else happened because I challenged myself to accomplish that one goal, no matter what I had to do. It really helps when you believe your life is on the line. I’ve tried to convey what I was thinking, how I was reasoning, how I was planning and what my back-up plans were. I’ve tried to clue you in as to what was driving me, my mindset, my fears, and my doubts. I think I’ve covered everything I know to tell you in those departments.

**Next, I’ll give you the timeline.** It’s fairly accurate. If I’ve had to guess at anything, I’ve planted that guess in the spirit of how long it probably really took. I wish I had kept a better record about my journey, but I didn’t. Please know this, if I say I started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month, I actually started on the 1<sup>st</sup>. I was willing to take my time and not overwhelm myself.

**I chose to use 30 Day increments**, based on the idea that it takes 30 days to break a habit. I had heard that somewhere and it stuck with me. I was biting off some very big challenges. It had taken 40+ years of drinking and plenty of years of smoking to get to where I was. **I was willing to take a few years** to get to where I wanted to be. I learned, personally, that I could break habits in about 15 days, but I was willing to go at least 30 days before beginning to reconsider what I was doing if it wasn’t working. I never had to do that. However, I believe if you’re not gaining momentum in 30 days, you may need to adjust something you’re doing.

# “ENOUGH!”

## A REINVENTION



**Picture above was taken around 1981. Around February of 2019, I posted the picture on FaceBook.com as a TBT post (Throw Back Thursday).**

Someone snapped a picture of me on the beach In Mazatlán, Mexico. There I am in my short shorts, a head full of hair, and sporting a beard. I posted the picture of me as a young man (early 20s) on the beach. Lana Beard Cortez, an ol’ high school friend and now gym owner saw the post. She commented in her reply on FaceBook, “I can re-introduce you to that guy, if you ever want to meet him again.”

**The idea began to haunt me.** Could I find that guy again? In my late 50s, could I actually make a comeback? What would that look like? What would that take? I didn’t consider it long and then I moved on. It was only later, when I needed to fill up 40 hours a week, that I took on the challenge of going back to the gym.

“ENOUGH!”



# “ENOUGH!”

## MITCH 2.0

June 2019

Shortly after I connected with Lana on FaceBook, I started to think seriously about my health. I was overwhelmed with how far in I was. I was afraid I would fail but concluded I had to stop smoking. I had been praying on and off for years, “God, take these vices away from me.” That prayer became a daily prayer.

I started working with a homeopathic MD. A doctor who believes the body can heal itself; very different from traditional doctors and their ways. I got a full block of blood work, which revealed I was deficient in a lot of departments. **The biggest problem was my “T” level.** The American Medical Association says a male my age is good with testosterone levels between the range of 200 and 1,200. I tested out at 230. This explained my lethargic state and my general loss of zest for life. We got to work to raise my testosterone level, shooting for somewhere around 800 to see how I felt from there.

While we’re at the beginning of this timeline, **let’s get one thing out in the open.** This transformation hasn’t been free or even cheap. In retrospect, it takes some money to do the things I committed to doing along the way. The first bill started with the doctor visits and the blood work. You have to establish a baseline. What is your starting point? What are your problem areas? Where are you deficient? And then there are the supplements and the testosterone (or hormones) to begin the correction process. Supplements are not cheap and if they are, they probably are not any good. Bottom line is, I decided I was worth the money and I never looked back at the cost.

## MITCH 2.1

July 1st, 2019

I decided I had to quit smoking. **I tried to quit but failed** because my willpower evaporated when I drank. For me, smoking went hand in hand with drinking.

No matter how good my intentions, two bourbon & sodas in and I’d kill for a pack of cigarettes; any brand, any flavor, and I was going to smoke them all -- **ALL OF THEM** -- by the end of the night! It became very obvious: To quit smoking, I had to stop drinking.

## MITCH 2.2

August 1st, 2019

I decide to stop drinking and smoking - **COLD TURKEY** – at the same time. No doctor, no therapist, no patch, no gradual weaning off. A **DEAD STOP**.

If I was overwhelmed just contemplating the challenge of quitting cigarettes, I was really petrified now.

My severe **ACID REFLUX disappears** the first day I stopped drinking and smoking.

Talk about an emotional roller coaster; **by day 15 without alcohol or cigs, I can cry at the drop of a hat.** My friend and expert in addiction, David Essel (check him out online) tells me it’s completely normal. I have functioned for over 4 decades with a buffer between me and the real world: Alcohol.

# “ENOUGH!”

My body is learning to deal with life head-on; without that buffer - that cushion of numbness - alcohol. David suggests I keep my triple-A mind busy with something healthy to do.

## MITCH 2.3

September 1st, 2019

I decide to work out 2 days a week. I'm not sure you could even call it a workout in the beginning. It was more like a 4th grade PE class; not much. In fact, I think I could do more as a 4th grader!

**It was pretty pathetic; however, I wasn't there for Marine boot camp**, or to be a Triathlete. I took it very slow. In the beginning, I barely got out of my comfort zone. I was simply trying to get in the routine of showing up. I figured showing up was half the battle. I blocked out my workout times on my calendar -- for the year! I had few expectations after I showed up, but I did expect myself to show up. My goal was just to show up and do what I was told to do by my trainer, and muddle through one hour of exercise, two days per week, for one year.

I hired a coach at \$45/session (\$360/mo.). I committed financially. I told my trainer, Lana, to charge me even if I didn't show up. This was key. I was going to be held accountable for showing up, and penalized if I didn't show up.

I took my **FAT PICTURE** the day I started. It is embarrassing for sure. I really struggled with posting this picture of myself. I suppose no one wants to be seen at their worst, however, I know how the transparency has helped others, so I will openly own it.

I am NOT exaggerating my pose. I was so bloated, this is actually how I stood.

**“ENOUGH!”**



**MITCH 2.4**

**November 1st, 2019**

**I am 5'8" and weigh in at 217lbs.**

“ENOUGH!”



### **I start my KETO-ish diet.**

I never intended to diet but my triple-A “go-go-go” brain needs more to occupy itself. Two days a week working out is not enough to occupy my mind and all the time I have. So, **90 days into no drinking and no smoking, and 60 days into working out**, I decide to change my eating habits. This fills my time with an entirely new world of information and experimentation I had never delved into. There is a lot to learn and take in. The idea of dieting is completely driven by my trainer, Lana Beard Cortez. We outline the parameters of a new eating menu and begin to see if I can live with it.

### **It’s a low carb diet consisting of:**

Beef – Chicken – Turkey – Pork – Venison – Fish - Seafood

Eggs – Cheese – Nuts – Berries - All the veggies I can get my hands on.

### **These 3 things are strictly off limits...**

Corn - Peas – Potatoes – most Fruits (sugar related)

Check out this website [LifeMadeKeto.com](http://LifeMadeKeto.com)

# “ENOUGH!”

## **I EAT WHEN I WANT – I EAT AS MUCH AS I WANT...**

I just changed what I was eating.

After one month, I decide to **EAT ONLY WHEN I’M HUNGRY!** (This was huge).

I find I’m going 12 – 14 – 16 hours between meals, especially when I’m busy; an unintentional form of intermittent fasting.

I also common-sensed my way through a fear that I’m sure was one of the best ideas I could have come up with. I was afraid I would get hungry and not be able to find my target foods before I broke down and gave into the foods I was trying to avoid. I figured that we all eat about the same 8 things all the time. Most of us have this habit.

I gave myself a month to **find 20 keto-ish dishes** I absolutely loved! Once I had that 20-dish menu, it was pretty hard to fall off the keto wagon.

Look at these recipes. What’s not to like about these meals? Be sure go through all four pages.

Imagine the calories and the carbs you’d miss in a year if you chose to eat from these menus.

<https://lifemadeketo.com/category/dinners/page/4/>

I also took a month to document all the dishes I could enjoy at restaurants while in town. Amazingly enough, almost every restaurant has something I can enjoy and feel good about. Over time, I went into one restaurant after another, writing down what they had to offer that fit my new eating choices.

There were a ton of things I’d never tried, and I loved a whole bunch of them! I replaced the 8 things I routinely ate in the past, with at least 20 things I’d love to eat routinely in the future. **I DO NOT feel deprived. I DO NOT go hungry.** I am very satisfied. I started losing weight and getting physically stronger in the gym. I begin to notice my stamina is increasing.

# "ENOUGH!"

## RESTAURANTS I CAN EAT AT IN TOWN

### ——- BREAKFAST ——-

#### **JIM'S COFFEESHOP -**

Hard Boiled eggs - Bacon - Meat & Veggie Omelet

Chopped Steak (Hamburger Patty with a slice of cheese on top) + mixed vegetables + small dinner salad

#### **DENNY'S -**

Hard Boiled eggs - Bacon - Meat & Veggie Omelet

Meat and Egg Skillet (Request no potatoes)

#### **LAS PALAPAS -**

Fajita - Eggs - Cheese w/ bacon strips

Shrimp Fajitas -

### ——- LUNCH / DINNER ——-

#### **\*THE GREENS -**

Spicy Korean Beef Salad; Substitute Quinoa with extra Spinach, Kale and Lettuce.

#### **CHEDDAR's –**

Meatloaf & Salad

#### **WILLIE's -**

Ribs & Coleslaw

# “ENOUGH!”

## **SMOKEY MO’s BBQ -**

Brisket

Turkey

Smoked Sausage

Ribs

Coleslaw

## **CHOKER CANYON BBQ -**

Brisket

Turkey

Smoked Sausage

Ribs

Coleslaw

## **WASABI’s –**

Salmon Salad

Octopus Salad

Sashimi Plate

Miso Soup

## **SMASHING CRAB –**

Shrimp

Crab

Lobster

## **BJ’s -**

All kinds of Salads

Salmon (Substitute Steamed Spinach for Rice)

Trout (Substitute Steamed Spinach for Rice)

Ribs

# "ENOUGH!"

## **FISH CITY -**

Crack & Peel Shrimp

Crawfish - Muscles -Crab

Salmon on a bed of steamed Spinach

Trout on a bed of steamed Spinach

Crawfish (Seasonal)

## **LYNN'S SEAFOOD BUFFET -**

Sea Food

Crab Salad

Cucumber Salad

Kimchi

Chicken Sewers

## **SISME CUISINE (Schertz, Tx) -**

#EF4 Stir-Fry w/ meat choice

Beef + Shrimp (extra \$3)

## **GRAY'S -**

Great Salads!

## **PAESANO'S -**

Chicken Primavera w/o Primavera sauce and w/o pasta, with a side of Broccoli!

Seabass

Caesar Salad

# “ENOUGH!”

## **LAS ISLAS MARIA’S -**

Seafood Salad Plate – Awesome!

All kinds of Fish and Seafood to choose from

## **Botana Playa y Mar** (plate) \$15 -

Shrimp/Oysters/Octopus/Crab/Abalone

Cucumber/Purple Onions/Avocado/Tomatoes/Lime juice

## **LITTLE RED BARN -**

Chopped Steak

Steak

## **LONG HORN STEAKHOUSE -**

Chopped Steak

Steak

## **TACO SALAD -**

Taco Salad (Request “No Refried Beans”)

## **WHOLE FOODS -**

Salad Bar

## **iLsong Garden -**

Bulgogi w/ Veggies instead of rice

## **PEI-WEI -**

Lettuce Wraps

## **THAI CAFE -**

Lettuce Wraps

## **GOLDEN WOK -**

Miso Soup

Seafood Soup

Jambo Beef w/ Bok Choy

**The mind is a crazy, wonderful thing.** After eating like this for about 15 days, I start craving only the choices from my new menus. As I type this paragraph, I notice something has happened I never *ever* thought possible; *I have not had a piece of bread or a tortilla since November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.* I loved my hamburgers, enchiladas, rice and beans, and my breakfast tacos, but I am perfectly content to stay with my new choices, given the amazing results I’m reaping.

My energy level is through the roof. Acid reflux is gone! **My bar-bill is \$0.** I have a huge chunk of time back. My waistline is shrinking by the month. I started at a 36” waistline, and will eventually level out at 29”.

# “ENOUGH!”

**I lose 15lbs easily in the first two weeks**, and then it turns into about a 1.5 to 2.2lbs loss per week. Make no mistake, I do get stuck at certain weights from time to time, so there are a few weeks I lose 0lbs and even some weeks I go up 1lb or so. This is frustrating but I persist.

**At one point I screwed up and started drinking** Diet Dr. Pepper and my weight loss stopped. When I stopped drinking diet sodas, I started losing weight again. I learned that while diet sodas have nothing in them, in the way of carbs or calories, they do contain additives foreign to our bodies and **it shuts down our metabolism.**

## WHAT TO DRINK?

Water is an obvious choice, but I gravitate to unsweet tea until I find my all-time favorite; carbonated water with fresh-squeezed lemons and with a dash of pink sea salt. The carbonated waters in cans are very tricky. It seems the manufacturer always slips in some synthetic crap. Besides that, the strength of the carbonation is often weak. **So, I go to Costco, buy a Soda Stream**, and start producing my own super-carbonated water on demand. This was a great addition to my goals because the fresh lemon juice is also a good cleansing agent/detoxifier for the liver and kidneys. I'm hooked!

## DESSERT?

I fall in love with berries. I eat too many of them and my weight loss stops. Berries become the “new candy.” I especially like the blueberries and blackberries. They have a lot of sugar in them, but I understand the natural sugars are supposed to burn fast. They don't seem to slow my weight loss down enough for me to stop, even though I eat the whole jumbo box at a time. I do learn to cut back. Correction, I'm *trying* to learn to cut back.

## “ENOUGH!”



### **FASTING**

My new control and discipline leads me to challenge myself to a fast or two. The longest I go in a straight fast is 72 hours. The longest on a juice diet is 5 days.

### **INTERMITTENT FASTING**

After a while, I begin to go 16-18 hours without eating anything substantial, or at all. Will power has nothing to do with it. **I am simply NOT hungry.** KETO hunger is different than Sugar/Carb hungry. I don't get "hangry" anymore. KETO hungry is a slow droning build; subtle, especially when I'm busy; I look up and it's been a long time between meals. In fact, I usually know when it's time to eat when I find myself running out of energy. A year and a half into this new eating style and the trigger to eat is NOT hunger, it's when I feel myself running out of steam.

# “ENOUGH!”

It all started when I learned to check in with myself before I eat. **If I’m hungry, I eat.** If I’m not hungry, I don’t eat. This is very inconvenient for the people around you. It means you have no eating schedule, and this really jacks with girlfriends, wives, and mommas.

The old me would eat WHEN...

- It’s **TIME TO EAT**  
(Breakfast – Lunch – Dinner)
- **FOOD IS AVAILABLE**
- **OTHERS ARE EATING**

Before I began to recognize the three triggers above, I would eat even if I wasn’t hungry or just because. Now, I only eat *when I’m hungry* - mostly. When there are occasions where people are gathering and I’m expected to be at the table, I put a little on my plate and fake it.

## **MITCH 2.5**

**January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020**

I start getting up earlier: 4:30am on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday.

This was harder than almost anything so far. Doing it now and then is not hard. Maintaining this habit was hard for me. I fail often on this one. I do not beat myself up over it. I’m seeking a lifestyle I can live with forever. Maybe this isn’t part of that lifestyle. Maybe I end up rising at 5am or 6am or 6:30am; I don’t know yet. This is complicated by my wife’s condition: Parkinson’s (14 years) and her needs dictate some unreasonable sleep habits. At the moment, 6am seems to be my number.

## **MITCH 2.6**

I start running 1 day a week; 2.2 miles over hilly terrain.

I started my life change at the weight of 217lbs, but I was stuck at 192lbs. I wanted to lose more. I decided to force my body to move. This was also part of the decision to get up earlier. The run takes 30 minutes, and eventually a little less. Later I would drop running and change to building muscle and getting some much-needed rest (my wife’s Parkinson’s can be a big challenge in the sleep department).

# “ENOUGH!”

## MITCH 2.7

March 8th, 2020

I decide to get Lasik Eye Surgery.



My good friend and doctor, Kris Story-Held, slices and lasers my left eye for distance; 20/15 Vision now. My right eye remains nearsighted for reading. I no longer wear glasses.

## MITCH 2.8

**I decide fasting should be a part of my life** from here on out. I get stuck at 183lbs for a few weeks. My holistic doctor (Dr. Lane Sebring, MD in San Marcos, Tx) explains that my body is refusing to go after the fat that holds all my toxins. I have to force my body to go after these last fat reserves. **I decide to go on a 3 day fast.** If I break, and decide I have to eat something, I will eat only fresh vegetables, and I have to stretch 3 days fasting to 5 days with fresh vegetables ONLY.

“ENOUGH!”

179 lbs.



“ENOUGH!”



# “ENOUGH!”

**MITCH 2.9**

**June 8th, 2020**

I got some hair transplanted from the back of my head to the front of my head; over 2,000 plugs of my own hair. It takes 12 hours. Limmer Transplant Center.



# “ENOUGH!”

## MITCH 3.0 (Pending)

I need to get my eyelids “circumcised” (if you know what I mean). My eyelids are beginning to sag into my vision.

## MITCH 3.1 (Pending)

Yes! I would like to see my abs at least once before I die. **Just once** - for one frickin’ day - at least!



**From 217lbs to 168lbs** makes a world of difference. To get a real grasp on the entire “gravity of the situation” I picked up a 55 pound dumbbell and walked around the block with it. When I finally set it down, it was like, “Holy crap...I’ve been carrying that much weight around for all these years. It’s no wonder I was feeling like a worn-out old man?” The weight change affects everything.

- My waistline went from 36” to 29”
- My neck went from 17.5” to 15”
- My jacket size went from size 46 to 40.

“ENOUGH!”



## “ENOUGH!”



Back when I had that big belly, I would intentionally drop a fifty-dollar bill on the ground before it was worth bending over to tie my own shoes. I don't groan anymore when I bend over. I don't have to throw my legs to get out of bed, and I certainly don't miss puking up a bucket bile at 2:30am every morning. Not to mention, at the risk of TMI, my long-lost friend has started showing up in the morning again – every morning!

This is some great stuff, and it's a great feeling, but there is a downside. Remember my saying that losing weight is not cheap? For every 2 inches you lose, nothing fits anymore. *Every time* you lose 2 inches you have to buy new pants, shirts, underwear, sweat pants, belts etc., etc. I made the mistake

## “ENOUGH!”

of buying a lot of replacement clothes before I reached my ultimate *hold* weight. I should have bought just a few sets of shirts and pants to get me by on my way down the scale.



# “ENOUGH!”

**February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

This month I went from waist size 30” to 29” I also went from 168Lbs to 170Lbs.

**Muscle weighs more than fat.** As I stated in the very beginning, I’m 60 years old now and under no illusions about making any magazine covers, but I have come a long way in 18 months. I post the picture above only to show my progress and vindicate myself after posting the “Fat Pic.” I’m NOT finished yet. I want to see how far I can go. I am in it for the health and the long-term benefits of being healthy.

Today I’m having fun playing in my new obsession. I don’t care to do more powerful, performance-enhancing drugs beyond the testosterone cream necessary to keep my basic inner drives in play. Without having the basics in balance (including your hormones), it would be very difficult for any of these changes to have happened. You have to get in balance. I looked into supplements and natural foods to increase my “T” level, but it’s simply *not* feasible from everything I’ve learned and from talking to my homeopathic MD. If you know different, let me know. I am always willing to listen and learn. That’s how I get to where I want to go. Listening, Learning, Implementing.

**And one last thing:**

**I’m not done yet!** I’m not done living and accomplishing and improving. I don’t know what’s next, but something’s gonna happen in the direction of upward and/or forward.

I hope this has helped you in some way.

--Mitch--

Please feel free to make your comments known.

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MITCH STEPHEN is best known for his career in creative real estate investing. He has purchased a property about every 4 to 5 days, in or about his hometown of San Antonio, Tx, for over 2 decades. He is the author of 3-book series, MY LIFE & 1,000 HOUSES. His books can be found on his website <https://1000Houses.com> or on Amazon.com

- MY LIFE & 1,000 HOUSES:
- Failing Forward to Financial Freedom

## “ENOUGH!”

- MY LIFE & 1,000 HOUSES:
- 200+ Ways to Find Bargain Properties
  
- MY LIFE & 1,000 HOUSES:
- The Art of Owner Financing

His **1000Houses.com** podcast has over 500 archived, recorded interviews where here holds inspirational discussions on real estate investing, entrepreneurialism, and finding financial freedom. [1000Houses.com/podcasts](http://1000Houses.com/podcasts)

His YouTube Channel posts one 6-to-10-minute video every working day. You can find this free source of real estate investing education at [1000Houses.com/YouTube](http://1000Houses.com/YouTube). Please be sure to LIKE – SHARE – and SUBSCRIBE

For almost everything about Mitch Stephen's educational side and plenty of FREE STUFF about real estate investing and financial freedom via real estate, please go to [1000Houses.com](http://1000Houses.com)

To be a guest on his *Home Town Real Estate Heroes* podcast, go to [1000Houses.com/podcast2/apply](http://1000Houses.com/podcast2/apply)

To hear more of Mitch's original music, go to [MitchStephenMusic.com](http://MitchStephenMusic.com) where you'll find over 100 songs written or co-written by yours truly.

Mitch is co-founder of [LiveComm.com](http://LiveComm.com) Lead Generation + Mass Texting = Success!

Mitch is co-founder of [TaxFreeFuture.com](http://TaxFreeFuture.com) where you may go to roll over your retirement accounts into a Self-Directed Retirement account with Checkbook control. Be sure to watch the 37 video shorts that show you all the amazing things you can do with a self-directed retirement fund; IRAs, 401Ks, Health Savings accounts, Educational Savings account, etc.

Mitch's real estate investing companies function primarily from \$26 Million in private money lender funds. These are regular people that are sick and tired of 1% (or less) CD rates from banks and scared to death of Wall Street. Mitch offers the average person an above average rate of return on their idle money and he gives his lenders a 1<sup>st</sup> Lien position on very valuable Texas real estate as collateral. One Lender (You), One Borrower (Me), One Piece of Collateral worth substantially more than the amount you loan. For a free copy of his book **The Art of Private Lending**, please go to [1000Houses.com/ArtofLending](http://1000Houses.com/ArtofLending)

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