

## Marie's Story - Logical Miracles

I have been tossing around the words "Suppers for...". After four months in the program, how would I fill in that blank? I decided that for myself and my children what I wanted to use the Suppers program for was health and mental well being. People in every generation of my family suffer with bipolar disorder, so my concerns are not just for myself but for my children as well.

Last Monday was a very emotional day. I ate all day long without connection to my physical limitations. Truly, I ate for the mental state. Fortunately, since a year of EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization Reprocessing) therapy, I at least don't stuff myself with lots of sugar. Instead I have healthy foods.

I am very close to a few cousins who do cook very healthy, gluten and wheat free, lots of veggies and grass fed and organic meats. Their way of eating is very much in keeping with the Suppers recommendations, but they live at a distance so support is minimal. I need regular contact with people who are working at making diet and lifestyle changes. This is not easy work. Suppers feeds my emotional needs and helps me stay on track. It helps me find energy to cook more healthy meals during the week and make healthier choices when eating out on the weekends. Staying on top of healthy meals for teenagers who do sports and a husband who travels a lot is no small task. Sometimes I cut corners. But the Suppers charge to practice nutritional harm reduction helps me keep pizza and subs to a minimum without making me feel like a failure for not getting it perfect. It's a gentle program.

Our facilitator has told us to expect "logical miracles", to feel and function better as a result of changing our diet. Each one of us sets our own goals. I hear these logical miracles every time we gather and people report on their improved mood, giving up coffee or sugar or whatever it is that is making them crazy. I had a logical miracle too; it happened for my son.

One day some of us were wishing out loud that our children would eat better. One woman said that their own mothers were the last ones to get them to do it though. Then our facilitator offered to do a Suppers for Teens program. Knowing how that would go over, I asked my son to give me this for my Christmas present and he did! The boys met at her home, cooked dinner together, recorded the recipes, and brought home dinner to their families. I nearly fell over when my linebacker brought home a pot of stew in which he had voluntarily included shredded cabbage and peas!

Was this the same kid? But that wasn't even the miracle. The miracle happened a few weeks later when I found my boys going through cookbooks together in search of recipes they'd like to try. They had experienced pride in preparing the family meal. The one son who was eating poorly began to examine his choices. He now helps with cooking. He told me when ordering subs and pizza he adds salads and chooses lean meats instead of fried foods. He is looking leaner and says he feels better. And he's recruited a friend for the next round of Suppers for Teens.

My own struggle with weight and health continues. I don't expect this to be easy. But at least with Suppers, I'm getting education and support and gradually changing our family meals.