

HEART PLAN

**WEIGHT LOSS SUCCESS
Begins in Your Heart**



Losing Weight and Losing Your Panties on the Courthouse Steps.

Strange things happen, sometimes, that can call into question how you view your body. Like Leila losing her panties on the courthouse steps, the effect can be surprising.

When you look in the mirror you don't see yourself. You see who you used to be. Or how you want to be seen.

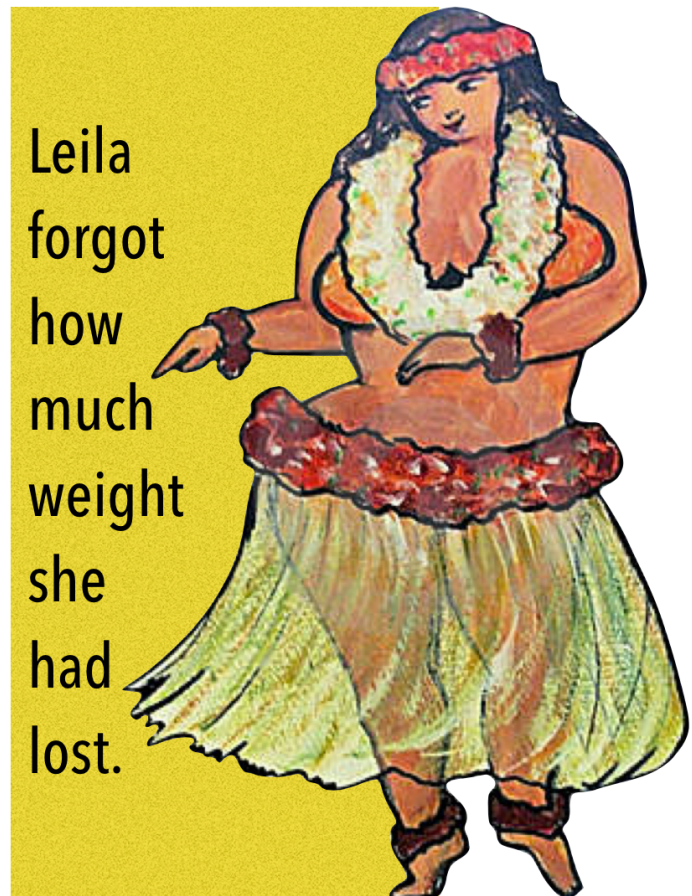
Seldom do you look at yourself and objectively see what others see – what strangers see.

Even your friends and closest intimates don't see the "real" you anymore. They are blinded by the same image-morphing problem that makes them not see you objectively.

Past impressions, personality traits, and affection can get in the way of seeing what is plainly there to be seen.

You Don't See Your Bottom

When you look in the store's long mirror trying on some new jeans, you see the jeans, and how they fit around your bottom. But, seldom are you looking at your bottom. Nor your waist. Right?



Of course you are aware that your bottom and waist are not what you want them to be. What you see is what they are “NOT”. Not small enough. Not tight enough. Not attractive enough.

What you see is frumpy where you don’t want frumpy to be. What you see is too much of this, and too little of that – and all of it arranged in the wrong places.

But are you really seeing the body that others are seeing, unfiltered by your personal body judgments?

Shareen’s Reflection in the Store Window

After Shareen’s complicated pregnancy (“the last 3 months seemed like 9 months all by themselves,” she said), and a difficult post-partum recovery, she was finally making real progress on losing her excess weight. Walking past a row of stores on the way to an appointment, she noticed a woman’s fleeting figure reflected in the window out of the corner of her eye.

“I want to have a shape like that,” Shareen said to herself. When she paused to admire the reflection again, she stopped. She did look like that. The reflection was Shareen’s.

Have you had a similar experience?

Shareen’s body image was still pregnant. She was thinner now, not exactly svelt, but a lot thinner. **Her mind, however, kept telling her she was bigger, although she was trying on new, smaller clothes.** She was feeling proud that she was smaller than she had been in a long time.

Phantom Limbs and Body Image

A friend lost a leg below the knee in the war we both fought in. He said he could “feel” the sweat dripping from the missing limb in hot weather. He could “feel” the cold in Winter. And, at times when he fell asleep on the sofa, he would wake up with the absent leg “feeling” very much asleep.

There were times when he would “feel” intense pain coming from his lost leg, which would only go away after taking a double dose of Tylenol.

If phantom limbs can hurt, isn’t it like when we don’t see your true body image? Do you do things that “hurt” yourself because you don’t see what is really there?

Would it matter if it did?

Part of the problem with eating disorders (anorexia and bulimia) is an overpowering body image that sees cellulite where there is none, that sees the contours of fat-stripped-away muscles and sees excess fat.

I am certainly no expert on the treatment of the tragedies that are eating disorders **(the #1 risk factor for eating disorders is dieting as a young teen)**. But I see the logic of what my friend was taught to do by the Army rehab people. They told him to bare his leg where the amputation occurred. Then rub the area where the removal scars were. They told him to rub it frequently and long.

Over time, the mental image of what was no longer there, the phantom limb, went away (although it still goes to sleep once in a while).

Crossing The Threshold Of 200 Pounds

All of us hide our true shape from ourselves, from time to time. Sometimes it is deliberate. Frequently it is a strong hidden desire to see a different reality. Mostly, it is a deeply ingrained subconscious non-reality.

The difficulty is we act each day as if that non-reality is truth. **We grow accustomed to what is not there, act in ways that ignore what is taking place in our bodies.** Which makes it easier to cross one of those psychological barriers – like going over 200 pounds, or moving up 2 dress sizes.

We say to ourselves, “200 pounds doesn’t look much different than when I weighed 199.” Or, “I like the way this new dress looks on me.” What we don’t do is mentally compare ourselves to when we were ONLY 175 pounds. And certainly not when we were impossibly slimmer at 150.

If your weight is still moving up, or not moving down, or has moved down a lot, **do you see the reality of your present size?** What would you do differently if you did see it?

Rub The Phantom Limb

Once you have a clear idea of your true scale, you need to “rub the phantom limb.” **You need to convince your sub-conscious that your excess weight is really more than just about bathroom scales and dress sizes.** You can take responsible steps to change your body shape...just keep your reality in view.

If you don't do that, you will always be trapped in an illusion, an illusion that can prevent you from taking responsible steps to change what so obviously needs to be changed. (Or, in the case of 1 in 6 who cross the 250 pound line, become morbidly obese and possibly needing surgical help.)

How Leila Lost Her Panties On The Courthouse Steps

Which leads us back to Leila on the courthouse steps in Honolulu.

Leila was over 300 pounds when she first asked for my help. She had gotten serious about finding a way to healthily lose weight. A wonderful Hawaiian lady, with a great heart matched to an infectious smile, Leila was making great headway in losing weight, slowly, steadily...healthily (which is not easy, given wonderful Hawaiian cuisine and Islander genes).

Down almost 40 pounds, in a hurry to not miss her cousin's court date, she decided to take the broad marble courthouse steps rapidly, two at a time, in spite of her bright red and yellow floral-printed mu-mu.

On that crowded sun-lit day, when it seemed half the island had business on the courthouse steps, suddenly something grabbed at her ankles. As she fell forward, bewildered as to the cause, she realized her panties, her "old" panties, had fallen off and ensnared her feet. Surely it was the work of akua (a ghost).

"My first thought," she said, "was whether or not my panties had puka (holes). My second thought was, I'm going to be late."

Overcoming her surprise, Leila quickly unraveled her feet, stuffed her obviously oversized panties (ka pale ma'i) into her purse, and resumed her rush up the stairs, unfazed by dozens of curious and amused onlookers, who had stopped to watch her scurry up the remaining steps.

Leila had lost weight. She knew it. But she hadn't made the complete shift in her mind. **She still dressed as if she were 40 pounds heavier.** Getting dressed that embarrassing morning, she had forgotten how much weight she had lost. (And maybe would have checked for puka, just in case.)

Acknowledge The Size Of Your Body

An important step in the consciousness raising process necessary for you to achieve permanent weight loss is acknowledging the size and dimensions of your body. How far it is from where it ought to be – where it can be – if you worked at it steadily?

That is not an excuse for anorexic or bulimic behaviors. Seeing the reality of your size – whether moving up or down, or stalled for too long – is your personal call to action, to enliven your quest to unleash the wonderful human energy hidden behind your excess weight.

Be aware, however, that as you lose weight you will be constantly adjusting to the new reality of your slimming body. **Watch your body regularly, “rub the phantom limb,” and be aware of the real progress you are making.** It will be your greatest motivator. And your protection from allowing yourself to regain it.

If you don’t adjust your body image regularly, **could you be the next person losing your panties on the courthouse steps?** If that is even a remote possibility, be sure to check for underwear pukas each morning.

– Boyd Jentsch

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