Obesity surgery, regardless of procedure choice, is a gift. I don’t mean that in the traditional sense of the word. You, your insurance carrier or a combination of both paid for the surgery. The gift is the procedure itself.

About Me

A bit about my history: I had a duodenal switch procedure in 1998; with a starting weight of 330 pounds, Type 2 diabetes, sleep apnea and high blood pressure. I was on a c-pap machine for the apnea and on oral medications for the others. As of now, I am 135 pounds, no obesity-related comorbidities and am a happy and healthy 59-year-old. I have undergone several rounds of plastic surgery (some covered by insurance; some not) and am living a great life.

I have seen and or heard of many people go through a surgical procedure, do well for a while, and they either quickly or slowly regain their weight. A small percentage of this can be traced back to a physical cause related to the surgery or a new illness; for the most part, weight regain is lack of support and a strong program that routinely encourages high quality self-care. That is one of the glaring issues with any obesity surgery, it is a tool; it is not a cure. If we make no behavioral changes, no commitment to a new way of life and health and do not take the time to nourish ourselves well, then weight gain is almost inevitable.

My Weight-loss Journey

My own weight-loss history is fairly straightforward, good weight loss with a period of coasting for about six years where my weight was not ideal; but “not bad.”

Keys to Success

As statistics show in the research available, many people do quite well in their first year(s) following their procedures. This is partly our adjustment to the surgery, partly our enthusiasm for success and our high levels of self-motivation. In my own course of research (non-scientific); I have found that like me, many people have settled into a comfort zone. While not at their ideal weight, they are significantly lighter, may have gotten rid of several comorbidities and their surgeon is pleased with the progress!
For some, our eating will continue to be an issue, and I know that people have found the structure of commercial weight-loss programs both emotionally supportive and a healthy way to give their food plan some boundaries. For me, the key has been the elimination of simple carbohydrates (all sugars, any products made with flour), and I have a very peaceful relationship with food and easily maintain my current weight. Again, the surgery is a TOOL, not a cure, so seeking other forms of support is perfectly normal and healthy!
I have been involved with any combination of the resources on page 50 throughout the years and have found significant help from each depending upon the current issue and how much time and money I had to seek external support. Through journaling, prayer and a lot of talking to myself and others, I was able to solidify these things for myself about my life going forward:

- I needed to forgive myself for past mistakes and reclaim ownership of my life and my body.
- I wanted to be able to enjoy and trust my body to work physically.
- I wanted to make peace with food.
- I wanted to find my purpose NOW, not the one that was relevant at 25 or 45, but the life I wanted at 56 and beyond.

As I move forward the most important thing comes down to my attitude, how I frame my life and the language I use for my internal talks. With any food plan, I have a choice of how I view things. Notice the language; “I chose to eliminate…” rather than “I am forcing myself to give up…” – HUGE difference in self talk, and HUGE difference in my attitude and success! Reframe the gym into an adult playground and stop exercising and start playing!

**Repeat after me: IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO WRITE MY NEXT JUICY LIFE CHAPTER!**

I tell you these things not to promote a particular surgery, food plan or aftercare choice. I tell you these things so that you too can go and find YOUR way, **YOUR** path and **YOUR** bliss. The surgery helps to change your weight; **YOU** are ultimately in charge of your life. My advice is to honor who you are.

My wish for you is that you have:

- Courage to seek out and obtain support
- An attitude of gratitude about the surgery and life itself
- Success in your endeavors!

**Conclusion**

You can find all that you need for life-long success with your weight. Find the courage to ask for what you need and accept nothing less. Yet another lesson: I don't get everything I want, AND I create a life where I get everything I need. As with any gift, treasure your opportunity to have obesity surgery and commit to taking great care of yourself.

**About the Author:**

Jill C. Williams, MS, CPT, is a wellness coach, certified personal trainer and workshop facilitator. Jill had a DS procedure in 1998 and has gone from 330 pounds to 130 pounds. She is an obesity surgery aftercare program developer and works with individuals and small groups to ensure long-term success through fitness training, wellness coaching and group support. She is a tireless advocate for helping you create a body you love and trust physically and emotionally. To learn more about Jill, please visit www.silversexynstrong.com.
Membership Application

OAC Membership Categories
(select one)

- Individual Membership: $20/year
- Institutional Membership: $500/year
- Chairman’s Council Membership: $1,000+/year

OAC Membership Add-ons
(optional, but only accessible by OAC members)

Add-on 1: Educational Resources
To order bulk copies of OAC resources, members can purchase educational packages. If you’d like to order resources, select one of the below packages.

- **Standard Package**: 10-50 pieces/quarter, $50/year
- **Deluxe Package**: 51-100 pieces/quarter, $100/year
- **Premium Package**: 101-250 pieces/quarter, $150/year

Add-on 2: Make a General Donation
Make a tax-deductible donation to the OAC when joining as a member. Your donation helps the OAC’s educational and advocacy efforts.

- $5
- $10
- $25
- $50
- $100
- Other

Membership/Add-on Totals:
Membership Category: $_____  
Add-on 1 (if applicable): +$_____  
Add-on 2 (if applicable): +$_____  
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP PAYMENT: $_____

Contact Information
Name: ____________________________  
Address: ____________________________  
City: __________________ State: ____ Zip: ________________  
Phone: ________________ Email: _____________________

Payment Information
- Check (payable to the OAC) for $_____.
- Credit card for my TOTAL membership fee of $_____.  
  - Discover®  
  - Visa®  
  - MasterCard®  
  - Amex®

Credit Card Number: ________________________  
Expiration Date: ____________ Billing Zip Code: _________

Building a Coalition of those Affected

The OAC is the **ONLY** non-profit organization whose sole focus is helping those affected by obesity. The OAC is a great place to turn if you are looking for a way to get involved and give back to the cause of obesity.

There are a variety of ways that you can make a difference, but the first-step is to become an OAC Member. The great thing about OAC membership is that you can be as involved as you would like. Simply being a member contributes to the cause of obesity.

Why YOU Should Become an OAC Member

Quite simply, because the voice of those affected needs to be built! The OAC not only provides valuable public education on obesity, but we also conduct a variety of advocacy efforts. With advocacy, our voice must be strong. And, membership is what gives the OAC its strong voice.

Benefits to Individual Membership

- Official welcome letter and membership card
- Annual subscription to the OAC’s publication, Your Weight Matters Magazine
- Subscriptions to the OAC Members Make a Difference and Obesity Action Alert monthly e-newsletters
- “Bias Buster” Alerts, alerting specifically to issues of weight bias
- Immediate Advocacy Alerts on urgent advocacy issues and access to the OAC’s expert advocacy team
- Ability to lend your voice to the cause