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Dieters use their faith as inspiration in weight control

By MARGARET MCKINNEY
Sunday travel editor

There was standing room only in the big conference room of the Airport Ramada Inn, Indianapolis.

The air conditioning was inadequate for such a large crowd, and doors had to be closed because of a noisy meeting next door. But nobody left.

More than 140 women and about a half dozen men had come together, some from hundreds of miles away, to meet Carol Showalter and Mary Haig, co-leaders of 3D, a Christian group diet program that now exists in 50 states and eight foreign countries.

Nobody knows exactly how many followers the program has. The 3D mailing list includes 70,000 names, but the list is months behind in its records.

The three D's stand for Diet, Discipline and Discipleship. Members are called to Christian discipleship through discipline and diet. The aim — or trimmed — bodies that result are a desirable by-product of balanced nutrition, prayer, Bible study and small-group sharing and caring. Changed lives are the goal, but the changes involve mini-goals, successes and failures along the way. One-hour weekly sessions renew individual strength and determination.

The two international leaders are inspiring witnesses to 3D effectiveness. They are slender, pretty and healthy-looking. Animated and happy, they demonstrate with every word and gesture that they are committed Christians. Observers feel a spark of envy, wanting what they have.

The gathering that night in Indianapolis was not the usual testimonial session for overweight people. Nor is it in small 3D groups. An Evansville member of 3D said recently, "I've been in this program for nine weeks, and there's hardly been any mention of diet." So too at the Ramada Inn the emphasis was on discipline — the diet, exercise, daily Scripture reading and prayer. Nobody confessed to eating a quart of chocolate ice cream in the bathroom and stopping up the carrion and flushing it down the toilet. It was assumed that every compulsive eater has lapsers like that. "Sin is a weight," said Mrs. Showalter, reversing the usual order of a familiar quote. "Lay that weight aside and allow the Holy Spirit to go deep within."

Although you wouldn't know it today, Mrs. Showalter waged a long battle with obesity before becoming involved with 3D. As told in her book which is part of every 3D kit, she went the way of crash diets and Weight Watchers for 10 years. All the diets worked, but then she regained the weight. It didn't help, being the wife of a Presbyterian minister, and subject to all the temptations of catered and iced Christian fellowship meals. Yet her position as church leader and example intensified her feelings of guilt and despair. Worthy and workable as Mrs. Showalter considers Weight Watchers, that kind of organization didn't have the power to put her own life in order. An obsessive preoccupation with weight was robbing her life of joy.

Mrs. Showalter did not "invent" 3D. The name was chosen by a Christian weight-control group led by members of the Community of Jesus on Cape Cod, Vacationing on Cape Cod, Mrs. Showalter heard about 3D and took the idea home with her to Rochester, N.Y. At first she wanted only to be a member of a 3D group, but a leader was needed, and others urged her to accept the post.

Sunday picture by MARGARET MCKINNEY
Mary Haig and Carol Showalter

Several years of trial and error followed, as the present program evolved. Carol's husband, Dr. William Showalter, helped. Soon there were many groups in Rochester, and people who moved away took the idea to other cities.

Requests for help multiplied. It seemed as if the only way to respond was to work out a standard program that could be purchased as a package. A not-for-profit corporation was formed. Carol called on her friends at the Community of Jesus for guidance, and other Christian church people were consulted.

A beginning package was assembled, but it had flaws and omissions. Now a revised package costing $40 per member for a 12-week session is being introduced. It contains study materials, the 3D book written by Mrs. Showalter, sheets for recording a personal diet diary, and a book explaining the 3D diet. There is additional nutritional information in the book plus helps for meal planning. The diet used is the same as the Eat and Stay Slim diet and the one used by the American Dietetic Association in its booklet developed for diabetics.

Packages for two more 12-week sessions for groups that want to continue meeting are also available at $35 per member. A leader's kit may be shared by the co-leaders, although each leader is expected to have her personal package and follow the discipline.

Three D groups meet in churches, often with the support and cooperation of the minister or priest. Members need not be members of the church where meetings are held.

A meeting room, scale and tape player are all the equipment necessary. The ideal size of group is 10 to 12, with two leaders. Responsibility is shared equally, bearing in mind that the leader must be the greater servant, trusting the Holy Spirit for guidance.

Whether a person has joined in order to lose or gain weight or to get a handle on some other form of compulsive behavior, he or she must weigh in every week. Members must memorize selected Bible verses and learn to be open with one another. Openness does not imply confession that this one or that ate six candy bars on Friday, but a willingness to look beyond the act and discover why he or she felt a need to overeat. "Fat," said 3D nutritionist Lorie Jack, "is a symptom. It tells on us. We can't hide it. Something is wrong in our lives."

Mary Haig, who shares top leadership with Carol Showalter, is the wife of an Anglican priest. Her home is in Canada where 3D has received wide acceptance. Dietitian Lorie Jack was added to the staff in September, 1980, in response to requests for a full-time nutrition specialist. Carme Ford was the fourth member of the 3D team visiting Indianapolis. The women traved about 10 days of each month. The day before, they were in Columbus, Ohio, where they met with group leaders from Roman Catholic churches and 13 Protestant denominations. There D is popular on military bases, too. The U.S. Army recently picked up the tab for a team visit to a post in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Groups may be formed of only women, only men, or couples. Some churches have special 3D groups for teens. Any combination that works in all right with program planners. Said Mary Haig, "Commitment is our goal. Read off to God, walk down to each other, tap running over."

Evansville's only current 3D group meets at First Presbyterian Church. Those interested in starting others may phone there, 423-6287, for assistance. Because people like to make a new beginning on weight control at the new year, local 3D members suggest that new groups order their materials now so that they will be on hand Jan. 1.

The 3D address is Diet, Discipline and Discipleship Inc., 2710 Chili Ave., Rochester, NY 14624.

Students feel pinch during holidays

Inflation makes yule stocking shrink

Beth Palmer Ronald Williams

Pipeline

Barbara Davis Celia Sciarenco

Pipeline is a monthly column featuring interviews with students from area schools. Anyone interested in participating or submitting a topic for discussion may write to Sylvia Slaughter at The Sunday Courier & Press, 201 NW Second St., Evansville, IN 47708. For the month's Pipeline, Sunday staff reporter Maureen O'Connor Hayden interviewed students on the effect inflation has on their lives. Participants are Ivet Bosse High School seniors, Beth Palmer, Celia Sciarenco, Barbara Davis and Ronald Williams.

Q: Does inflation affect your life?

CELIA: I think inflation affects all of our lives, especially now that we are in the middle of the Christmas season. Also, I can — and I think Ronnie can — feel it as musicians. We are being wiped out by the costs of entering solo and ensemble contests. When we were freshman the cost for a contest was $2 for a solo, and now, as seniors, it is up to $3.50 a solo and $7.50 for each ensemble. Just to buy the music we need costs even more.

RONNIE: I can see inflation on our music contest tours. When we first started the contest tour cost us $35 for three days. Last year it had gone up to $50, and that was only for two days. That does not include the cost of our own food, which has also increased.

BARBARA: I can see how inflation has affected me since I started working. Since I have been working, I've been buying my own clothes, and I've cut back. I haven't been buying as much as last year. Another area where I can feel it is in gas prices. That takes so much of my paycheck.

BETH: I've felt it in my savings. I used to be able to save a lot of my paycheck. Now it is hard for me to save anything. I just don't know where it is going.

Q: How are you adjusting to inflation?

CELIA: I pick up some extra money by playing for some community event, but by the next week it is gone. If something comes along that I really need, I will try first to pay for it. But if I can't, my parents will help me out. Also, I am changing by not going out to movies as often and not going out for a pizza when everyone else does.

RONNIE: Instead of paying $4 for a movie, I'll wait until it comes on at the Washington Avenue Theatre which is only $1.50.

BARBARA: I think it is a good idea for couples to share the costs of dating. It is not fair to expect the guy to pick up the tab. It's just too hard now.

Q: How will inflation affect your future plans after high school?

BETH: I'll definitely have to go to ISUE for college or just not go at all. All I can afford now is to stay here.

BARBARA: I don't want to stay around here and go to college, but the way the money is now it is going to be rough for me to go to school away from home.

'I am feeling badly now because I haven't bought presents. I just don't have the money.'

RONNIE: I will still go away to school at Purdue. I this, it's best to get away and learn to be away from home. But it's going to be tough.

CELIA: It eventually will wind up affecting me. Although I figure once I get to college, I'll figure out a way to stay there. But I have another expense to worry about and that is a viola. If I go away to school I won't be able to have as much money so as to have a better viola — one that I could afford if I stayed here for school.

Q: How has inflation affected you this Christmas season?

CELIA: I am feeling badly now because I haven't bought presents. I just don't have the money. I'm spending all my money to pay for solo and ensemble contests.

RONNIE: I feel that way, also. I just can't spend the money I had planned to spend on different people. Prices are so high, and I'm not getting enough work hours at my part-time job to earn the money I need.

BETH: I've really had to cut back on the prices of my gifts. I'm in the same situation as Ronnie. I'm just not getting enough work hours — they keep hiring more people and cutting back on our hours.

Q: What are you d oing to adjust?

CELIA: This Christmas, my mom and I are going to go visit my sister and brother-in-law in California. We haven't seen them for a while and because of the cost of the trip, we won't have a lot left over for presents. My mom told me it would be OK to make homemade cards, but I feel like I am getting too old for that. I'd like to give them something decent for a change.

RONNIE: For people whom I want to get a gift for, I've told them I will get them a late Christmas gift — after I've earned the money to buy a nice gift.

BARBARA: My family is trying to adjust by going back to an old-fashioned Christmas where we just get together, have a big dinner and not worry as much about the presents. ... There is so much commercialism these days — people only seem to be worried about 'how much did they spend on me'" kinds of things.

BETH: Barbara's right. It's still the thought that counts.

Fitness classes planned to shed holiday pounds

Exercise classes — some new, others past favorites — are scheduled to begin Jan. 11 under the auspices of the YMCA.

Fitness Fantasia, a total fitness program of choreographed movements to music, is scheduled to begin on that date in 10 Tri-State areas. Included are a variety of aerobic dances, floor exercises and aerobic activities that can be adapted for social recreation.

Following is a partial list of Fitness Fantasia classes and their locales:

East Side: Beginning and advanced morning sessions at Seton Manor Auditorium, 800 St. Mary's Drive. Two evening classes available — one at Mitchell Temple, 2109 Lincoln Ave., 7-8 p.m., and one from 7-8 p.m. at Seton Manor.

Downtown: Beginning and advanced morning and evening classes at the Evansville YMCA, 222 NW Sixth St. Both evening classes from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Beginning classes on Tuesday and Thursday. Advanced class on Monday and Wednesday.

Newburgh: Afternoon classes from 1-2 p.m. and evening classes from 8-9 p.m. at Newburgh Presbyterian Church, Highway 662.

Boonville, Ind.: Evening classes at St. John's United Church of Christ, 123 N Sixth St., from 8-9 p.m.

Wadesville, Ind.: Morning classes from 9-10 a.m. at Wadesville Christian Church, Highway 660.

Mt. Vernon, Ind.: Morning classes at Mt. Vernon Skating Rink in cooperation with Mt. Vernon Parks and Recreation Department.

Ft. Branch, Ind.: Beginning and advanced classes at Ft. Branch Optimist Club Skating Rink. Beginning and advanced evening classes at Freedom Hall.

Following is a listing of locations for the YM's Trimnastic programs, available in nine locations beginning Jan. 11:

East Side: Two morning locations — Our Saviour Lutheran Church, 4501 E. Madison Ave., with classes 8-9 a.m. and 9:15-10:15 a.m. and Northeast Park Baptist Church, 1215 Beeler Road, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Evening classes at Methodist Temple 6-7 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday.

North Side: Two morning classes at Olivet Presbyterian Church, 5600 Oak Hill Road, 8:30-9:30 a.m. and 9:30-10:30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Evening class 6:15-7:15 p.m. Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

West Side: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m. at Zoar United Church of Christ, 4600 Church Road, and Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 6:15-7:15 p.m.

Newburgh: Two afternoon classes — Monday, Wednesday and Friday 12:30-1:30 p.m. and 1:30-2:30 p.m. and Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 6:45-7:45 p.m. class at Newburgh Presbyterian Church.

Boonville: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 4:45-7:45 p.m. at St. John's United Church of Christ, 123 N Sixth St.

Poseyville, Ind.: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m. class at St. Frances Catholic Church, Poseyville.

Mt. Vernon: Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30-10:30 a.m. and Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 6:30-7 p.m. at Memorial Coliseum Building, 126 E. Third St., Mt. Vernon.

Weight training classes to tone, reshape or build the body utilizing special lifting and breathing techniques begin Jan. 11.

Aquarise classes begin Jan. 11 and continue for nine weeks at the YMCA.

For additional information and fees about the above classes, contact the YMCA (423-6151).

PRE-CHRISTMAS SALE
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