

## Commit, Dig in, and Do it: Texas Veteran Makes Impressive Progress with TeleMOVE!



**Before MOVE! - 310 pounds**

Donald Morrison first noticed it in high school: he was overweight compared to others. Since then, he's lost count of how many times—and fad diets and pills—he's tried to lose weight. He retired in 2005 weighing 240 pounds, but has since gained about 10 pounds a year. During that time, he admits that he secluded himself, caring little about his weight and appearance.

But during his brother's visit in the summer of 2010, Donald became depressed and embarrassed by how he looked in family pictures. He knew he had put on weight ("finding clothes that fit was getting harder"), but didn't realize how much. Seeing himself next to his wife and brother was an eye-opener.

It was a transformative moment for Donald. "Something has to wake you up and make you decide to take a different path," he explains. "To start losing weight, you have to make a profound personal decision; otherwise, nothing will work for you."

So he made that decision by starting MOVE! and making weight management his life focus. "Without that, I don't believe anyone can successfully lose weight," he says.

So far Donald's focus has paid off. After *gaining* weight for over a decade, he is now steadily *losing* weight with the support of his wife and the Temple (Texas) VAMC. Donald started MOVE! in February 2011 at 290 pounds, already down from a high of 310 pounds. "Losing weight initially was easy, but continuing to lose it has been harder," he reports. But he's done it. In April 2011, he weighed 256 pounds. By August, he was at 200 and had lost an impressive 90 pounds after 7 months of participation in MOVE!.

Because Donald lives several hours away from his VAMC in central Texas, he uses a home messaging device through TeleMOVE!. The device allows him to learn about weight management via short daily lessons, tips, and trivia, and provide a weekly weight. It also connects

with his land line phone, which lets his clinical team monitor him closely—"They're sincerely interested in my health and progress," Donald explains. When he recently felt pain during exercise, his MOVE! Coordinator called within 24 hours to help. Shortly after that, the facility MOVE! Chief called to follow up.



**After starting MOVE! - 256 pounds**

Donald also praises the MOVE! instructional materials, which confirmed much of what he already knew, but most importantly, inspired him to act. “MOVE! works...if you work the program,” he says. “If you put even some of it to use, there will be positive changes.” He believes that MOVE! offers the right tools to create healthy habits, set achievable goals, and monitor progress. He also has found MOVE! group sessions to be effective because it helps to know that others are experiencing the same issues and obstacles in meeting weight goals.

“I am still extremely obese, but making progress,” Donald reports. He has almost met his initial weight goal, but will not be satisfied until he is no longer obese. Donald knows it’s going to get tougher, but when he thinks about some of things he’s been through—military service, duty in Vietnam, life in general—losing weight does not seem so hard. “I just have to commit, dig in, and do it. And I’ve decided that is exactly what I am going to do.”

**Continuing success with MOVE!**

