

Nurse who secretly chose restaurants based on the size of the chairs loses MORE THAN EIGHT STONE – and finally rides rollercoasters with grandson again

Debbie Scully, a 56-year-old nurse from Slough, spent years secretly choosing the same three restaurants - not because she preferred the food, but because she knew the chairs were wide enough for her to sit comfortably.

Every family day out, holiday and trip into London was overshadowed by one question: *"Will I fit?"*

At her heaviest, Debbie weighed more than 20 stone (128kg). Living with high blood pressure, pre-diabetes and chronic knee pain, she found herself constantly worrying about whether she'd fit into restaurant chairs, crowded Tube trains, aeroplane seats and even theme park rides.

"I was exhausted all the time," Debbie says. "As a nurse, I knew exactly what the health risks were, but I just couldn't seem to stop thinking about food."

Having struggled with her weight for most of her adult life after becoming a mum at just 17, Debbie tried virtually every diet imaginable - from SlimFast and Weight Watchers to intermittent fasting, calorie counting and prescription medication.

"I'd lose two pounds and celebrate with a bag of crisps," she admits.

As her weight increased, so too did the anxiety that came with everyday life.

"We only ever went to three restaurants because I knew I could comfortably fit in the chairs," Debbie explains. "I told my family it was because they were cheap and served good food, but the real reason was the seating."

"I loved the idea of trying new places, but I'd constantly think, 'What if I get stuck in the chair? What if it's a bench and I can't squeeze in? What if I break the chair?' Those thoughts never left me."

Trips into London, once something she enjoyed, became equally daunting.

"I'd convince myself everyone was looking at me thinking, 'She's taking up too much room.' Whether they were or not almost didn't matter - that's what was going through my head."

Flying brought another layer of anxiety. Debbie routinely paid around £200 extra for specific seats simply to avoid the embarrassment of asking cabin crew for a seatbelt extender in front of other passengers.

"I hated asking for the extension because people would giggle or make comments. Paying extra was expensive, but it felt easier than facing that humiliation."

But the most painful moment came during a family trip to a theme park with her grandson.

After queuing for a rollercoaster together, staff were unable to fasten the safety restraint because of Debbie's size.

"I was totally mortified," she recalls. "The ride attendant kept trying to push the restraint down, but it just wouldn't close. I had to get off and walk the whole length of the platform while everyone watched."

"My grandson was with me because he wasn't old enough to ride alone. He didn't understand why Nanny couldn't go on with him. I was absolutely heartbroken."

The experience left such a lasting impact that Debbie stopped going on rides altogether, despite continuing to visit theme parks with her family.

"I couldn't face feeling that shame ever again."

Determined to improve her health after being diagnosed with pre-diabetes and taking three medications for high blood pressure, Debbie eventually discovered [Numan's](#) medically supported weight loss programme after becoming frustrated with another provider.

Since starting treatment, Debbie has lost more than eight stone (53kg), dropping from over 20 stone to just 11 stone 7lbs.

Her blood pressure has improved so dramatically that she now takes just one low-dose medication, while recent blood tests confirmed she is no longer pre-diabetic.

"My GP actually phoned me personally to say well done because all my blood results had improved so much."

The physical transformation has been remarkable too. Debbie has started Couch to 5K training, something she once thought impossible.

"If you'd suggested running to me a few years ago, I'd have said, 'If you ever see me running, run with me because I'm being chased by an axe murderer!'"

Perhaps the most emotional milestone came when Debbie recently returned to the same theme park with the very same grandson.

"I was terrified standing in the queue," she says. "I honestly felt sick and wanted to leave."

"But then my grandson looked at me and said, 'I'm so happy you're going on with me, Nanny.'"

"I swallowed my fears, sat down, fastened the restraint... and then tightened it."

"We had the most amazing ride. For the first time in years, I wasn't scared because of my size - I was only scared because it was a rollercoaster."

The changes haven't stopped there. Debbie has rediscovered the confidence to shop on the high street for the first time in her life, dropping from a size 24 to a size 12, recently wore a figure-hugging red dress to celebrate the first anniversary of her husband's recovery from a life-threatening brain haemorrhage, and has even taken two of her grandchildren to W/WE in London - comfortably sitting in the upper-tier seats she once believed would have been impossible.

Looking back, Debbie says the biggest change isn't the number on the scales but the freedom she has regained.

"Being overweight affects every single part of your life, even if nothing actually happens. The fear is always there. Every outing, every chair, every journey—you are constantly wondering whether you'll fit."

"Now I don't think about any of that anymore. I can just get on with enjoying my life and making memories with my family."

Reflecting on her journey, Debbie hopes others struggling with their weight realise they don't have to continue living with those anxieties.

"The fear is real, but you don't have to stay trapped by it. If you've tried everything else, ask for help. That's exactly what I did, and it's completely changed my life."