



HOT DOG!
Trixia's golden retriever (here in 2015) went from an overweight 78 lbs. to a healthy 56.



TIPPING THE SCALE

In 2011, Trixia was carrying 265 lbs. on her 5' 4" frame.

"HOW MY DOG AND I LOST

140 POUNDS"

A short walk once left her winded. Now Trixia and her running buddy, Charlie, are fit and fierce. Learn her secrets

by KATE ROCKWOOD

TRIXIA LASSITER WAS IN TEARS.

It was 2011, and her fertility specialist had just canceled her treatment because her body, at 265 pounds, was not responding to the daily injections that were supposed to help her ovulate. "Nothing is happening," the doctor told Trixia. "You're going to have to focus on losing weight." The brief walk to her car from the doctor's office left the 24-year-old gasping. "I was completely out of breath, and my knees ached," she says. "I'd been in denial about my weight for

so long, but this was my breaking point."

Overnight, Trixia made sweeping changes. She loaded her grocery cart with whatever seemed healthy, like bagged salad, raw vegetables and low-cal frozen dinners. Inspired by her doctor, who ran marathons, she got just as zealous about running: "I jumped in headfirst. I thought I could hop on the treadmill and power walk five miles."

Over the next six months, Trixia lost 15 pounds, but then her good intentions gave way to old habits. A stressful day

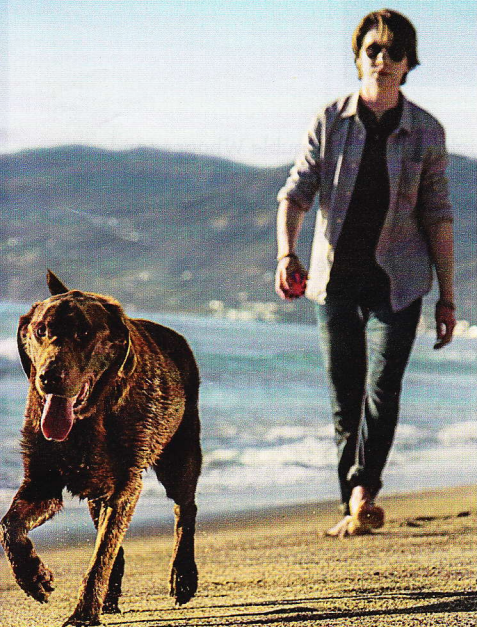
might end with a Double Whopper and a large order of fries. "I've always used food for comfort," she says. More than once, fresh foods she'd bought were left to rot in her fridge.

Then, at the gym, Trixia tore her Achilles tendon and was sidelined for two months. She was surprised to find herself relieved. "I was pushing because I wanted immediate results, but I now saw that what I really needed was patience and a plan," she says.

So Trixia scaled back her workouts: She alternated shorter jogs with Zumba classes and hikes with her husband and her dog, Charlie. She also bought a Fitbook—a journal for setting goals and tracking food and fitness. "Writing everything down helped me notice *OK, I can barely run a minute right now, but two weeks ago, I could only run 20 seconds,*" she says. Her progress, right there in black and white, fueled her to keep going. A minute turned into a mile, which, after two years of training, became a half marathon.

At the same time, Trixia started mapping out her meals. "I can be pretty lazy when it comes to cooking, so I decided to do it just once a week," she says. She'd jot down her food plan for the next seven days in her Fitbook, then prep and portion everything in the fridge—meals like Greek yogurt with granola and fruit for breakfast, turkey chili and crackers for lunch and baked chicken, quinoa and asparagus for dinner. "I bought these nifty Ziploc steam bags so that come mealtime, I could pop things straight from the fridge into the microwave to steam," she says. Tracking also allowed her to see when she was most vulnerable to stress eating so she could avoid it. And if she did overeat? "I learned to go easier on myself, then get back on track," she says. →

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NEW TRICKS Before Charlie lost weight, "we'd play Fetch and he'd struggle to keep up," says Trixia.



LOVING LIFE
Trixia (healthier and stronger than ever!) is now studying to become a personal trainer.

POUND-MELTING MAGIC

Research shows that jotting down your goals ups the odds that you'll make them happen. This workbook makes shaping up a breeze. *Fitbook, \$23, getfitbook.com (enter code GH15 at checkout for 15% off)*



Trixia and her husband, a Marine, have put plans for a baby on hold for now, but when she reached around 150 pounds, she began ovulating, which she attributes to having shaped up. At the moment, she's focused on her four-legged "baby," Charlie—and running marathons, her first of which was in 2014. "I wasn't very fast, but when I rounded the corner at mile 26 and saw the finish line, I had one of the most emotional moments of my life," she says. She ended the race with her arms in the air, and then came proud tears. "I started hugging random people; I was so overwhelmed that just a few years before, I could barely walk across a parking lot," she says.

In the past two years, Trixia has crossed the finish lines of three more marathons—as well as those of 11 half marathons, an ultramarathon, a triathlon and more than two dozen shorter races. And she's stayed the course with her healthy habits as well: She still writes down small, concrete goals; plans her workouts; and tracks her eating. "I've learned how important it is to be accountable and organized," she says. Her weight now hovers between 145 and 153, but she no longer sees the scale as standing between her and her dreams—of running, of hiking with her husband, of becoming a mother. "I'm more focused now on seeing what my body can do than on what I weigh," she says. "I love knowing how far I've come." ♦



TRIXIA'S TOP TIPS

STAVE OFF BOREDOM.

"I eat a lot of chicken breasts, salmon and turkey meatballs, and I use different sauces and seasonings for new flavors. Adding pasta sauce and Parmesan is an easy way to give something Italian flair."

HIDE THE JUNK.

"I don't want to deprive my husband of a treat every once in a while, but I'm a big believer in 'out of sight, out of mind.' So we cleared out a cabinet just for those junk food items I didn't want to see all the time. I try not to look!"

COMPARE YOU TO YOU.

"I know I'm not the fastest runner out there, but I can only measure me against myself. When I see people struggling with their running, I want to tell them that I wasn't always running marathons. We're each at a different part of our own path."