



“FitB*tch—Transforming your body and your life!”

By Alissa Gardenhire-Crooks

I don't care if people think I am a bitch...if it is between being thought a bitch who or because I take care of myself (first) and a nice lady who has nearly or completely disappeared as she cares for everyone else but herself...I'll take (embrace being) the bitch! A FitB*tch!

I use to be really nice...sort of. It is a weird story because I have always been nice and passive and a lot things go “water off a ducks back” sort of female. I was never confrontational. Very type B. Chill. Easy. Fun. Work with you. Take a lot of shit before going off type of person. Scared. Afraid. Weak. Sad. Passive aggressive. Resentful. Angry. Enraged. Depressed. Sad. Desperate. Murderous. Foolish. Impulsive. Passive passive passive. You like me? Ok I like you too. Type of female. Was I right? Ignore my instinct. Believe everyone but myself they must know better, they sound emphatic. Empty shell...big, fat empty shell type of female.

When I found myself at 251 pounds, heavier than I was even while pregnant with my son, and almost completely empty inside I hit an absolute low point. Unfortunately I stayed there for a while! I describe myself during that period as a big fat empty shell with one kernel of Alissa left in there. For a long time I felt the emptiness and just accepted it. I would say to myself, "I don't know what to do about it." "I can't change this." "This was my body, my sense of self, my husband/marriage, my work, my mothering routines, and every other damned thing in my life that wasn't working for me...which was a lot at the time...had built up to a lot of things! I was stuck and became desperate. It was the feeling of desperation that woke me up. I opened my eyes and saw that one kernel of Alissa left and decided to fight for it. For me. I was fighting for me! I liked me, at least the me that used to be in that sometimes fat sometimes not body of mine. She had "left the building" and damn it I was gonna bring that bitch back! And I did.

I focused on my weight in my fight for me, but really got back my whole me--recreated a whole me in the process. My feeling of desperation began in my mind and manifested in my

body. 251 pounds of Alissa, reduced to 243 pounds (over about two years) at the point where my empty and stuck turned to empty and fight in me. I did feel desperate about my weight and felt I needed a permanent solution to this weight/fat problem! I had lost the same 50 pounds twice since putting on the weight after college and was able to keep it off maybe a good 3 months before it came raging back...and then some. And then I had a baby and honestly I can't blame much of my fat on him because I only gained about 25 pounds throughout my pregnancy and I was still lower than I had been at previous periods in my life. I actually gained weight after he was born, topping out at 251 pounds (and I nursed him and still got fatter after giving birth! Not fair! But then I couldn't expect a 7 pound baby to suck years of fat off me, that was there even before getting pregnant, now that is not fair...to him).

Fatter than ever? What the heck? (I was going to write what the fuck, but I don't want to insult people, but that's how I usually talk.) this is where the depression and feeling stuck kicked in. There I was...a new mom, with a non-stop career, a relatively unhappy marriage to a man who was basically checked out of the marriage...largely because I let him, because I did everything, asking nothing from him, but resenting the hell out of him and punishing him in my passive aggressive ways...