



Jared Coty, a student-hire with the 514th Air Mobility Wing safety office, is pictured at the running track near the fitness center here July 11. Coty, who weighed 500 pounds as recently as 2009 (see picture on opposite page), now weighs less than 235 pounds.

HALF THE MAN HE USED TO BE

By Mr. Shawn J. Jones

Every weekday around lunchtime, the same man can be found on a treadmill at the fitness center here. Sometimes he runs. Sometimes he walks. But he always shrinks.

In fact, since he started working as a student-hire with the 514th Air Mobility Wing safety office in January, Jared Coty has trimmed more than 100 pounds from his 6-foot 4-inch frame.

"The scale is basically what pushes me to work out the next day," he said. "I'm motivated by watching the numbers drop."

Working on a military base has contributed to his weight loss. He appreciates access to the base fitness center, which he said has really good equipment, and he said he is motivated by being around so many Airmen who take fitness seriously.

"I look at them to push me and give me ideas."

Also, Coty said that working out around fit service-members causes his competitive nature to kick in. When exercising at the fitness center, he said he'll often peek at the settings of nearby treadmill runners and try to match their pace.

Coty's hard work hasn't gone unappreciated. His supervisor Master Sgt. Ben Atkinson said that he doesn't notice the day-to-day weight loss, but when he saw old photos of Coty, he was "amazed at what a great accomplishment he has performed."

However Atkinson said it's not important what other people think, but how Coty feels about himself.

"When we talk you know that he feels great and more confident in himself," Atkinson said.

The 100 pounds that he has dropped since January are only part of his overall weight loss that began after he reached his peak weight of 500 pounds in 2009.

"I was doing absolutely nothing. I would go home, lie on the couch, wake up and eat something and basically sit around watching TV until it was time to go back to bed."

He finally became motivated to lose weight when he moved in with a childhood friend, who was a student-athlete attending college. His friend frequently invited Coty to join him at the gym. While he credits his friend for getting him into the gym, it was one aspect of the gym itself that made him aware of how much he had lost control of his weight.

"The entire gym was covered in mirrors," he said. "That probably had something to do with it."

The secret to Coty's weight loss is really no secret at all. He consistently finds time to exercise, typically 5 or 6 times per week. Most of his training consists of walking and running on a treadmill with a medium-to-high incline. He burns about 800 to 1,000 calories per workout. To a much lesser degree, he also performs some anaerobic conditioning such as pushups or sit-ups.

Despite the intensity of his workout routine, Coty said there is a weight-loss obstacle that continuously challenges him.

"It's easy to go to the gym," he said. "The hardest part is changing the diet."

Coty is not following any complex mass-market weight-loss plans, he just relies on the advice that he's collected throughout the years. His diet is based on eating healthy foods in responsible portions and avoiding junk food.

He said the weight loss has been a long road. His diet and exercise plan has worked. He is now only thirteen pounds from his goal of 225 pounds.

"I didn't realize I had the determination." ♦

