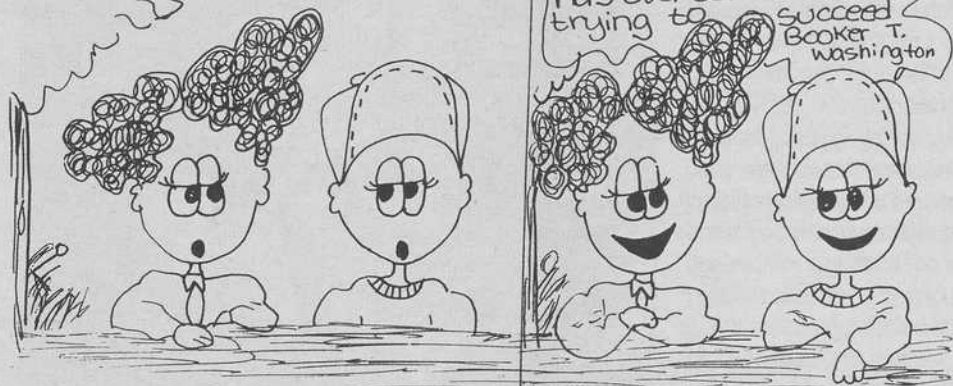


# SUGAR PUDIN'

By Zaida Puryear-Williams 45

Life is a struggle.....  
just keep on moving....

Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles that one has overcome while trying to succeed.  
Booker T. Washington



## LEARNING HEALTHY EATING FROM PEERS MAY REDUCE DIABETES RISK IN AFRICAN-AMERICAN WOMEN

PART II

By Jim Dryden  
Reducing Risk Factors

The goal of the study was to reduce risk factors of NIDDM and other diseases such as hypertension, and not necessarily to make the women lose weight. "We didn't approach the study by setting goal weights for the women," says Haire-Joshu. "We wanted to teach them healthier eating habits. If they lost weight because they were eating food lower in fat, so much the better."

In fact, some women did lose weight during the study, and, in follow-up interviews, many reported that they were still eating a lower-fat, more nutritious diet two months after their training had ended. The next step is to follow a similar population for a longer period of time. The Washington University researchers are now beginning a new four-year study to continue with other low-income African-American women.

"The goal of reducing risk is very long range," Auslander explains. "We don't know exactly what causes diabetes, but we do know that you can reduce the risk if you are not obese. We also know that your risk increases as you get older. Most of the women in this study are still in their thirties, so it may be years before any of them would have problems."

Sharing Healthy Eating Habits

In addition, she says, most of the women in the study were single heads of households who are responsible for the eating habits of their children and other relatives. What these women buy and cook not only affects their health, but also has an impact on the health and nutrition of their dependents. By modifying

eating habits of women in the study, researchers also are hoping to modify the eating habits of their children and other family members.

Risk factors for NIDDM include obesity, genetic factors and a sedentary lifestyle. Of the 66 women in the pilot study, 45 had close relatives with diabetes, 70 percent did not exercise regularly, and the average weight of study participants was 215 pounds. A large number had high blood pressure and high cholesterol. More than a third were smokers. Half had monthly incomes of less than \$500.

"They were very concerned, as a group, about making sure their children ate well," Auslander explains. "Many of these women, because of economic status, have little control over many aspects of their lives. By giving them the tools to improve the nutritional value and cut fat in their diets, this program can give them some control in that area of their lives."

The changes can only work, however, if the women can afford to improve their eating habits. Economical eating was an important goal in this low-income population. "We would demonstrate how the cheapest food often is not the healthiest food, but healthy food can be economical," says Haire-Joshu. "We showed the women how

much more meat and less fat they got in lean ground beef. It may be a few cents more per pound, but you get more meat and better nutrition."

The researchers have now developed a nutrition workbook for women involved in the program. The peer nutrition educators named that population "Women Helping Women Make Healthy Choices." The workbook will be a key training tool for a new, larger study. Researchers have received a \$1 million grant from the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disease of the National Institutes of Health to continue and expand the neighbor-led nutrition program.

"This will give us a chance to measure long-term success," says Auslander. "Reducing risk has to be a long-term effort because it involves changing long-standing dietary habits."

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## FOR THE LADIES

# Believe In Yourself



BONITA ARMSTRONG

By Bonita H. Armstrong

What is stopping you from pursuing or realizing your dream? Is it money, time, other people, location? Is it education, children, spouses? Or is it you?

The fear of failure is one of the greatest barriers of success. We are afraid to fail, so we are afraid to try. We don't want to make a mockery of ourselves in the presence of others, we want to be accepted, we don't want our ideas laughed at, we don't want to take unnecessary risks, we want to feel safe.

So we toil on, day after day in situations we find unfulfilling and unrewarding. We put our happiness in the hands of others, laboring under the impression that this situation is more safe than putting our lives in our own hands. We don't trust ourselves. We don't believe we can take care of ourselves. We have no faith in us.

The truth is that no one loves us more than we love ourselves. We should believe in our own abilities, our own judgment and our own qualities. We should take a chance on ourselves. We've got to learn to believe in ourselves.

What is stopping us from realizing our dreams? We are. Believe in yourself.

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I'm nervous.

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I take care of myself.

My doctor never told me to go.

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