



January 24, 2011 – Grand Rapids, MI

Reality

I didn't watch the first couple of episodes of the latest season of *The Biggest Loser*, and after last week's episode, I don't see any reason to ever watch it again. I turned on the last 10 minutes to see who the mystery trainers were, but they'd been shown earlier; I found online they were younger versions of the current trainers. When I tuned it, the last couple had just weighed in, twin brothers who both started close to 290 pounds. In the prior weeks, they had lost 24 and 29 pounds respectively. The shock of this weigh-in was that they both gained nine pounds. The accusations of tanking it flowed from the trainers; they accused the brothers of not trying hard enough, although all the other participants at the ranch believed the brothers did the same work as they had the prior weeks. What happened?

Reality happened in reality television—who'd have thought that was possible? The weight gain wasn't really body fat because the weight lost the prior two weeks wasn't body fat. A change in electrolytes or carbohydrate intake could have resulted in fluid retention that could easily explain a nine-pound increase; see this week's 30 Pound Club message for more on this subject. These guys weighed 260 pounds—nine pounds is nothing. The trainers know that, but reality TV dictates that they show their disgust and question the participants' effort. One brother was voted out, so the "reality" will continue for his twin. Previews showed heated conversations between him and the trainers.

There's nothing real about *The Biggest Loser* except the participants and their life stories. We're the ones who face reality every day by trying to eat better and exercise more while keeping the same schedule we've always kept. That's reality, and with hard work, we can succeed the same as those participants do—and we don't have to listen to someone question our commitment to ourselves.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

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