


# 'The Biggest Loser' Contestant Gina McDonald Says, "My Husband Was Very Supportive of Me Going on the Show"



 By Kerri Sheehan

Like many contestants on NBC's *The Biggest Loser*, 47-year-old Gina McDonald felt like a stranger in her own body. Over the years, she attempted many fad diets as the scale escalated uncontrollably. A lawyer and a law firm owner, she's always been very accomplished in her professional life; unfortunately, her personal life used to be a different story. Back in 2002, poor eating habits, a lack of exercise, and a stressful divorce caused her to reach 245 pounds. Ashamed and left with two young children, the single mother struggled to keep her at home life in check.

Last year, her husband of five years, Chad Eldred, encouraged her to become a contestant on *The Biggest Loser*, and she's hit the ground running ever since. Although she didn't win the show's coveted title, she was able to snatch up the \$100,000 at-home prize due to her ability to keep shedding weight after leaving the ranch. The journey she went through during the show changed her outlook on life and kept her motivated: "I have learned that I am capable of anything. I look at obstacles as just minor setbacks and stay the course."

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Her first workout on the ranch proved to be the most trying endeavor she faced. "My most challenging obstacle was believing that I could actually do it!" she proclaims with the gusto of a true winner. Once the workout was over, she was overcome with emotion. As a member of Bob Harper's team, she shares, "I had seen Jillian Michaels' team falling apart and was so thankful that our team endured."

Since her time on the show, McDonald's family has overhauled their lifestyle in a positive way. "I think my weight loss resulted in positive changes for my daughter too. She learned from my guidance that she's capable of anything if she works hard enough." McDonald's daughter has lost 30 pounds, while Eldred has shed a whopping 60! "My kids, husband, and I all try to eat healthy and move every day."

Eldred was actually her biggest supporter while she was on the show. He stepped up to the plate and managed to play both mom and dad to McDonald's two college-aged kids during her journey. "He will tell you that he cried every day missing me, but each tear was worth it to have me happy and especially healthy."

Over the summer, their daughter played chef in the house, but now that she's back at college, Eldred has taken on the job. "He keeps my fridge stocked with healthy options and has a good meal ready most nights." The couple is planning to run a half marathon together in December. "I'm training hard! This will be my longest run, and I'm excited to be doing it with Chad."

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Of course, the duo must make a solid effort to balance their workout schedule with spending time together at home. "The perfect night is sitting outside by our pool and having a small dinner and just enjoying our home."

According to McDonald, the hardest part of maintaining her new

lifestyle has been managing to spend time with her husband and kids while also taking care of her business. "It has taken me some time to settle into my new routine. Not every little thing that goes wrong becomes a setback or an excuse not to exercise and eat right."

For others looking to go on *The Biggest Loser*, the former contestant stresses the importance of "believing in yourself and never, ever giving up" – a motto that she repeats to herself every day!

*Be sure to tune in for next week's premiere of season 15 of The Biggest Loser on Tuesday, October 15th on NBC at 8/7c! She'll also be participating in The Biggest Loser Run/Walk in Panama City on December 29th.*