

100+ Pounds to Freedom!!

Weeks prior to signing up at Farrell's, I was on course for scheduling gastric bypass surgery. I walked into Farrell's not knowing about the program and signed up the day before the new 10 week session started (Oct. 2016). My hope was to give myself one last shot to make the changes I needed to make without surgery (heck, I could commit to just 10 weeks, right?). After failing at all other programs I had my doubts, but after my 10 week session at Farrell's I wanted more. I needed more. The supportive, nonjudgmental atmosphere made the decision to sign up as a FIT member easy. I didn't know at the time it would forever change my life!

Before Farrell's I lacked the motivation to exercise and to make the changes necessary to live a healthier lifestyle. I lived an unhealthy lifestyle for 30 years; struggling with my weight, eating whatever I wanted and drinking alcohol like a fish. As a result of my unhealthy choices, I had a number of medical conditions: prediabetes, sleep apnea, insomnia, severe obesity, heart burn, acid reflux, anxiety, depression and fibromyalgia.

I had all the typical excuses and bad habits: I don't have time to work out, I don't want to give up or limit certain foods, I don't want give up or limit my beer and/or wine, I'm not a breakfast eater and I never wanted to give up my happy hours. Farrell's provided the support system and knowledge that I was lacking; jump starting the momentum I needed to work through those 30 years of excuses and bad habits. Over the last year those excuses and bad habits became meaningless obstacles that I was ready to overcome. I began to break through them, realizing that with each obstacle I overcame there was a reward on the other side; rewards I never knew I wanted or needed; rewards in the form of freedom. I could fit my butt back into my kayak, I gained the confidence I needed to get back on a motorcycle after 20 years, and I had the ability to run alongside my nephew as he drove his dirt bike; the rewards of freedom!

If you said to me a year ago that I'd be inspiring people with my fitness/health journey, I would've thought you were nuts! However, my personal transformation is hard not to notice. It's not just the weight loss that has transformed, but my attitude, my health and my lifestyle. Physically, I'm no longer prediabetic and my cholesterol levels are normal. I'm off all medications for fibromyalgia, heartburn, acid reflux, pain and sleep aids. Mentally, the changes are even more rewarding. I no longer lack energy, have a destructive appetite, or suffer from depression and sleeping issues. This shows how healthy changes have affected all areas of my life. Now, I feel anything is possible!

I have learned many lessons over the past year, but the one that sticks out the most is this: just because I was unhealthy and overweight didn't mean I didn't have anything to offer other Farrell's members. Realizing not everyone knows how to cook or food prep I arranged food prepping cooking demonstrations with members that were struggling and showed them how to change an unhealthy recipe into a healthy recipe.

My keys to success were showing up to workout (even when I wasn't feeling it), listening to the instructors/owners and asking questions, participating in the FIT challenges, food prepping every week, having accountability partners, setting weekly/monthly goals, stepping out of my comfort zones, and building strong relationships with like-minded people.

Even after losing over 100 pounds (I know it's going to sound cliché; however it's so true), I've gained way more than what I've lost by choosing this path of a healthier lifestyle. I will share my new-found health and fitness knowledge with anyone that will listen. The friendships I've formed along the way were worth every sore muscle and every missed happy hour. For every struggle there was ALWAYS someone to help me, encourage me, and to be accountable to. And I NO longer need that surgery!