

## **FIGHTING MY WAY TO A HEALTHIER & HAPPIER LIFE**

I grew up in a small town and was raised on a farm. Having to think about staying fit was something I never had to do because I was always working. After entering adulthood, things changed FAST. My husband and I had our daughter and were ready for another child. Instead of one, we were given quintuplets! Being pregnant with five children at once took a toll on my body. My life became centered around my instant family of 8. It was survival mode. I cared for our children while my husband worked. There was not time to exercise. My weight slowly crept higher and higher as the years passed and my children were always put first.

In 2016, I found myself at an all-time low while my weight hit an all-time high at 185 pounds (4'11" tall). Mentally and emotionally I was a disaster. My low self-esteem crept into every facet of my life. I needed a change. I had to help myself. It had to happen. In August 2016, I quit one of my part-time jobs to free up time to exercise. I tried other gyms - but there was no one there to push me. To help me. Then I heard about Farrell's. KICKBOXING? I was in! Strength training – cool! Nutrition guidance - fantastic!

I started my journey in October 2016 with my daughter. I was so excited to do this! I did not join to win anything. I simply wanted to find something I could stick with. I remember walking into my first kickboxing class and watching the FIT members. Would I ever be able to move that much around the bag? I was getting tired just watching them! My first strength training class, as I struggled with my yellow bands, FIT had purple! "What did I get myself into?" was running through my mind. All 10-weekers started off learning technique and form together. The program slowly ramped up the intensity as the days went by. I was hooked. But WOW! It was so hard! I would get done with my 45-minute class and have to take a nap. I was wiped out. I didn't want to move, but that was short lived.

My goal was to keep moving during kickboxing. Each day I kept my feet moving a little longer. Before I knew it, I was moving the entire class. During strength classes, I was banding up! But that purple band - there was no way I could do that purple band. I didn't even grab one until a managers put it in my hands one day. Under protest, I took it and tried it. Much to my surprise, I did it. That push from coaches, instructors, managers & owners was a trend throughout the entire 10-weeks and into my FIT journey.

The nutrition component of this program is fantastic. I focused on making changes I could sustain for life. This was not a fad diet that I would burn out on after a period of time, revert to my old habits, and gain the weight back. I could still eat real food. In fact, I needed to eat more than what I was! That was a crazy thought. I focused on eating more protein as well as healthy carbs and fats. That kept me full so much longer. As I became more educated on the nutrition and started seeing weight and inches drop, I didn't even want some of those old comfort foods. This was amazing!

At our 10-week celebration, I did not win the \$1,000. But, as stereotypical as it sounds, I didn't care because in my mind I did win. I had lost a lot of weight and inches. More importantly, I had started to gain back my confidence. I wanted that to continue so, I signed up for the National Challenge. My goals were set for each session and I was all in. I continued to push myself harder each day because I found out I could do more. Before I knew it, new 10-weekers were looking at me the same way I looked at FIT members when I joined! That motivated me even more. I suddenly wanted to inspire others. I wanted them to feel the success I was feeling! This desire led me to become a coach and an instructor for Farrell's.

The physical results are easy to see. The unexpected results are the best part though. Working out has become the most important part of my day and I could have never anticipated that! I like to be a loner when it comes to working out. But the atmosphere with everyone else became infectious and I was drawn into the "Farrell's Family" and love it. The confidence I have in myself now is priceless. My life is so much better because I believe in myself.

I started this program in October 2016 not being able to look at myself in the mirror and just generally feeling awful about life. Now, a short year and ten weeks later, I am completely transformed. This new confidence has led me on another adventure. In August 2017, I took my love for kickboxing and started training to fight in Muay Thai. I am able to use the strength & cardio I continue to build at Farrell's to help me excel in the ring. My progress was unfortunately slowed drastically during the last month of the challenge due to an injury. I was not able to exercise at all for the last

four weeks of my challenge. Some progress was lost, but I am determined to come back stronger than ever and continue my journey with Farrell's.

As a 38-year-old mom of six, I am forever grateful to the Farrell's program and especially to all the FIT members, coaches, instructors, managers & owners for all their support and encouragement. The combination of cardio kickboxing, strength training, nutrition guidance, and accountability are what make this program worth every penny and minute I have invested in it. It works! Without it, I know I would not have achieved the success I have. With it, my confidence is helping me soar to new heights every day. THANK YOU!