

Life is a journey...and there are many different roads that a person can take along the way. Some of the roads I had taken in the past were positive ones...filled with breathtaking and picturesque scenery and a smooth ride. Other roads were filled with potholes, twists, and turns...anything but a smooth and scenic ride.

When I started the Farrell's "10-week Challenge," on October 8, 2016, my life had taken a detour off course and the bumpy road I was on was leading to a dead end for sure. I no longer wanted to be part of the pictures along the way, I barely wanted to get out of my car, and I was filling my stomach with fast food and convenience store slushies. My life at this point, needless to say, was hell on wheels.

I had always been told that if you are lost, ask for directions. I found direction to a better road with Farrell's. I began the 10-week challenge and fell in love with the classes, the support from the owner's, instructors and members and the structure of the program. I followed the plan, logged all of my food diligently in the handbook that had become my road map to better health, and completed the 10 weeks with perfect attendance. Once the challenge ended, I looked at my numbers and pictures and was shocked at the transformation that my body had made. I also realized that my body was not only stronger, but my mind was stronger too. I was definitely on the road to a happier and healthier me. My journey, however, was only beginning!

I embarked on continuing the journey with the "Farrell's Year Long Challenge". The year-long challenge pushed me to create and accomplish both fitness and personal life goals; it also gave me accountability not only to myself, but to the program that had now become everyday life.

One of my fitness goals by the end of the 1-year challenge was to be able to complete 25 pushups from my toes. I am very proud to be a breast cancer survivor and 3 years ago, after undergoing a double mastectomy, I had lost a lot of upper body strength and doing just 1 pushup was almost impossible. I started the 10-week challenge with being able to complete 26 pushups from my knees, and at my 1-year final testing, I successfully completed 61 pushups from my knees. I was so overcome with emotion at my accomplishment, that I cried as I finished my last pushup. While it takes me longer than 1-minute to do 25 pushups from my toes, I am able to complete them and have more strength mentally and physically than I ever have.

The other fitness goal I had was to be able to run a 10k. While the opportunity never presented itself to run an actual 10k race, I held true to my goals and was able to successfully work my way up to being able to run the distance of a 10k. My running and "training" proved to be contagious to my family and soon my son began to ask to run with me. He is creating goals right along with me and it is inspiring to see him as determined as I am to accomplish them!

My personal goal during this year long challenge was to be able to share clothes with my 15-year old daughter, who is a competitive dancer and ballet barre instructor. My daughter loved this goal and wanted to help me achieve it! Over this past year, she has taken time to stretch me extra good on a regular basis, worked out with me at home doing floor exercises and ab workouts and together we have celebrated little successes along the way. One of the biggest successes that we have been able to celebrate is that now each of our closets have expanded and we are able to share pants, shirts and shoes! This has definitely been a win-win accomplishment for both of us!

During this past year, I was so very thankful for all of the people who inspired and supported me as I went along my journey to a happier and healthier me, that I became a Farrell's Instructor in June. I wanted to give to others what I had experienced along the way. There is a great feeling of satisfaction that comes from helping others realize their potential, achieve their goals and transform their lives. Their success continues to push me to achieve my own. We are all better together!

While my 1-year challenge has ended, my health and fitness journey continues and new goals have been set. Thank you to Farrell's for helping me get back on the road to a happier and healthier me. My new road now includes 10 goals to live my Life at Level 10!