

My Farrell's journey actually began long before setting foot in the Ames FXB gym. In June of 2012, I began my first 10 week session after both of my brothers had successfully finished their 10 weeks. I had great success, and I enrolled in the 1 year FIT completion. Things were going well, I was feeling great about my fitness and I was well on my way to a total body transformation. Then, in February of 2013, a job opportunity that I couldn't pass up came up in New York City. I promised myself that I would continue working out and eating right. However, after a very stressful year living in the City and with the announcement that our first child was on the way, we had to make an early exit from the job and city that we had completely uprooted our lives in Iowa for. By that time, I had completely fallen off the wagon and things would only continue to get worse. Another year went by, I was living and working on the road. I was eating very poorly and any progress I had made on my fitness in 2012/13 was completely gone. I felt embarrassed and ashamed and I didn't quite know how to pull myself back up again.

In June of 2016, after living in Western NY for several years, a friend of mine sent me a link to a job posting in Ames, Iowa. We were unhappy with our jobs, and even though we were close to my wife's family, we were not feeling fully satisfied. We discussed the option of moving back to Iowa, and after some long discussions we decided to go for it. We needed a change. I interviewed for the position and was offered the job in August of 2017. I felt very excited about the opportunity, but I also knew I had to try again to get back into shape. I wanted so desperately to go back and finish what I started in 2012...I wanted to go back to Farrell's. I quickly searched for the closest location and was very excited to see there was a location in Ames. I immediately emailed Angie and got signed up for the next session. I moved to Ames on September 19th, 2017 and on September 28th, I walked back into a Farrell's for the first time since leaving in 2013. I was there to have my photo take for my 10 week session...the second I walked in the door I was overcome with a wave of emotions. At first I was nervous and doubtful about whether I could do it again...starting over was so hard. Then as I waited in line and watched the people working out on the mats, something happened. I began to feel chills running down my spine. I felt hope and determination as if something that had been missing inside of me was suddenly there again. I felt like I was home.

I weighed in on October 1st, 2017 at 315lbs...over 5lbs heavier than my starting weight in 2012. I was a little older, my bones creaked a little harder and my lungs were on fire running that first mile. I pushed hard, I wanted to see how far I had stepped back. To my surprise, I wasn't discouraged by my testing. I knew I had a lot of work to do, but I was ready. I went to work immediately trying to find the spark I had in 2012 and it was amazing how quickly the fire grew. I showed up for class, I pushed harder than the day before and I didn't make a fuss about it. Show up, work harder, just keep going. This became my mantra. My 10 weeks flew by and to my surprise, I won the \$1000 challenge for my 10 week class. Given the size of my class, I was extremely proud of what I had accomplished. I let it soak in, set a new goal and showed up on Monday ready to go back to work.

2017 proved to be a complicated year in our lives. A cross country move, a new baby in June, another move to a bigger house in August, financial struggles, lost family members, old injuries resurfacing and a laundry list of other stressors. Through all of this, Farrell's has given me focus. It has taught me that my personal goals are important and that even if you FAIL it is not an excuse to give up. Show up, work harder and just keep pushing. Now a new year lies ahead of me and I have a lot of new goals. There will be stress and I know there will be failures. That is no excuse to quit. I am so excited to see what else this program can help me accomplish.