

In July of 2008 my employer began offering Personal Health Assessments that tracked biometrics and healthy lifestyle habits. My second PHA was in January 2009. When the results came back and were trending in all the wrong directions, I asked how much of that was due to being a year older. The answer, none! That was tough to swallow. I am harder on myself than anyone else and the shape I was in was no one's responsibility but my own.

In 2009 we had a "Biggest Loser" wellness activity that I participated in. By simply changing my diet, I dropped 20 pounds pretty quick. To keep the momentum going, I joined a local gym and started using weight machines three times a week and running. This worked great over the summer. I had a lot of extra time to devote to exercising and I was definitely on an upswing. Fall rolled around, time was nowhere to be found, my workout routine became boring and the results just weren't there. The first thing to go was exercise, then the diet slipped and I was back to beating myself up for not reaching my goals. My 2010 PHA was better, some of the weight stayed off but I still had a long way to go. When spring rolled around I became a regular at the gym again. Three days a week of weights and running. I started to see results and remember wearing my favorite suit at the time and feeling really good in Oct 2010. Unfortunately, I had a repeat of 2009. Time was scarce and the routine became really boring again. I didn't look forward to working out and it was easy to come up with a reason not to go to the gym. When I had my 2011 PHA I had lost 5 pounds since the previous year, but I was still either high risk or too close to high risk in multiple categories of the PHA. I tried to get back into the gym but the motivation to keep going just wasn't there.

In April of 2011 I was asked by a friend if I wanted to try an adult kettlebell class. My oldest son had been training with kettlebells as a student athlete and I was very impressed with how the training increased his flexibility, balance, strength and speed and really maximized his potential. It was spring and time to get the workout routine going again. When I started I could not bear crawl 6 feet without taking a break. Completing any part of the workout was a huge struggle, even getting through the warm ups was a challenge. I was in bad shape and it was pretty obvious! I committed myself to going twice a week and started walking on a treadmill another two times a week. We would also get a nutrition tip at the end of each class and I started incorporating those into my eating habits. I was darn near devastated when after three months I gained weight. Jeff was quick to explain to me that since my body fat % went down 2.1%, I had actually lost bad weight and gained good weight. I continued my two times per week for another three months and this time I had lost 13 pounds and my body fat % decreased another .6%. After 6 months of kettle bells and functional fitness I was two sizes smaller than the previous year and my favorite suit was long gone!

In Oct 2011 I joined Jet Functional Fitness as a full member so I could increase the number of times I went per week. One of the 2011 goals I set for myself was to be in a morning workout routine by the time fall rolled around. I knew evenings and weekends would become more challenging in the fall and winter and wanted to remove that excuse. Between Oct and Dec I was working out 3-4 times per week and running 1-2 times per week. Early Dec I was 2 pounds from my weight goal! That was the closest I had been in 5 years and I couldn't believe it. Even more exciting was the fact that I had an exercise routine that I not only loved, but craved. When stress would normally have sent me to the couch or the refrigerator, it sent me to exercise. I wanted to do it.

When I had my PHA in Jan 2012, I had exceeded my weight loss goal of 19 pounds by 3 pounds, reduced my body fat % by 7.5% and my cholesterol dropped 46 points.

In 2012 I came up with some new goals and Jet has helped me train for, reach or exceed those too. I continued to build lean muscle and in Sept 2012 I had 14% body fat (down 16.5% from Jan 2011) and had lost another 17 pounds for a total of 39 since I started at Jet in April 2011. I also trained for and competed in a mini-triathlon. My goal was to place in the top 50 women and I ended up taking 23rd! I maxed out my dead lift at 200 lbs. in July, did a TGU with a 24k in Aug, completed a class with a 40 lb weight vest on, ran my fastest mile in Oct, improved my average pace biking, swung the 40k 10 times and did 100 burpies without stopping in Nov. I can do a real push up and am hopefully on my way to my first ever pull-up! Looking back when I started 5 burpies in a row was not possible and swinging the 8k was exhausting. Looking forward is the best part as I don't see myself slowing down any time soon!

Over the last 19 months I can specifically point to a couple of things that have really made a difference for me. There was one class early on where Jeff told us we were going to do the plank for one minute and if anyone rested during the one minute it would mean the entire group would go that much longer. That was the first time I held a plank for a minute. He knew we could do it long before we did and that is what I needed to push myself to work harder. Encouragement and motivation like “No one quits in the last 10 seconds”, “You are stronger than you think you are”, “It really can be done, find a way” and other people cheering you on to complete your goals and celebrate your successes no matter how big or small they are, doesn’t ever go away.

For me this journey has not been easy. I have had many challenges and hit plenty of speed bumps and Jeff E. and Jeff K. have been with me every step of the way. Besides providing challenging workouts and knowing when to push me a little harder, they also helped me make changes to my diet and introduced me to yoga. They have also spent time explaining how it all works together to help me understand the changes I have gone through, achieve the results I have and become the athlete I am. When you have trusted professionals that truly want to help you succeed as much as you do yourself, there is simply no throwing in the towel. Quitting is not an option and is honestly one thing I have not wanted to do the last 19 months.

For me Jet Functional Fitness was the game changer. I look forward to going to Jet because Jeff E. and Jeff K. are exceptional at what they do, kettlebells are fun and the workout routine does not get boring. The people that go to Jet work unbelievably hard and encourage each other like teammates. The atmosphere and camaraderie at Jet is priceless and it all keeps you coming back for more. Jeff told me that I achieved the results I did because I worked hard and all he did was point me in the right direction. All I can say is Thank You to Jet because I couldn’t have done it without their direction and help and I am looking forward to working out with them for many years to come.

Lena