

***We all need to stop and think about 'My time' before it's too late! . . .this is why we all need to take some time for ourselves.***

***My name is Sandy Tammel and I am a personal trainer at Coffee Street Fitness in Lanesboro. I would like to share JoAnne's story with all of you...***

***Because JoAnne has a very busy life that we all can relate to by trying to juggle a career, a family, unexpected emergencies and all those other important matters that arise out of nowhere. We don't have time to stop and think about ourselves and how this all takes a great toll on our own health such as it did with JoAnne. When she came to me she had very little confidence that she could do anything physically to help herself feel normal and energetic again. Not knowing what to expect from me as a personal trainer, JoAnne just knew she needed to do something about her health and fitness level. I remember her saying "I just want to feel better again and get my energy back." I confidently assured her she would if she keeps a positive attitude and keeps coming to the workout sessions I have planned for her. I praised her for taking charge in thinking positive by wanting to do something for herself and scheduling her own 'my time' to do it! She became very confidence and strong willed throughout the entire training process and had a very positive attitude with a very positive outcome. JoAnne was a great trooper and kept on going through all the bumps along the way even while recovery from her surgery. Nothing stopped her or myself from continuing her training sessions. She amazed herself of what she could do! She is a true inspiration to all in what a person can do when you put your mind and determination into it . . . and commit to becoming a better you!***

#### **JoAnne's Story ~**

My plan was simple: my 50's were going to be my best decade. My children were grown, home and work were good, so now would be "my time." I paid for a weight-loss plan and lost the weight.

Then, I hit 50 and the next day my mother became ill. Balancing a career, family, and a medical emergency was too much. I gained all the weight back and became so sluggish that it took all my effort to get up from a chair. The fatigue was a symptom: my first-ever colonoscopy at 51 showed stage 2 cancer. I recovered from major (successful!) surgery, but shortly after, my only daughter was engaged. Then, my mother died. Though I wanted to exercise, and I bought DVDs and a treadmill, none of it worked. I still did not take time to be fit.

The cancer surgeon had assured me that someday—in 3, 4, or 5 years—I would think, "Oh, this is how I used to feel." Five years later, I got the energy back and became a grandma to a beautiful, but big, baby boy. I realized I want to be the grandma who can pick him up and play with him as he grows. That will take strength! Then I saw an ad for Sandy Tammel as a fitness trainer. I confess I copied her number but waited all autumn to call her.

Well, I had grown up in a time when fitness for girls meant dancing to "Go, you chicken fat, go"; when we chose teams in PE, I was only chosen because my best friends were physically fit. So I had a huge fear of failure. Sandy agreed to train me two days a week. It did take courage for me to show up for training with Sandy. I had not ever lifted weights or heard of some of the exercises! The half-hour sessions consisted of me asking hundreds of questions about my stance, holding the weights, and asking "how am I supposed to do this one again?"

Through it all, Sandy has never lost patience, never lost enthusiasm, never lost her assurance that "you can do it!" When I had bunion surgery, she found exercises I could continue to do. If I have a sore shoulder, she modifies the workout. No workouts are routine: she changes exercises so I don't get bored and am constantly challenged. I trust her completely; that means if she thinks I can do an exercise, I think I can. . . I think I can!

Having a personal trainer sounded to me like something only the elite can afford. The past year working with Sandy has not only provided excellent strength and cardio fitness (a great way to keep the cancer away and keep my bones strong) but she has also been a great emotional support, encouraging me and changing meeting times when my schedule changes.

My husband asks me if I like the training. Here's my answer: I do not like actually taking the time to go, because I am not used to taking time just for me and there is always so much to do; but I love being there and I love the feeling that comes from accomplishing the exercises. It is also amazing to fit into clothing without trying to hide excess weight!

Life continues to present challenges, but building strength helps me to face the challenges without being overwhelmed by stress. I am no longer afraid of being that grandma that can't get down on the floor to play with her grandchildren. I am grateful that I took that first difficult step, because that grandson is now nearly 30 pounds and I can pick him up and play with him all day!