



Slow and Steady Yields Big Results

Jen Clune, an employee with the Dartmouth school system has reached a personal goal with the help of the Town of Dartmouth's MIIA wellness program. She shed over 45 pounds over the past year. As a result, she reports many positive changes such as feeling better, having more energy, feeling proud that she achieved a personal goal, and enjoying more physical activity.

She accomplished the weight loss by adopting a healthier lifestyle and making small changes over time. In addition to regular exercise at a local gym, she keeps track of what she is eating as well as the portion size, participates in online wellness quizzes, attends nutrition and other wellness workshops and checks in with her wellness coach once a month. Most of these activities are offered to town employees at no cost through the Town of Dartmouth's health insurance provider, the MIIA Health Insurance Benefits Trust.

Jen's advice to others looking to become healthier is to consider what small shifts you can make in your daily habits. Jen encourages others to design meal and fitness plans that provide different options and choices, so they feel in control and not deprived. She shares that going slow reaps the best benefits and gives individuals time to adjust, as making changes to one's lifestyle can be overwhelming.

Tricia Silverman, Jen's wellness coach and a registered dietician, remarked that a wellness coach's job is to listen intently and help people make better, practical decisions about nutrition, exercise and other areas of their lives. Coaching individuals is a highly confidential and personalized process where the coach can be both a cheerleader and a guide to help people become accountable for their own wellness goals.

MIIA Wellness Classes: Jen participated in the following activities over the course of the past year. She found that the flexibility provided by the online programs worked well with her busy schedule.

- The 5% Solution (and coaching from Tricia Silverman) series program
- Healthy Holiday Eating workshop
- Biggest Winner Online series program
- Quizzify monthly health literacy online quizzes

Wendy Gammons, MIIA's Wellness Manager, commented that providing members with a wide variety of programs, online and in person, allows them to choose those activities that best fit their lifestyles and also helps them meet and maintain their individual health and wellness goals.