



Juli Baxter

real people real results

By Jeanette Hurt

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When New Berlin resident Juli Baxter initially came to Fitness Together, her goal was to lose weight. Although this 50-year-old lost the weight—and went from a size 18 down to a size 12—she discovered two bigger benefits from working out: managing stress and finding more energy.

Employed as a supervisor in information services for Aurora Healthcare—and as a part-time barista at Starbucks—Baxter works an average of 70 hours a week. And that’s on top of being a wife and having the responsibilities of caring for an aging parent. As this month’s success story, Baxter also finds time to work out at Fitness Together twice a week and exercises on her own. She’s committed to a healthy lifestyle—one she was introduced to four years ago when she discovered Fitness Together. Baxter and one of her trainers, Pete Piranio, BS, CSCS and owner of Fitness Together, took time to answer our questions.

With your heavy workload, how do you manage to find time to work out?

Baxter: “I discovered by exercising that it really decreased my stress level. I call exercising my decompression time. Even when at work, we were in the midst of rolling out 14 hospitals within an 18-month period, I never missed a session. Now, I definitely won’t stop exercising, I won’t stop with my program. I know that when I leave here, I am going to feel less stressed and have more energy.”

Piranio: “If you have a lot of stress in your life, you can

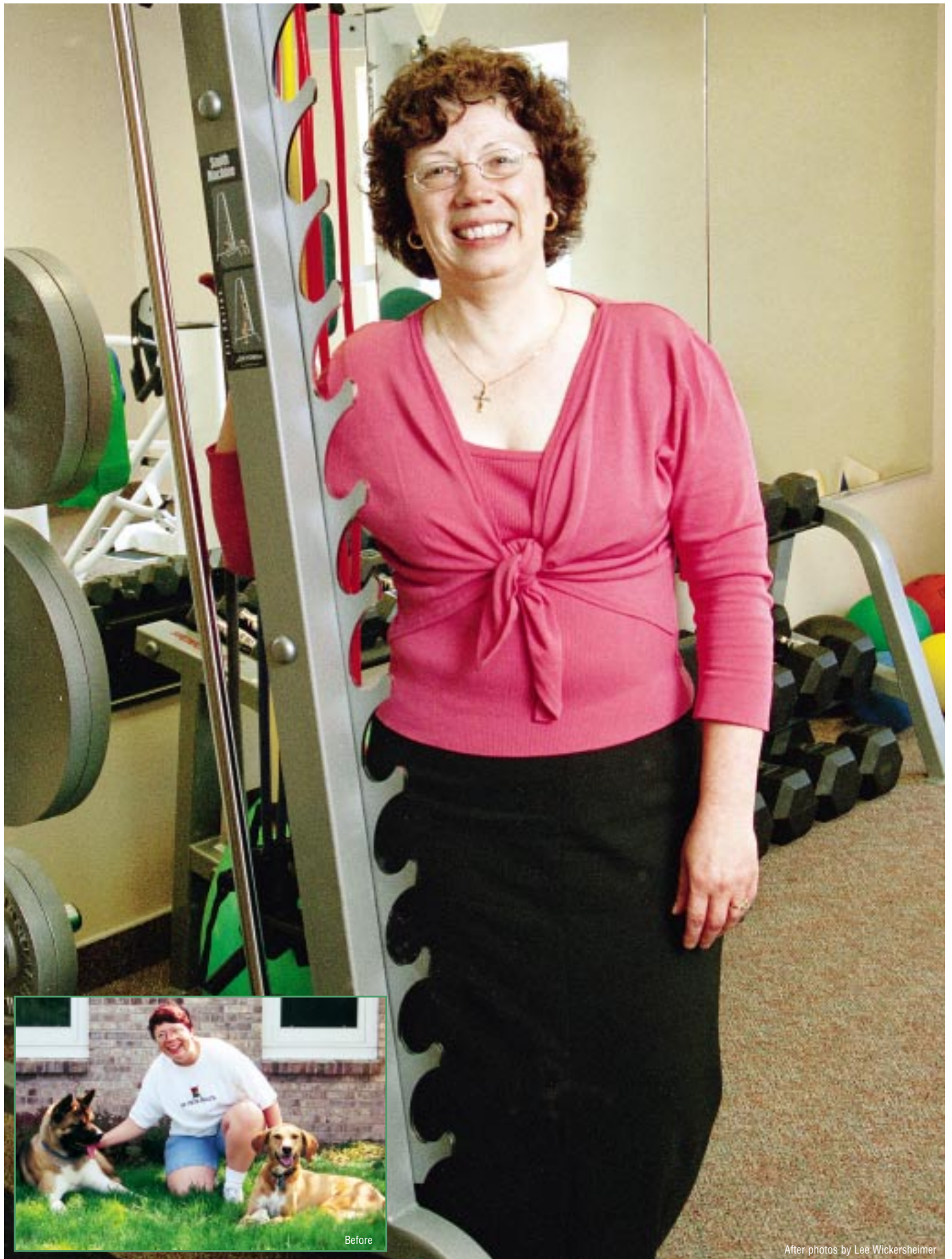
actually decrease your ability to lose weight because of hormones. Also, one of the ways many people decompress from work is to eat food. One of the biggest causes of overeating is stress.”

Baxter: “I would agree with Pete because I was an emotional eater. I used to come home late at night, and I didn’t feel like cooking, and that bag of potato chips looked really good as a meal.”

How did Fitness Together help you stop your emotional eating and your potato chip meals?

Baxter: “I kept a food journal, and after a while, I could tell which days of the week were really stressful days for me. Also, instead of eating five small meals a day, I used to miss meals. What changed is I would plan for those days that were really stressful so I had good choices I could make. I was never a breakfast eater, but now I will have a protein bar and a piece of fruit. We looked at my food journal and discovered I was not getting enough protein.”

Piranio: “Juli participated in our Eat Nutritional Program, which is a six to eight weeks program. It’s not a diet—it’s a common sense approach to eating.”



After photos by Lee Wickersheimer

real people, real results

Baxter: "My choices, in general, were pretty good, but the first thing I did was I cut out all my soda. I was drinking diet, but not caffeine free. I also started drinking eight glasses of water every day and bringing my water bottle everywhere with me. Then, the other thing with eating is, I always have a protein, a starchy carb and a fiber-filled carb. I found out I was not as hungry when I was getting a good, basic balance."

Piranio: "She would skip meals and then set herself up for failure. Even with making good selections, you overeat if you skip meals. You need to stabilize your blood sugar. She learned about the hunger scale—you don't wait until you're starving to eat, and you don't eat until you're full, you eat until you're satisfied."

Besides eating breakfast and having more balanced meals, how else have your nutritional habits changed?

Baxter: "I have learned that there are things I need to eat before my workout and after my workout. I think that's really helped. I have gained a lot of muscle."

Piranio: "Do you feel like you've bulked up?"

Baxter: "No. I feel like I am more defined. You can really see my muscles, but it's not bulk. It's toned definition."

Piranio: "One other thing is she probably burns 500 calories more a day because of her muscles."

How often do you work out?

Baxter: "Right now, I work out twice a week. When I first began, it was three days a week, then I went up to four days a week, and then down to three, and now it's two times a week. My workouts have progressed enough that I can work out just two times a week. Now, there isn't a part of my body that I don't work. When I first started, I didn't have the stamina. I began by using three pound weights—now I do 20 pounds."

Piranio: "She probably made her greatest progress when she was working out four times a week, but she's more educated now and can come in just two times a week."

When you started at Fitness Together, did you exercise much?

Baxter: "I walked my dog and that was about it. I used to be a couch potato. When you come in, there's an assessment, and part of it is to go up and down on stairs, and you should be able to do it for three minutes. I didn't even do it for a minute. At my next assessment, I made it through the whole three minutes, and now, if you asked me to do it, I could do it for as long as you wanted me to. So many things have changed since I started at Fitness Together. Since I started exercising, I have had only one cold, and I work in a place where everyone else around me is always catching the latest bug. My immune system is strong. I used to get sick at least two or three times a year, and I always caught whatever anyone else had."

Has it been hard to maintain your new lifestyle?

Baxter: "As women, we think we have to be perfect, and I think that's not true. At Fitness Together, you even have a throw-away day when you can eat whatever you want. But I will tell you, my throw-away days aren't as bad as they used to be. Now, I'll think—am I really going to want to pay the price of eating badly?"

Piranio: "Your cravings change as you become used to eating clean."

Baxter: "After a while, I just didn't feel good. After you've been eating well when you eat all the things that are not part of your basic balance, it's just not worth it."

What are your fitness goals now, after being with Fitness Together for so long?

Baxter: "I'm still actually making great progress, but now, it's fine-tuning things. That's one thing about having a trainer work out with you. If you try to do it on your own, you don't know that there are these exercises you need to do to fit in these pieces. My programs are always tailored to keep what I have and to work on where I want to go. Without Fitness Together, I don't think my workouts would be maximized." **FT**

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FITNESS TOGETHER

1 Client 1 Trainer 1 Goal

Real People, Real Results

Lost **15** pounds
Lost **4** inches

Stephanie Brand, *Delafield*

I have gained more **FLEXIBILITY,**
better balance,
STAMINA!
& strength!
than I thought possible

Carolyn R., *Whitefish Bay*

Your Trainers Salute You!

After 11 months, my blood pressure
went from **160/110**
and my cholesterol at **253**
TO **125/80**
153

John Shaughnessy, *Mequon*

Lost **10** total inches
Lost **4** inches off waist

Renee Stamm, *Brookfield*

**Our Clients Look Good In Public
Because They Train In Private!**