

Jo's

journey



Jo Ball wants to “walk the walk” -- the fifth annual Whitewater Adventure (formerly Whitewater Walk).

She says: I have been a great starter of exercise and diet programs over the years but never really finished any of them. I know a lot of people are in that same boat.

Feel The Power

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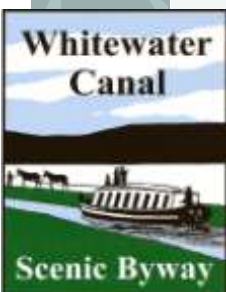
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Hanging on the wall in the work-out room of the gym I attend, is a poster with the words “Feel The Power” and underneath are small pictures of football helmets of each NFL team. Of course, I see the significance of that poster, however, there are many different ways to interpret that statement. In reference to my own personal journey those words mean far more than just strength or muscle building.

Getting healthy and fit has many benefits other than the obvious ones that I had never before considered. I was just curious about those benefits and decided to do a Google search. Here are a few of the things I found.

Most everyone knows that diet and exercise is believed to reduce the risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and reduces the bad cholesterol while raising the good cholesterol. Exercise reduces stress, induces changes in the body's immune system and may protect against some forms of cancer according to Harvard Medical School's consumer Web site. Another study now in progress is to prove that regular physical activity has an anti-aging effect at the cellular level, suggesting exercise could prevent aging of the cardiovascular system.

One would think with all of this wonderful information at our finger tips that everyone of us would jump at the chance to get the weight off and get to moving. Some of us are slow learners and I include myself in that category. With four months of regular exercise behind me, I began to have a really good feeling of well being that I couldn't identify until I noticed that poster I spoke of in the beginning. It is truly a feeling of empowerment. I get that feeling when I can walk into a restaurant and the greeter asks if I want a booth or table. I proudly announce I prefer a booth just because I know that I will fit comfortably. That is empowerment.



When I walk the trail and know that I will finish without having to stop and rest several times, that is empowerment. When I go to my Weight Watcher class and step up on the scale and realize a weight gain but I know I am replacing that ugly fat with strong healthy muscle, that is empowerment. When I go to my doctor for a routine check-up and she is so pleased that all my numbers are good, therefore, she reduces my blood pressure medicine , that is empowerment. When I am able to go into a clothing store and buy something off the rack that fits me and I didn't have to go to the plus sizes department, that is over the top empowerment.

The list goes on and on. The personal victories are more encouraging to me than a study or research results from any medical association. There is nothing more empowering or self satisfactory than being able to actually squat down to the level of my grandson to get a big hug from him and be able to raise back up under my own power. That is the best reward of all! Nothing can replace those hugs ! I did experience jumping another hurdle this week by running a few feet for the first time in forty years. That was fun and empowering to see my husband's shocked expression.

I know from experience that you start with small steps and move on up . The next time I will run a few more steps. I do have to learn to hop and that is a little more difficult for a person my age but since I taught my grandson how to play Simon Says, wouldn't you know the first thing that came out of his mouth was, "Simon says, hop on one foot" ! I just couldn't do it so he decided he would help me by holding up my other foot.....not good. We had a lot of laughs from that but I do have a new challenge now.

Since my last journal entry, our family has been blessed with the most beautiful granddaughter named Layla Susan. She is one more reason to get up every day and get to walking and hopping because I have a feeling that Xander will be teaching her how to play Simon Says.



From Sunday, September 19, through Sunday, September 26, the Whitewater Adventure will allow participants to Bike, Hike and Paddle the state-designated Whitewater Canal Scenic Byway and its loops in the Valley. Formerly known as the Whitewater Walk, it will begin in Hagerstown **at the historic canal's northern terminus and conclude in Lawrenceburg on the Ohio River – 109 miles in 7 days.** This year's event will include a mixture of biking and hiking the Byway and its Loops, boating and floating the Whitewater River, and riding the Whitewater Valley Railroad. In addition, participants can also take a twilight walk in one of the historic communities that dot the hills and valleys of this beautiful region or join around a campfire in the evenings.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.WHITEWATERCANALSCENICBYWAY.ORG