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Pushing Your Limits

For the first several years I worked for the State of Nebraska, I was regularly working extremely long hours. My average work week was 6-7 days, 60-80 hours (and some still are). While I absolutely cherish and enjoy the challenge of my work, I was not making time for myself. Having been a competitive swimmer in the past, and what most would call naturally athletic, I was definitely coasting. I soon realized this way of life shouldn't continue and that positive changes needed to be made. I needed to bring focus back to my personal health and well-being.

Changing your habits is challenging, but rewarding. It's important to enjoy your small victories in the journey, not just when you achieve a big goal. The small, everyday victories are what lead to long-term success. Now, I'm excited to be back in the pool doing what I love! I've also returned to yoga and added the new sports of cycling and running to my list of activities. Although I may not look it, I have somehow turned myself into an endurance athlete. I guess you could say that you can't judge a triathlete by their tri-suit. For those of you hesitant to try new things, I'd encourage you to give something a chance. You might just love it. While I may be the last to cross the finish line, at least I AM finishing. I am finishing long, challenging and rewarding training sessions and races. And, I LOVE IT.

I'm having an absolute blast trying to learn the limits of what I can and can't do. Surprisingly, I am learning that the 'cans' are outnumbering the 'cannots' – and that's a great feeling. Being an active, healthy person gives you a great appreciation for life in so very many ways.

My best recommendation to others is to find something you enjoy. Yeah, I know you hear that advice all the time, but that's because it is true. What is the best way to do that, you may ask. Try going back to a sport or activity you've enjoyed in the past. For me, that was swimming. I took a break after having been a highly competitive swimmer for half my life, but it was time to literally dive back in. I encourage you to be brave and try new things. I chose to get out of the comfort zone of the pool and have ventured into cycling, running, adventure races, triathlons, endurance racing... There are so many adventures to be had and friends to make in the healthy living world.

A change in lifestyle is never easy. Trust me, I know and I do understand. My change began the day I realized that I wasn't going to be able to coast forever. I needed to do a better job of taking care of myself – something we all could do. I want to stay healthy and active throughout my entire life, so that it is just as important today as it will be every day to come.

Having the **wellnesoptions** program for State of Nebraska employees is a great encouragement. It's good to know that we are all in this together, making us all better tomorrow than we are today. Please, do something good for yourself and your health today. Remember, you deserve to be happy and healthy, and you might just love it!