

## Client Testimonial: Leslie Licata

Amgen Fitness Center - January 22, 2016

My journey toward becoming more physically fit began with the devastating diagnosis of breast cancer in 2013. The fight was on. My battle included a surprising secondary diagnosis and numerous complications and setbacks. After 9 surgeries and additional treatment regimens over the next 18 months, I was weak and exhausted. I was continuing to work but just getting ready to go into the office in the morning was completely draining.



At that point I wasn't allowed to lift anything heavier than a half-gallon of milk (which I had to do with both hands!) and I was receiving physical therapy to regain basic range of motion. After 6 months without further problems the doctors cautiously agreed I could begin an exercise program outside the clinical setting. But where and how to begin?

I was fortunate to have a fitness center on site at work but was completely intimidated by the idea of working out at the gym. I knew I'd need help getting started. With some coaxing from my daughter (okay, much coaxing), I discussed my health and my goals with the Director of Personal Training, Peter Parasiliti, and signed up for 8 sessions of personal training with him. I still wasn't allowed to really lift any weight and was completely deconditioned, a word I learned that meant I had a very, very long way to go. But Peter was up for the challenge and I was ready for the next round of battle.

With creative adaptations and patience with my slow progress, we worked at it twice a week. I began to experience small successes and could see the potential benefits. I could also see how difficult it was going to be to sustain with a full schedule at work that offered so many excuses not to go to the gym. I was determined to continue but knew I needed the ongoing support of a trainer. With the commitment and expectation of that twice weekly training session on my calendar, I've been able to keep at it for an entire year now.

My doctors tell me that because of my surgery I'll probably never be able to do a "real" pushup. Peter refuses to believe that and I'm starting to think if we keep working at it, someday it just might happen!

I still have limitations and we still make adaptations and adjustments but I'm building strength, flexibility, and confidence in myself and in my health. Two years ago, I couldn't imagine myself in a gym and today I can't imagine what I'd do without it.

