

Jody DeLasky

I was diagnosed with fibromyalgia several years ago and it has been a challenge for me. Before I started going to the Phillips Community Pool there were days when getting out of bed posed a tremendous challenge. At '40 something', my aches and pains were those felt by people double my age! I learned my treatment options included medication (with potentially serious side effects), pain management, and/or exercise. I chose exercise.

As I began thinking of what low impact exercise might suit me best, swimming came to mind. I started my first swimming class when I was four, and swam through high school. I was the captain of the swim team for Tartan High School and swam in an Amateur Athletic Union program for South East Metro Swim team in Minnesota. Believe it or not, I was even top ten in the nation in a relay when I was young, and I swam the butterfly.

It had been 25+ years since I had been swimming. I even giggled to myself and thought, "Who am I kidding?" But, I thought it was worth a try if it would keep me off daily medication. One year later...what have I learned?

I have learned that even though I can no longer do a flip turn or swim 100 yard fly with ease, lap swimming at the pool has been the best therapy I could have ever asked for, in more ways than one. The lifeguards and morning swimmers greet me, smiling, every morning. Mary shares Lane 1 with me when the other lanes are full. There are kickboards, fins, and hand paddles, and there are several who exercise in the deep end each morning. One of the beautiful things about swimming is that I can go at my own pace to reach my goals. And, after a relaxing swim, I can spend a few minutes stretching in the hot tub. It's a great way to start my day...now, if I can only find a way to get rid of the goggle marks around my eyes BEFORE I get to work, I will have it made!

A final note...sincere thanks to all that make the pool a great place to go for fitness and fun.

