Wellness Activities Group

Practice What You Preach

“Live daringly, boldly, fearlessly. Taste the relish to be found in competition – in having put forth the best within you.”

~ Henry J. Kaiser
“I can run faster than my husband now,” Danielle boasted as a proud grin stretched across her face.

Last November, Danielle started noticing a change in coworkers – they were losing weight and keeping it off. Despite the enormous temptations she knew she would face over Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years, she wanted to be a part of the weight-loss success that was sweeping over SilverStone Group. Danielle made the choice to change her diet and exercise routine – not an easy commitment to make just weeks before the holidays. She admits that, in the past, she struggled with holding herself accountable for healthy eating and exercising regularly. Danielle was able to confidently step up to this challenge, however, because she was enrolling in two health initiatives SilverStone Group’s Wellness Activities Group (WAG) made available to Associates – Tony Dean’s F.A.S.T. Diet and the Corporate Challenge.

Losing weight the F.A.S.T. way
Incorporating the F.A.S.T. Diet made Danielle instantly shed weight – over 30 pounds in just 4 months! She learned portion control and healthy eating habits by maintaining a 1,350 calorie per day diet. She also began incorporating a minimum of 30 minutes of exercise into her daily routine. The F.A.S.T. diet not only sparked a change in Danielle’s food consumption, but in her husband Andrew’s as well. He enjoyed the challenge of finding restaurant nutritional information before they went out for dinners, and he grew adventurous by trying some of the healthier foods Danielle was beginning to eat on a regular basis. She quickly met her weight loss goals thanks to strict adherence to the diet guidelines and support from Andrew. By the time February rolled around, Danielle was buying new clothes to accommodate her shrinking waist and challenging herself with races such as Trek Up the Tower (a 40-floor stair climb in downtown Omaha).

The next level
In March 2011, SilverStone Group Associates were called to participate in the Corporate Challenge – a 6 week kettlebell workout program that required compliance with a healthy diet while receiving Russian Kettlebell Certified (RKC) training through SG Human Performance (an Omaha-based kettlebell training facility). Danielle, along with 71 additional SilverStone Group participants, stepped up to this unique challenge presented by WAG. Spouses and significant others were also invited to participate, so Andrew decided to join his wife. A total of 8 teams were formed, all competing to gain the highest cumulative score. Points were earned based on individual performance. Each participant set personal goals that could be realistically met during the 6-week program, such as body-fat reduction, strength training improvement or reaching a desired weight. Thorough measurements were taken every two weeks and participants were required to log their food intake and exercise schedule. The winning team would have the opportunity to select a charity to receive a donation in their name, enjoy a catered celebratory lunch and, most importantly, gain challenge-winning bragging rights – a priceless opportunity at SilverStone Group!

Although Danielle and her husband were teammates, the challenge sparked an inter-marital competition between the two. During each kettlebell class a workout MVP was selected for putting forth an outstanding workout (which was also an opportunity to score some team bonus points). Danielle and her husband competed against each other to earn this coveted honor, sizing one another up for form and stamina. Andrew’s
hard work earned him an MVP title, and while Danielle’s team didn’t win the challenge, her personal success with the program was remarkable. She crushed her challenge goal she initially set (which was losing 1-2% of her body fat) by dropping it by 3.5%!

**Maintaining the success**

The combination of the F.A.S.T. Diet and the Corporate Challenge has motivated Danielle to continually push herself physically. As she puts it, “I just keep signing up for stuff!” She will be participating in a women’s team triathlon as the group swimmer, and has also committed to a number of running events. Prior to the Corporate Challenge, Danielle couldn’t get her husband to go to the gym with her. Now they are regular faces at the gym and on a first name basis with staff members. The couple was so impressed with the training at SG Human Performance that they committed to an additional 5 weeks of kettlebell training to complete during the summer months.

Danielle has reached her goals and is looking forward to maintaining the results she has worked so hard to achieve with continued help from the F.A.S.T. Diet and some additional kettlebell training. She is grateful for the wellness opportunities the WAG committee has made so easily accessible to her and the entire company. Aside from introducing fitness and diet initiatives to Associates, WAG encourages total well being with various activities throughout the year. WAG understands that overall wellness will ultimately build a better staff as a whole.

When asked what kind of advice she has for her coworkers who haven’t yet taken advantage of these health programs, she replied, “Do it, but don’t go into it thinking it’s going to be like the ‘Biggest Loser.’ Most people lose 2 pounds a week, which is a very healthy rate of loss. Be honest with yourself and the people who are running the programs.” One look at Danielle and you’ll want to heed this weight-loss champion’s advice!
Workplace Wellness through City-Wide Initiative Promoted by WAG

To continue its efforts in creating a healthier work environment, SilverStone Group has partnered with Live Well Omaha: Douglas County Putting Prevention to Work. The goal of this initiative is to help make Omaha a healthier city to live, work, play and raise children. As a Live Well Omaha partner, SilverStone Group has already committed by offering free, healthy snacks in its break room, as well as healthy food options for catered lunches. In addition, SilverStone Group reimburses a portion of gym membership fees for all Associates.

“We are committed to providing a workplace where mind and body wellness is a priority because a healthy staff is important to the success of our organization,” stated Michelle Hansen, co-chairperson of SilverStone Group’s Wellness Activities Group (WAG). “Being healthy is a lifestyle decision, and we want to create an environment that supports it.”

The WAG committee spearheads SilverStone Group’s wellness initiatives, promoting well-being through events such as Corporate Challenge for weight loss, Lunch and Learns, promoting and supporting fitness activities and more. Because of these initiatives, SilverStone Group has won numerous awards for its wellness campaign. In 2008, SilverStone Group was awarded a Gold Well Workplace award by the Wellness Council of America. The company also won the Governor’s Excellence in Wellness Award at the Grower’s level, a prestigious award earned by only 27 Nebraska employers.

Live Well Omaha is a community-wide effort committed to reducing and eliminating barriers preventing healthy living. The Centers for Disease Control recently evaluated the health of 182 U.S. cities and Omaha ranked 142 (with 1 being the healthiest). The disappointing ranking was due to a high prevalence of risk factors contributing to obesity, poor nutrition and a lack of physical activity, as well as frequent smoking and binge drinking.