

From Teaching to Health Superstar

By Charlie Sheridan

At 68 years old, Carol Sedberry could be taking it easy, but that's not in her nature. Carol got back into exercising 10 years ago when she retired from being a high school teacher and counselor. She maintains a regular workout schedule, varies up her routines to keep from getting bored and says it takes more than just cardio and weights to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

Carol has been a member of WRS Athletic Club for the past decade. More than just a place to work out, the club provides her with a strong social network, which she says is an important part of staying healthy.

How do you define being healthy?

Being healthy is having a well-balanced life through physical activity, mental activity and spiritual growth. I feel better now than I did 10 years ago, and I know it's because I'm eating healthier and I'm working out. I just can't imagine anybody being my age and not working out; it's just so important. I feel so good working out, and it's so good for me.

I also feel very fortunate to have many friends, and I believe interaction with friends keeps your mind young.

What is your exercise routine?

I enjoy working out at my gym. My routine involves working out with my personal trainer twice a week (on Mondays and Wednesdays), and I have a friend that I also work out with twice a week (on Tuesdays and Fridays).

I have to have somebody I'm accountable to. I can't just set my alarm, get up and go to the gym and work out all by myself. So that's where my personal trainer comes in and also my workout buddy. We've worked out together for about 10 years. And unfortunately if she calls in and says, "I'm sorry. I can't come today," with no excuse, I just stay home. My trainer works with me on strength, cardio and balance.

On the days that I work out with my friend, we reinforce what I did with my trainer and then add about 30 minutes of cardio, which involves riding the stationary bike for 10 minutes, the treadmill for 15 minutes and the stair master for five.

Sometimes on Fridays we enjoy chang-



Ready to take on yoga: Carol Sedberry posing for the camera as she heads to her weekly yoga class. Carol has a beaming smile as she transforms her post-retirement life into a happy, healthy lifestyle as she embraces fitness, nutrition, and spiritual well-being. Photo by Charlie Sheridan.

ing up our routine a little by attending a 45-minute Pilates class. I also try to make it to yoga once or twice a week at a yoga studio, which is great for stretching and flexibility. My mom had osteoporosis. I've got the genes for that, and I know when you work out on a regular basis, it is good for your bones.

What about healthy eating?

Healthy eating and exercise go hand in hand. When I eat right, I feel better and have more energy. I was not always a healthy eater, but the more I learn about healthy eating, the more I try to practice it. Nutrition is another thing my trainer has helped me with, other than exercise.

I make my own rules to follow to keep me on track. I love sweets, so I don't want to give them up completely. Instead, I save them for a special occasion like a party or a wedding. I have also cut way down on the amount of unhealthy carbs like rolls and white bread. It is much easier to eat healthy now than in past years, because more and more restaurants are catering to the healthy lifestyle. I think every year I seem to get better at this.

What role does mental health play in your life?

Keeping fit physically and eating right are not the only things you need to do for a healthy lifestyle. I believe after the age of 65, it is very important to not only

exercise physically but mentally as well. One of my goals in life is to stay mentally sharp as long as I live. I watched my mom die of Alzheimer's disease, so I am very aware of trying to exercise my brain and keep it sharp.

I always try to have a good book in hand and read daily. I love to play word games on my iPad, and I have a group of ladies I play mahjong with several times a month. I try and challenge my brain as much as possible.

If I wake up in the morning and I'm supposed to work out, sometimes I think I really rather just stay in bed and stay home. But once I get up and get my clothes on and get in the car to go, I'm a different person. And so I know that's what I need to do; I need to just make myself do that.

What role does your spiritual life play in maintaining a healthy lifestyle?

My spiritual life is the most important part of my life. I thank God every day for the ability to exercise. I put God in the center of my life, and he is a part of all the decisions I make.

I walk hand in hand with him daily, and he has blessed my life richly. I believe I am a much better person because of my walk with God.