By Hamed Hamad

No matter what job or profession you’re in, it is the level of inspiration that will forever forecast the depths of your success. For Alison Hager, she believes, “You only fail when you quit trying.”

Born and raised in Kansas, Alison Hager grew up as an active child; swam, danced and did gymnastics. Up until she was in 5th grade, Alison became very ill, struggling with stomach problems and overall eating. With a gallbladder working at 4%, Alison needed medical attention and eventually surgery. Even after a few months of healing and trying to get her active lifestyle back, she fell doing the splits and ended up having a slipped epiphysis. Once more, Alison found herself in the hospital, which was the same time that poor eating habits and lack of mobility got the best of her.

By her 6th grade year, Alison weighed over 160 pounds and a few years later, her other hip began to slip and needed surgery again. The depression of not being able to be like the other students in PE class was excruciating, tempting Alison to give up trying. Not until her and her mother teamed up by taking simple walks that Alison gradually got back into the groove of things. And right before high school graduation, she trained and ran a 1/2 marathon, thinking, “If I couldn't be good at high school sports, I'd do something else!”

Once college years were in full swing, Alison’s weight got out of hand once more. After much struggle and practically not eating due to the weight gain, Alison was diagnosed with hypothyroidism. With the help of a Personal Trainer and researching healthy eating and making lifestyle changes, Alison was able to drop the weight, losing 90 lbs. by the time she graduated from college.

After graduating from Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, Alison moved back home and became a Special Education paraprofessional. She began training with a personal trainer, who worked out with her 5-6 times a week. It was the creation of healthy habits and friendships through the fitness classes and training that got Alison hooked. She confidently says, “I'd never dream of skipping a class or training because I know those ladies were counting on me to be there! That kept me motivated and driving forward.”

Despite the improvements Alison was making, she actually never considered becoming a personal trainer until her job required her to move. Upon joining a health club after moving back home, a personal trainer there approached her about needing more instructors. After teaching for a year, Alison’s own personal weight loss story was inspiring to many at the gym, making her potential clientele grow fast. But before she could take on the load, Alison knew she needed more training. The Coordinator at the time informed Alison about the NCCPT Certification program and decided to hire her provisionally. After passing the exam, the rest was history at Genesis Health Clubs.

Today, Alison specializes in clients of all ages and sizes; track athletes, elderly men and women and even soon-to-be moms in need of prenatal training. She keeps her and her clients’ workouts versatile and fun by incorporating weights, cycling, and Centergy (a yoga/Pilates mixed class).

Alison says, “I truly care for my clients equally. They don't fight me or doubt me on my advice, they just do it. I believe in my clients’ abilities and potential, and I refuse to flake on them.”

As for her personal goals, Alison desires to earn a nutrition certification and get the opportunity to travel for speaking engagements, sharing her journey so that it may help others. Making lifestyle changes do not happen overnight, she says, however, she encourages her clients to find something that they can improve on each day, “Even if that means taking the dog around the block one more time, or getting another 8 oz. of water down.”

And due to this relentless passion and dedication, NCCPT has proudly chosen Alison Hager as Personal Trainer of the Month. To connect with Alison, please visit the following: Twitter and Instagram: @Fit\_Not\_Skinny or <http://successinvariousforms.blogspot.com/>