

ADULT LEARNER SUCCESS STORY

Meegen Smith | Vermont



Adult education provided Meegen with the ability to learn. At 16, Meegen dropped out of high school and began running with the wrong crowd. By the age of 20, Meegen was severely overweight, a mother of two, and married to an inmate at the State Penitentiary. She had bulging discs in her back and degenerative joint disease that landed her in the hospital for emergency surgery. For the next 10 years after this surgery, Meegen was addicted to painkillers, and by the time she was 30-years-old, she ended up incarcerated. Prison sobered Meegen up and she began to look for anything that would help her make more of her life.

Meegen enrolled in Central Vermont Adult Basic Education (CVABE) with the dream of getting her GED® to become a personal trainer. It wasn't until she completed her GED® that she realized that personal trainers do not need this credential, however, she was not full of regret. She says, "Having the GED® gave me self-confidence and self-worth.

For so long my mentality had been that because I had learning disabilities, I couldn't learn. Before I went to CVABE to study for the GED® I really didn't know how to learn. I couldn't have become a personal trainer without all those things I learned at CVABE. I learned how to learn, and it set me up to pass my Personal Trainer exam."

Today, Meegen is supporting herself and her two children employed as a personal trainer. She states, "I've gone from jail, addiction, and pain to barbells, protein, power, and a Lexus!" ■

Inspiring educators so adults succeed and communities thrive