

SHARON JOHNSON

AGE: 51 | HEIGHT: 5'7

STARTING WEIGHT: 135

CURRENT WEIGHT: 122

HOMETOWN: Murrieta, California,

HOME SCHOOL: Dan Henderson Athletic
Fitness (Checkmat)

INSTRUCTOR: Ricardo Feliciano Pereira

BELT RANK: Black

How did you discover jiu-jitsu?

I learned about jiu-jitsu from my husband, Todd. He would always encourage me to try it, but I was too afraid to step on the mat. When I was 44, Todd and our sons, Ian and Sean, presented me with a gi for Mother's Day. What mother can deny their children?! So, that week I stepped on the mat and just kept going!

What motivates you to train?

Jiu-jitsu has given me the ability to push my body and mind in ways not offered by other sports/activities. I am motivated to continue to improve myself, and I love that the "dance" will be different with each opponent - there is never a boring moment for me on the mat.

What else do you do for physical fitness?

I only make the time for jiu-jitsu... working full time and family fill in the rest of my time!

How have you changed your diet?

I eat more foods from the soil - vegetables, fruit, old grains, etc, and less meat. I mostly hydrate with water and have decreased my alcohol intake.

What has been the biggest challenge so far?

Allowing yourself to become a leader and accept the growth that the professor and others see versus allowing my ego to still tell me I'm a white belt. Also, continuing to work and go to practice even with injuries and finding the time to go consistently with a full family and work schedule.

What's been the best benefit from the changes you have made?

My mind and body have transformed, learning that sometimes the best



return is simply to give, linking that to helping new people has shown me the more I help and give, the more people are drawn towards me.

What advice would you give to someone else looking to make the same sort of change?

I know it won't ever be easy and find the right school that fits your style. I am so glad to be a part of Checkmat at Dan Henderson's Athletic Training Center... this old gal has always felt supported and welcome there. It's not about beating your opponent - it's about beating yourself.

