

On Friday, December 4, 2014 Melissa Williams's life changed forever.

"On that Friday at work I had an abrupt sharp pain in my chest. It went away and I went on with my day," Williams said. As a health care professional, she was used to ignoring her own needs and getting things done. That night, though, she woke up with extreme pain in her left arm that wouldn't go away and finally went to the ER to get checked out.

"The ER physician came in and said 'You are having an active heart attack,'" Williams said. She was only 33.

Once she was out of the woods and in ICU recovery Williams found out the extent of her issues—she had four totally blocked arteries. The situation wasn't entirely unforeseen. Williams had been diagnosed with a host of health issues before her heart attack, including hypertension, high cholesterol, elevated triglycerides, obesity and diabetes.

"The first thing I remember telling my husband and family is 'This is over, I'm done being unhealthy and my life *WILL* change for the better'" Williams said. "Four years later and I am still holding tight to that promise."

Today, Williams is 90 pounds lighter and no longer diabetic. She's renewed her passion for dancing, which she now teaches as well as practices, changed careers and she and her husband adopted a baby girl. Williams said her father's death shortly after her heart attack has kept her focused on her health.

"I know he would want the best outcome for me and I wish he was here to see how strong I have become with his help. He was my biggest cheerleader and I do all of this for him," she said.

By sharing her story, Williams hopes to be an example of the importance of being pro-active with one's health.

"We all aren't perfect and I have my days, but I sit back and think where I was four years ago and I see the better. Good can come from bad, you just have to work!"