

WHY WE RUN FOR TEAM GENESIS 2010



Alan Lajoie

In 2007, I was very sick. I had diabetes and both my kidneys were failing. I had 3 strokes and a heart attack. Unable to deal with being so ill, I tried to commit suicide, and ended up hospitalized.

A short time later, upon release from a psychiatric hospital, I became a member of Genesis Club. Things immediately began to improve in my life. I joined the Wellness Program, a program that encourages exercise and nutrition.

Where I once weighed 300 lbs and my waist was 52 inches, I now weigh in at under 215 lbs and my waist has shrunk to 46 inches. I have been able to stop my insulin and my kidneys are functioning better. I no longer feel like I want to end my life. I enjoy coming to Genesis each day and my confidence is slowly returning. I am an active member of Team Genesis and joined local road races, twelve so far and I am a member of two walking clubs. I have a new lease on life, more confidence and best of all I have the drive to live longer and to live a better quality of life. This year I have committed to train for and run with Team Genesis at Falmouth 2010.



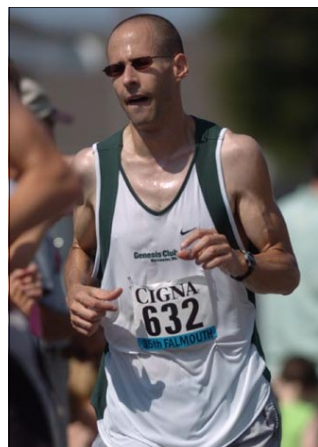
Kitty Berthiaume

When I entered high school, I felt great; I was making a lot of friends and had plans of going on to college. Towards the end of my sophomore year I started to get into trouble. That summer my parents discovered my self-destructive behavior and over the course of my junior year, I attempted suicide twice and was hospitalized three times.

I found Genesis through the Transitional Age Support Initiative. By this time, I was convinced that I would not go to college. My Genesis advisor suggested that I at least go take a tour of the local community college. I was dead set on not going there, but I scheduled three classes. I got two A's and one B. I was so proud of myself. I decided to take five classes the next semester I was in for a big surprise! Unfortunately I had to drop my chemistry class and failed my math class.

I took the summer off from school to train for the 7.1 mile Falmouth Road Race. I started to feel better and less anxious. I also started to lose weight, in all 40 pounds. I realized I could set a goal and I achieved it. I started and finished the race with Team Genesis and 11,000 other runners at Falmouth.

In the fall of 2009 I started my classes up again, this time I passed 3 classes. Eventually I hope to transfer to Worcester State College or UMASS Amherst. Genesis has helped me grow and learn how to cope with my mental illness. Since coming to Genesis I have only been hospitalized once. I have decreased my self-destructive behavior am doing great mentally and physically and will run Falmouth in 2010.



Michael Weinberg

In 1997 I graduated from Anna Maria College and soon started working in retail and UPS. I always exercised in college but eventually stopped. When I stopped exercising my mental illness seemed to get the best of me. It was soon after I was hospitalized for the first time with psychiatric symptoms. After that period, 20 hospitalizations occurred with 50 shock treatments. I would spend months at a time in my hospital room.

In 1999, I found Genesis Club and have not returned to the hospital in ten years. However, due to my anxieties and agoraphobia, I would only exercise at home. Finally, I joined the Genesis Wellness program. Also at that time, I was also at risk of being homeless and Genesis found housing for me.

I now have my own apartment, run for Team Genesis and help other members in their Wellness goals. Even though it is difficult to run with a major mental illness, I now love to train hard and to compete. But my real reason I run is to remain healthy and stay out of the Health Care System. In my first Falmouth race, 2007, I was running in memory of my Mom and Dad whose final resting place is on Cape Cod. I finished in the top 100 of elite runners with a time of 40:58.