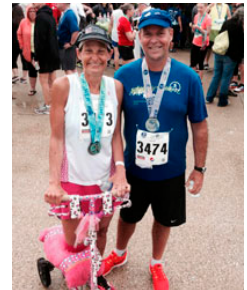




May 16, 2015 – Grand Rapids, MI

Race Volunteer: My Observation and Challenge

Before I get to where you could be in a year, I'm going to give you my final observation on working the finish line at the Fifth Third River Bank Run a week ago. Before I do, I want you to understand that I respect every runner, walker, and wheelchair competitor. One woman did the 25K on a knee-walker to show it takes more than two kinds of cancer and a fractured heel to stop her. I've done every distance in the race at one time or another, and I know how physically drained you feel when you give it your best effort, whether you finished first or last. With that in mind, here's what I observed.



Too many participants were overweight and obese. Frank Castelli, former director of the Framingham Study, once said Americans can't outrun their appetites. He's correct, based I what I saw. Some people who finished the 25K were over 300 pounds and one was close to 400 pounds. I give them all the credit in the world for training for the race and then going out and doing it.

However it would be a lot easier on their bodies if they carried less mass. When we walk, the forces exerted on our joints are about 1.5 times our body weight; when we run, it's 3 times our body weight. Even 20 to 30 pounds tremendously reduces the forces on our hips, knees, and feet. I'm not suggesting everyone needs to look gaunt and underfed because none of the elite runners who won the races looked that way; they looked fat-free but muscular. But we can and should do better. I'm going to help anyone who wants to do just that.



I'm a Runner

I enjoyed volunteering for this race and I will volunteer again—but I'm a runner, and probably more than ever I want to run the 25K next year (that's me nearing the finish line several years ago—checking my race time, of course). I'm going to recover from this injury and start from scratch again. That means walking a minute, jogging a minute, increasing the running over time until I get to running nine minutes and walking one. Even if I could run continuously, I don't feel the need to stress my body like that. Besides, I know I can complete a 25K faster using that approach.

There's always the possibility that this time, I won't be able to recover and my running career is over. I can live with that if I have to. I'm not there yet, so I'm going to plan my training for the next year to cross that finish line.

And I want you to join me.

The Challenge

I know many of you have always wanted to visit Grand Rapids because you have business interests here. Even if you have no ties here, it's a great place to visit; travel publisher Lonely Planet named Grand Rapids and Lake Michigan's Gold Coast the [top destination in 2014](#), and it'll be even better next year. You have an entire year to train, lose weight, earn the money it takes to travel here, and plan your stay, because next year I want you to run it with me.



The 39th Annual Fifth Third River Bank Run will be on May 14th, 2016. It doesn't matter what your current weight is or what your fitness level is, you can be here to participate in one of the races; a 5K is only 3.1 miles, and no matter how serious your health challenges are, you can probably walk at least that far with some training.

At this point, other than the date of the race, I have zero details. That's okay; it's all going to start with a doctor's visit anyway. You must get permission from your physician to lose weight if you need to, and get checked out to see if you can exercise at a level where you can walk, jog, or run a 5K, 10K, or 25K.

Here's what I'm working on right now to help you:

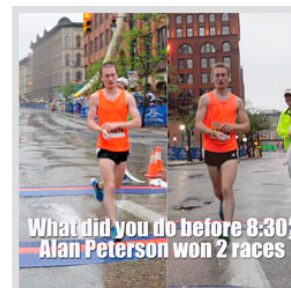
- I'm recording an audio series on how to begin a running program with an audio for every level of training. It includes a training program, plus the wisdom I've earned in the 30 years I've been running and helping others learn to run. What you don't pay for, you won't appreciate, but I think \$2.99 per download is fair, and you can buy the audio for each level until you reach your goal.
- My next book is on optimal performance in fitness and life. You'll learn how to improve your diet, lose weight, and have more energy for all the areas of your life.

May 14, 2016

Commit to that date and getting yourself to GR, and I'll help you with the rest. It would be so great to rock Grand Rapids together. None of us may win two races before 8:30 like Alan Peterson did this year (the 5K and 10K), but I'll see you at the finish line—one way or the other.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet



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