



Carolyn Olsen

Running has always been a big part of my life. I've been doing it for probably 20 years. I ran 4 miles 5-7 times per week. I hadn't run any races for most of those years, not even a 5K! A co-worker and fellow runner just couldn't believe it. He wondered how I could run every day but had never attempted even a 5K fun run. He shamed me into signing up for a local 5k our office was sponsoring. I ran the 5K begrudgingly. I finished it and actually enjoyed it. I didn't pay any attention to the race results, it didn't occur to me. The next day people in the office were congratulating me. To my surprise, I won my age group. Granted it was a small race and my time probably wasn't that great, but it gave me the confidence to go further. I ran more 5K's and then a Half Marathon. What a big deal that was! Well, if I could do a half-marathon, I should be able to do a full pretty easily, right? I ran the Naperville marathon in 2015 and then Chicago in 2016. Somehow I managed to qualify for Boston, just squeaking by. Turning 50 that year helped since I was in a new "old age" bracket. That's when I said I needed to find someone to help me train for the holy grail of marathons.

I saw a blog Laurie wrote for the Naperville marathon newsletter and thought I would contact her to see if she did any marathon training. I really needed some help preparing for Boston. I was a nervous wreck, never having run a hilly course like Boston! I spoke with Laurie on the phone before meeting her and I knew she would be able to help. Her running experience really impressed me. She's run many marathons, including Boston. We met for a private training session where she evaluated me. She watched my running form and how I performed certain exercises. She was able to identify my weaknesses. She customized a training plan that took into account my schedule, my running ability, strength training, where to train for hills, etc. She also gave lots of tips on the Boston marathon. I found her plan very smart. It focused on strengthening weaknesses and injury prevention. The training was tough, but for me it was manageable. I work full time and have 12 year old twins so I needed something to fit my schedule. I also joined her RunSmart strength training class which is designed for runners. It's a great weekly class with a wonderful group of runners.

Laurie followed me throughout the entire training. She made sure I knew what I was supposed to do each week and held me accountable. I was pretty dedicated to my training plan, but having to report in to Laurie kept me on track. She was quick to respond to any question I had. I can't say enough good things about my experience working with Laurie. She is a very knowledgeable runner/trainer, professional, easy to work with and very encouraging! She gave me all the tools I needed to take on and finish the Boston marathon and that was my goal. Laurie Rocks!