

Laird Malamed's Story

In 2005, Laird Malamed had high cholesterol (230), even with medication. His physician sent him to Evette Richardson, a dietitian. Besides putting him on a strict diet, Evette brought Laird to State of the Heart Fitness to combine good eating habits with an exercise program. At the time, Laird was walking a few miles a day, but then decided to take a stab at running. At first, he couldn't even run to the end of the block... downhill! Yet, gradually, he went further and further. On July 4, 2006, he ran his first 5k and he was hooked. This led to his first marathon only 8 months later in March of 2007. Oh, and his cholesterol? It was in the low 100's (on *less* medication) as he lost 30 lbs in the process.

Over the last few years, Laird has made a major life change and has become a serious runner as a part of his overall commitment to his health. In addition to his running, he has been working with Kim & Mike from the State of the Heart Fitness team to broaden his workouts to include swimming and core training. On Sunday, April 20th, 2009 we are proud to announce that Laird completed the ever-so-famous, Boston Marathon while achieving his 4 hour time goal by finishing in 3 hours and 59 minutes!

Laird has a unique outlook on his new hobby, running: *“Running for me has become a great escape that is also a great tension reliever, exercise regime and a way of exploring both West LA and cities I visit while traveling. I have a goal of running a marathon on all 7 continents (2 down with Europe in June and Antarctica in March of 2010), so running has become a way to take vacations in new ways. And at the same time, I started in fall asking friends and family to donate money (for a charity) to celebrate my running. For Boston, we had 155 people raise over \$15,000. Everyone who had donated was on a list in my pocket as I hammered out 26.2 miles, so we all ran together. I've enjoyed making running personal and yet a connected activity.”*

When you ask Laird about running a marathon in Antarctica, his response is, *“it's basically a crazy trail run in the cold.”* That's putting it mildly! HA!

Congratulations, Laird! You're an inspiration to us all!

Boston marathon: “My goal was to beat 4 hours. This is my second slowest marathon to date, but my goal given my training what I thought I could do with

some effort. And boy were those last 6 miles an effort! The final time – just 26 seconds to spare – 3:59:33 - and I had to really work during those last 6 miles. In fact, despite the slow time on the back half overall (7 minutes slower than the front half), the last 6 miles were probably my strongest close of any marathon. When you take into account the majority of hills happen after mile 17 and that I sprinted the last mile, I probably ran my smartest Marathon yet. I stayed within myself upfront enjoying the down hills, and only starting to push things after about mile 18.

And why? Because of two factors. First, my lovely wife was there to cheer me on at mile 25 just when I really needed a boost (and that led to the closing sprint), and sitting in my pocket was a sheet of paper with all of my sponsors names. Many times during the race, I thought of their support and said to myself – don't let them or yourself down. I know nobody would really have cared if I missed 4 hours. (There was a pretty good head wind most of the race.) But I felt the combination of making our charity goal and our marathon goal would be all the more sweet if they both happened.”

Note: Laird's charity was www.JustGive.org