

TCS New York City Marathon Runners Raise \$20,000 for Minding Your Mind

On Sunday, November 1, almost 50,000 people ran the TCS New York City Marathon. Eight of those amazing, dedicated athletes ran this storied race in support of Minding Your Mind. Through their efforts, a combined total of \$20,000 was raised and donated to Minding Your Mind. The gratitude we feel for their generosity is outmatched only by the affection and admiration we feel in welcoming eight new friends to the MYM family.

The Survivor

When **Claire Colahan** was a senior at Duke University, her world appeared perfect on the outside, but on the inside she was suffering from clinical depression. “I had no idea what was happening to me at the time. Everything completely changed seemingly overnight. My usual 8-hours of sleep turned into 12-, 14- and even 18-hours where I still woke up exhausted. I struggled to follow casual conversations with friends. I lost all personality and had no interest in doing the things I loved.” After countless test and doctor visits, Claire began participating in weekly therapy sessions. One strategy her therapist gave her was to choose a physical activity and schedule time for it every day. “Consistency and physical activity are important when overcoming a mental illness, so I scheduled a 5 mile run for myself every morning. These runs provided an escape from the negative thinking I had become so accustomed to. I’ve continued these runs even after the ‘clinically depressed’ diagnosis has gone away and now have turned this strategy into a passion.”

When reviewing the Marathon Charity Partners, Minding Your Mind immediately stuck out for Claire. Through her experience, she unfortunately learned how stigmatized mental illness is. “Stigmatizing a mental health diagnosis only makes an already difficult battle even more difficult by not providing the right resources to those who need them most. Many people who suffer from depression have nowhere to turn as a result of this stigmatization leading to an often fatal outcome.” She achieved her physical goal of completing a marathon, and her emotional goal of recognizing the support she received from family and friends throughout her diagnosis.

The Three Amigos



Bradley Yoder, Jeremy Alder, and Daryl Brubaker are three friends who each have someone very dear to them who has struggled with mental illness. Bradley lost his brother, Chris, in 2011, after a “25-year tumultuous roller-coaster/battle/journey through multiple diagnoses and coping strategies.” Chris was only 40 years old. Bradley ran “in memory of Chris, for all the joys and struggles of his life...and for all those kids out there who, with their families, are unnecessarily in the dark because of treatable mental and emotional struggles.”

Bradley recruited two friends to run along with him. Jeremy Alder ran for Minding Your Mind in this year's NYC Marathon in honor of several dear friends and family members who have struggled with mental health. He chose MYM as a way to support the quality mental health education needed by those who struggle with mental health issues every day.

Daryl Brubaker rounds out this trio. He chose Minding Your Mind as his charity partner so his friends and family could contribute to his goal publicly, anonymously, or in memory/ honor of a friend or family member affected by mental illness.

The Birthday Girl



Dawn Roberts is an avid runner who takes time to help mentor and coach other runners. The marathon was five days before her 46th birthday, and she called it her “Birthday Race!” She chose to partner with Minding Your Mind on behalf of her family members that have been touched by mental illness and for everyone impacted by mental illness. In the weeks since the race concluded, Dawn has become one of our most prolific supporters on social media. All of Dawn’s friends know exactly what Minding Your Mind is doing and why they should be paying attention! We are fortunate to have developed such a great friend and strong advocate in Dawn.

The Native



James Porfido is a New York City native who learned about the work Minding Your Mind does from a mutual friend. The mission and the programs we offer inspired James to combine his enthusiasm for running with a strong desire to make it count toward something bigger than just miles and motion.

The Professional



It has been **Jessica Atkin's** dream to run in the NYC Marathon since she began distance running in 2008. She chose Minding Your Mind because our mission resonated strongly with her as a mental health professional in the school setting. “As a mental health professional, I continuously battle the barriers created by stigma. These barriers range from students and parents resisting services/help, to staff and students stereotyping and/or fearing individuals with mental health issues. The children I work with experience a variety of difficulties including mood disorders, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, abuse/neglect, bullying, and addictive behaviors (to name just a few). These struggles affect every facet of their functioning, from their success in school to their ability to gain/maintain employment and live independently.” Her personal goal was to contribute to MYM's effort to eliminate mental healthcare barriers and ensure that young people get the care they need and deserve.

Our deepest gratitude to all of those who put their hearts and “soles” into this race, and chose Minding Your Mind as the beneficiary of their generosity.