

GET INSPIRED

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SHUNNING TO RUNNING

By Liz Holzemer

Growing up, I was never too keen on the assumption that as daughters aged, they inevitably take on their mothers' likenesses. During my last visit to the childhood home my parents still live in, I noticed my mother's face and character traits more closely than usual. At 43, I realized I have become more alike than unlike my just-turned 78-years-of-age mother. We're both minimalists in the makeup department, wear our straight hopeless hair long and parted down the middle, and eerily share mannerisms that once made me cringe.

I just never dreamed those shared similarities would also include pumping iron at the gym or what I had long shunned—running. Gym and I didn't jive, and I regarded jogging in the same light as Joan Rivers: *"The first time I see a jogger smiling, I'll consider it."*

Not long after my youngest brother was born, my mom laced up a pair of runners and announced it was time to ditch the maternity wear for defined muscles. She even managed to convince me to attend a step aerobics class with her at the local gym, but my uncoordinated movements and lack of rhythm proved humiliating. Those oh-so-attractive leg warmers solidified my decision to let mom go it alone from then on out.

Before long, my mother was entering 5Ks and 10Ks. As I cheered from the sidelines with a cowbell, I never envisioned my lanky form following in her running footsteps. Years later, mom upped the ante by competing in triathlons and even a marathon. She wasn't hung up on a finishing time; she just wanted to prove she could finish.

The more she trained and perspired, the more I became inspired.

Well into my forties and realizing I can no longer take my health for granted, I've returned to the gym and amped up my walks with intermittent jogging.

Funny how we take on what we vow to avoid.

Now I relish the therapeutic trail training before the house is abuzz with frantic searches for misplaced homework, car keys and lunch boxes. It's my time with fast-and-furious Fergie, pick-up-the-pace Pink and cool down with mellow Mayer.

Who knows, I may eventually set my sights on completing a marathon like mom, but that will just have to wait until I finish registering for my first 5K!

Liz Holzemer is the author of Curveball: When Life Throws You A Brain Tumor and founder of the non-profit, Meningioma Mommas (meningiomamommas.org). For more information on Liz, visit her website lizholzemer.com or email her at info@lizholzemer.com.



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