



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

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## Did you win?

Tuesday, November 13, 2012

That was my Dad's question 25 years ago when I returned from a "Turkey Trot" charity run. It was Northern Virginia. There were about 1000 participants and I was 40 years old. It was also my very first 5K.

Dad was blinded by love, but he also remembered that athletic little girl that used to make him proud. We hear lots of stories about the humiliation of being the last one chosen for teams. I was the one choosing the team. If I didn't happen to be the captain, I was one of the first picked.

So what happened to me that I had to train for 6 months to run a 5K? Society happened. By the time I got to high school, being strong and fast wasn't admirable in a girl. So I joined the others, bought makeup, put on the pointy toed high heels and became a spectator. I recovered somewhat as a young mother. I wanted my daughters to be active, so "for my age" as they say, I was quite fit, just not an athlete anymore.

When I told Dad that my time of 30:51, of which I was very proud, was in the bottom 25% of the finishers, he replied, "That's pretty crummy, 'enna?"

I had to laugh. I loved my Dad and I knew he wasn't really being critical, just honest. He still remembered that little girl who used to beat the boys.

There was a book a few decades ago called "Innumeracy" which compared the inability to understand number concepts to the better known "Illiteracy."

Dad wasn't alone. As a society, we don't have a good idea of how far a mile or a kilometer is. How long it takes to cover it. How big a portion is. How much our food weighs. Sometimes, we don't even realize how much WE weigh if we let things get out of hand.

Even worse, there's those movable numbers as I wrote in my blog yesterday. We don't have any idea what it means to be a size 8 anymore.

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## Member Comments About This Blog Post

**WINDSURFNERD**

You hit a nerve with the innumeracy comment! Why do people proudly announce "I can't





balance my checkbook" where they would never say "I can't read the newspaper?". And why does the media blame math instead of saying "some people lie"?

Sorry for the rant...hope your day is a good one!

Naomi

3133 days ago



**ROOSTER72**

You also beat all the people who did not even start (including your Dad)! Remember that.

3135 days ago



**COACHMOMMY**

Your Dad sounds a lot like mine. I ran my first 5K a little over a year ago @ 50. I was always an athlete (softball, basketball & tennis - still play softball). I had my children in my 30's, so spent most of my 40's overweight (losing & gaining the same 40+ lbs.) I lost the final 40+ over a year ago and I am maintaining.

My sister and I decided to do the C25K program at the local park (I was 50, she was 52). My Mom & Dad came to our first race. My sister and daughter passed the finish line ahead of me and as I was running past my parents, my 83 year old Dad yells out "hurry up, you're losing!". His mantra in sports is "you can always do better", not the PC "as long as you're doing your best!" Funny thing, it really motivated me at that race (not so much as a 12 year old girl and he was my softball coach - I can still remember the tears!).

3135 days ago



**COCK-ROBIN**

Thanks for your wonderful blog!

3135 days ago



**WILSONWR**

Another great blog . Innumeracy is a real problem today - especially (but not exclusively) with the younger folks.

Sounds like you had a tough Dad - the type who challenges you to be your best.

3135 days ago



**BOILHAM**

You are singing m song with this blog. Innumeracy is a big problem in society. One of the things my patient dear wife is tired of hearing me say is "Do the math! If you want to be successful in life you must understand numbers, everything in life is about numbers".

Accidents, financial matters, nutrition,, longevity, all relate to understanding numbers.

That's why the lotteries are so successful, a million, a billion or a trillion are about the same to most folks. Sorry, I don't want to get on a rant, so I will shut up now.

3135 days ago



**ELRIDDICK**

Thanks for sharing

3135 days ago



**AJB121299**

nice

3135 days ago

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