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The Half Marathon Seasonal Transformation

She hugged me and said, “I will sprinkle running dust on you for the race”. I hear the runners behind me remark “how cool, she has someone to support her” just as my Dad passed me in his car for the third time; laughing, smiling and stopping to take pictures. I recall a new friend’s words, “You can do HARD things”. Another friend arrives with just ½ mile to go. She’s there to run along side me, to smile, laugh, push, encourage and be there at the finish line.

As I ran, I thought of the challenge of life, and how it is so necessary to have support systems to cheer us on at the painful turns and to celebrate with us when we are successful. I smiled at the leaves on the ground in anticipation of the end of the year and the beginning of a new year full of possibilities. I thought of how training and running marathons parallel the continuous process that goes into designing our own lives. We are upon a new year, entering a time of reflection and goal setting. As you think about how you want to be in 2007, consider preparing yourself for the next season of your life as if you were training for a half marathon.

Begin with a goal and from that identify smaller specific goals that you can build a routine around. In that way, you are sure to achieve what you are aiming for and then won’t hurt yourself if you try to run a marathon next week. Then persevere by working hard and stretching yourself. Practice leaning on your support people when you are tired, bored or hurting and remember to support them back. Be kind to yourself and celebrate even the smallest successes. Maintain balance in your life in order to prevent a painful recovery. Now it is time to show up for the challenge and go the distance. Run it! Live out your life fully by giving it your all and listen only to the supporters who are behind your dream. Finally, celebrate your effort and your success. Take the time to reflect on

what you have accomplished and learned along the way. By definition, transformation is a process of change in character or condition. Like preparing for and running a half marathon, transformation of self is a process requiring practice, discipline, perseverance and celebration... and it takes time.

How do you get across your finish lines? How do you push on when the end is so hard to see? Who do you rely on to support you as you grow, bloom, transform and drop your leaves like the trees of this beautiful autumn season? Who will support you as you create a new vision for yourself in 2007?

I challenge you to dream big, set your goals beyond what you know you can do and gather around you, all the people who will encourage your dreams. Tell them what you are aiming for. Tell them how you would like them to support you. Find a good coach who can help you clearly define your vision and will help you balance your life as you evolve. And take extreme care of yourself so you can enjoy your transformation.