**In My Shoes Story Competition**

**Before Marchathon or BM**

While I am not built for running, I would get up early three to four times a week and run down the Bray Prom – motivated by texts from a friend who joined me to combat early signs of diabetes. I am one of the lucky people who does not have to use a vehicle to commute to work. I can walk to public transportation, in my case the DART, and commute to work. As motivation for the last leg of the commute in the evenings, my wife would meet me at the DART with our dog thus providing motivation and a walk for our dog. Now and again I would meet up with a dog owner friend and walk the prom.

**Start of Marchathon or SM**

So, as I began Marchathon I was already getting the recommended 10,000 steps a day. I decided to add little pieces to my routine and get up to 12,000 steps a day. I started getting up early more often and running 4 to 5 times in the mornings, increasing some of the runs from 3K to 5K and even a 7K now and again. I decided to start exploring my work neighbourhood at lunchtime and added a walk in the lovely Iveagh Gardens. I started walking my dog with my friend more regularly in the evenings. Lastly, I went on a day hike or two on the weekends (part of the reason I started running was to stay in shape for hiking). Then it became a little competitive (in a good way) with another Team Member. As Team Captain, I could let the side down not to mention all the other Team Captains. I exceeded my average daily step goal by 5,000+ steps. Then…

**Work From Home or WFH**

On the 10th of March our organisation did a test working from home which extended into the new normal. But I was still lucky enough to keep my steps up for the next week by taking some extra time off as an extended weekend and finding some more isolated trails to hike in the Wicklow Mountains. Fair play to my Team who all outstepped me on two of the days during that time. Yes, my steps did fall off as I suspect did many Steppers in the WFH period. However, I gained back two hours plus a day from commuting to the office. Also, Marchathon provided me with a means to separate the “WORK” from “HOME”. For example, I start my day with a run (FYI it is actually a slow jog fast walk) of 3k to 5K. The 5K’s tend to be more often now because I drop my son to work at 6am to Aldi. I appreciate my lunchtime more with a walk (many times with one of my children) to get out of the “Office” – Once again I am lucky in that I have a spare room set up as an office while many of you only have your kitchen table or bedroom doubling as an “Office”. I then mark the end of the day with a long walk on the promenade and to the Habour with my dog.

So, will my steps continue? I hope so but I don’t know what the future holds. Anyway, this is more about just getting out there and making the best of what we have. It doesn’t matter how many steps you do. It matters that you are getting out there and stepping. So be safe, keep your social distance but get out there. I would like to solute each and every one of you for making that effort especially during the WFH period. Keep on a Step’n!