



100 Reasons Why

we are grateful for the
discovery of insulin



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Visit <https://www.sanofi.us/en/about-us/our-stories/making-a-difference/american-diabetes-month> to read additional stories from others living with, caring for or committed to people with diabetes.



Visit <https://www.teamingupfordiabetes.com/> for diabetes facts, videos and resources to help you build a diabetes management game plan.

CHAPTER 3

Silver Linings: Celebrating the Bright Side of Life with Diabetes

Finishing the Escape from Alcatraz Triathlon was one of my proudest moments. At this time, I did not have a continuous glucose monitor; I was doing my training for the event with finger sticks. I would swim in the morning and prick before and

after. I would ride my bike or run for 3-4 hours and prick every hour to see where I was. It was complicated math to determine how much sugar was needed per minute of exercise.

I started out that morning knowing I was going to jump in the cold water of San Francisco Bay, and then swim for 60 minutes without checking my sugar. Based on all my training and tracking, I was prepared.

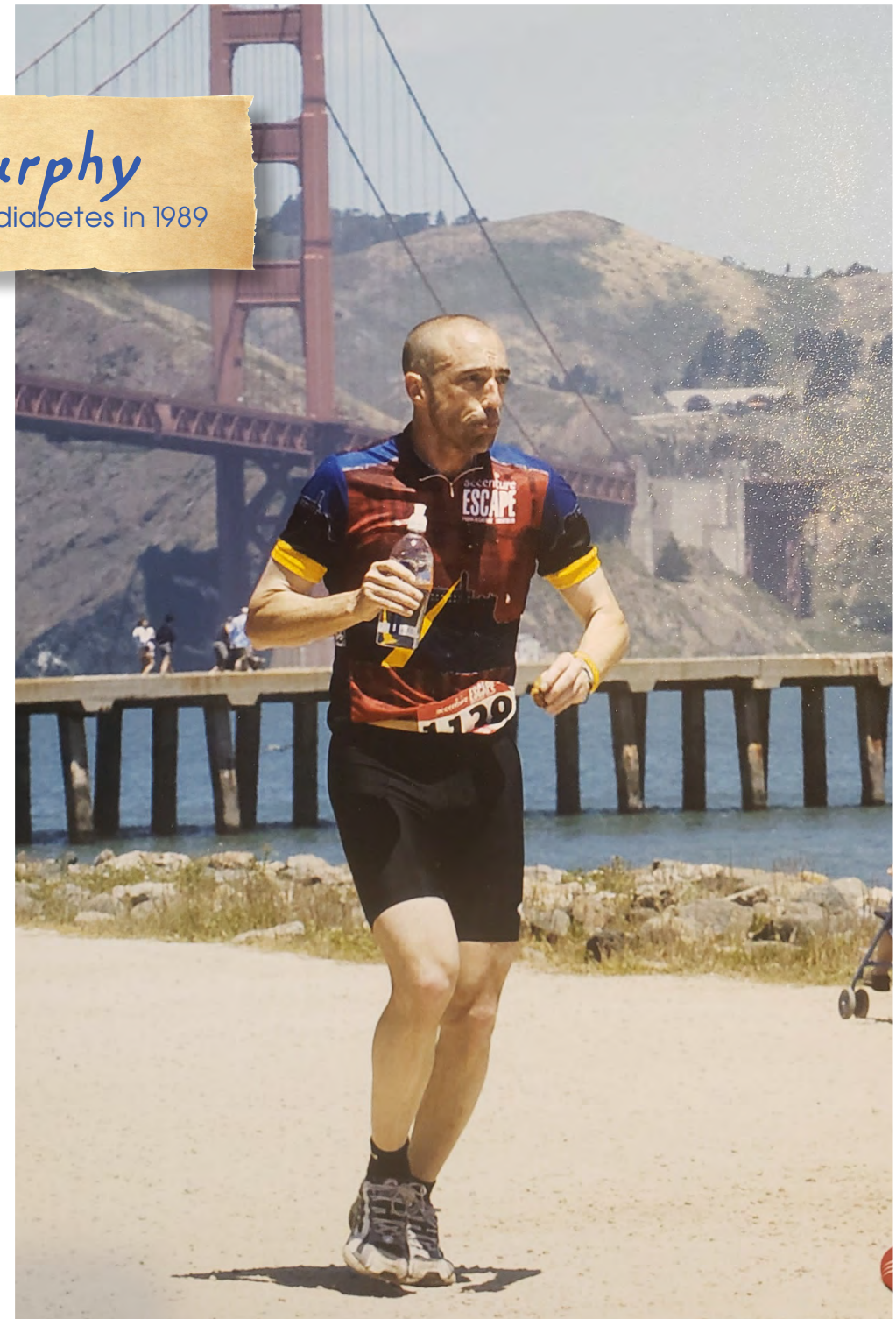
I exited the water and checked to make sure my blood sugar was where I expected it to be, then I checked 4 more times on the bike and run.

The moment I finished was one I will never forget. All the other athletes had their eyes on their watches, but when I crossed the finish line, my friend handed me a glucose meter so I could check the number that was most important to me. I was so proud to have completed a famous event and walked away with a good blood sugar number. It just doesn't get any better than that.



Jim Murphy

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1989



Seth Bernstein

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1986



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One silver lining about living with diabetes is that I definitely live a healthier lifestyle than before my type 1 diagnosis. I exercise regularly and eat a healthy, well-balanced diet. Before my diagnosis, I would eat just about anything that was available. Now, I read labels and carefully consider what I eat before I eat it. Since I live in Southern California, the weather is nice year-round. My wife and I like to go for evening walks after dinner, which is really a very nice way to spend an hour together and get some exercise at the same time.



Lynda Sardeson
Diagnosed with diabetes in 1990

One of the biggest gifts I've found in living with diabetes has been becoming part of an amazing, encouraging, and supportive group of other people with diabetes. When we get together, we have fun and we can openly talk about any of the ups and downs we may be having with diabetes without the fear of being judged. What an uplifting feeling! That and knowing that if I eat healthy, engage in regular activity and use all the tools available, such as insulin and glucose monitoring, I can control my diabetes. Diabetes does not control me. How powerful is that!



One of my proudest moments living with diabetes was when I was at a local pharmacy picking up my supplies and prescriptions. I was waiting for the pharmacist to ask me if I had any questions when I

noticed a small flyer sitting on the counter. It talked about criteria for a study that was being conducted for people with type 1 diabetes. I went home and called them immediately as I met the entire list of criteria to gain entry into the Diabetes Control and Complications Trial (DCCT) as a potential study participant. After six years of participating in this study, it was found that maintaining an A1C of <7% reduced the risk of developing some complications of diabetes. That was over 30 years ago. The study continues to this day but is now called the Epidemiology of Diabetes Interventions and Complications (EDIC).

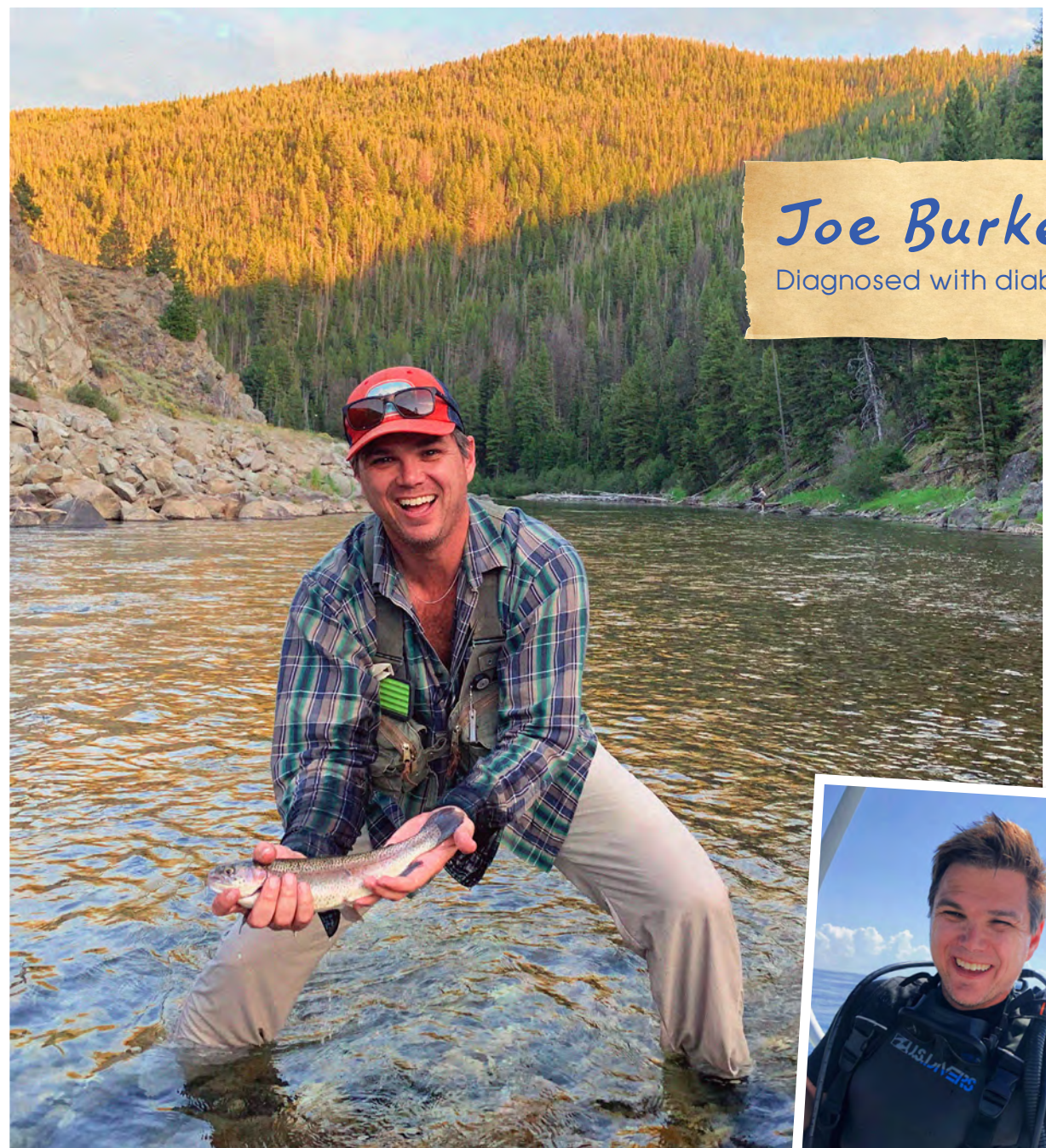
I am so very proud to be a part of one of the longest, most comprehensive, and important studies of type 1 diabetes and those living with this disease! My hope is that people with type 1 diabetes can benefit from recommendations born from this research for years to come.



Donna Cullen

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1988



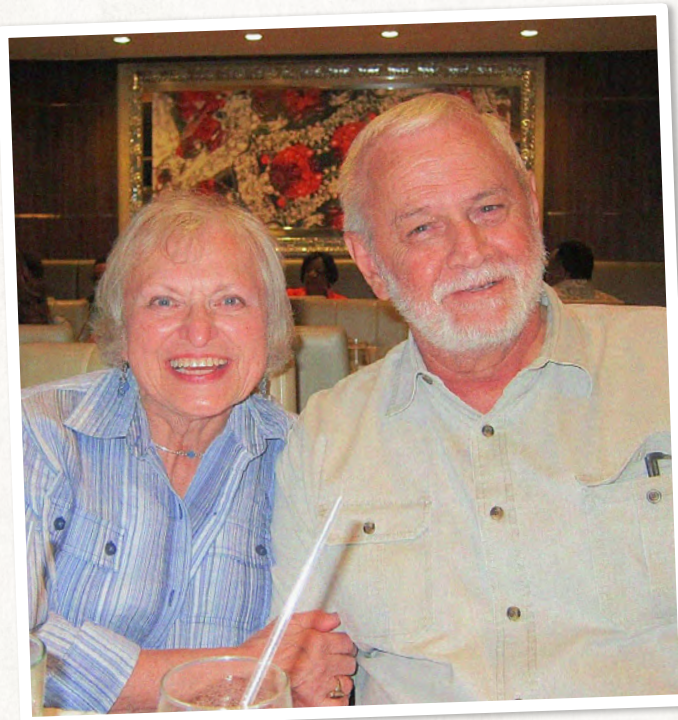


Joe Burke
Diagnosed with diabetes in 1997



I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes in the spring of 1997. I was eighteen years old and had moved away from home just a few months earlier. My parents had let the family know that they were divorcing the same week that I awoke from a diabetic coma and was informed that I had diabetes, and that I will always have diabetes. It was a rough patch for sure! But there is a confidence that comes with knowing that you've made it through the rough times and emerged alive and well. Since then, I've decided diabetes will never be the reason I slow down. I have taken the path less traveled across five continents, catching fish and climbing mountains on each that I've visited. I've sailed across our globe's magnificent and daunting oceans and seas as a working seaman. I've earned degrees from three excellent universities and built a career that reflects the vision of myself that I began to create as a young man. I have a beautiful, healthy and growing family. While it was hard to think of the future when I was laying in that hospital bed, today I can't imagine how it could have gone any better!





After being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes, I found myself following a path of denial. I did not feel “sick”, so either the doctor was wrong or the results of my tests were not accurate. Oh, I did experience some of the classic signs of diabetes: constant thirst, making more frequent trips to the bathroom, and increasing feelings of fatigue, but I could come up with a reason for all of them and besides, they were more of an inconvenience than an illness. Boy was I wrong! I did get treatment for diabetes but did not take it very seriously. One day, I ended up in the ICU with a life-threatening

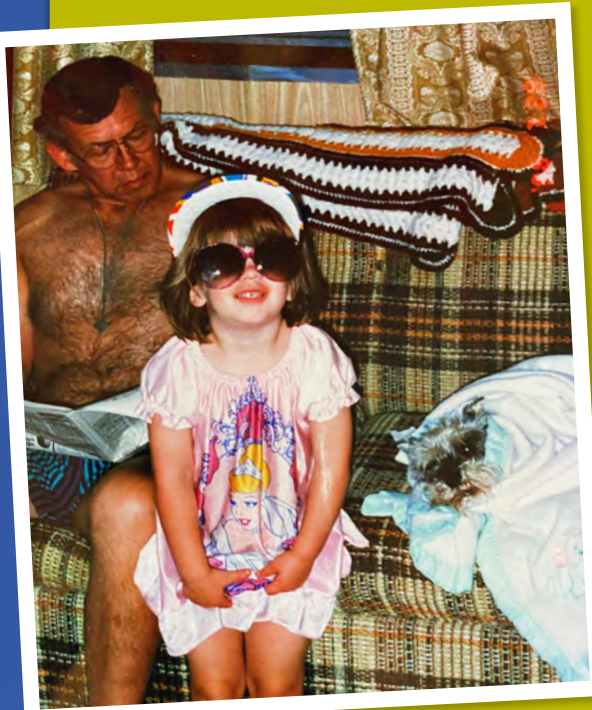
condition. A condition which is on the list of diabetes complications. I describe that moment as my wake-up call. If I wanted to continue to be with my family and continue to grow with them, this was the time to act. I have been fortunate to have a spouse who was then, and remains today, a true care partner and a source of encouragement. I was also fortunate to put together a care team (Endocrinologist, Dietician, Certified Diabetes Educators, and an Exercise Therapist) who were all willing to work with me despite my earlier failed attempts. I did not want to let any one of them or myself down. Today, I can view this as a ‘silver lining’ because it led me to finally act in a serious and responsible way about my health.



Kirk Kenyon

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1989

I was diagnosed with diabetes in 1999, when I was five years old. I have grown and changed so much since I was diagnosed, and diabetes has influenced so many of my passions! I graduated



college with my Bachelor of Science in nursing and became a pediatric nurse. Being a nurse and also being a person with diabetes has allowed me to bring a new perspective to my nursing practice and relate to my patients on a very different level. Over the past 21 years, I have also built an amazing community of people who understand diabetes and support me in everything that I do. I have even been involved in a summer camp for kids with diabetes which has allowed me to support them in their

journeys. Showing kids with diabetes that you can do anything has been one of the coolest experiences I have ever had!

Taylor Duncan

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1999



I was diagnosed with diabetes in 1996. I immediately started reading everything I could find to learn how to live with it.

I muddled along for over two years before I had the opportunity to attend a conference that decided my destiny. In an amphitheater filled with diabetes educators, I quickly became inspired to learn more and share it with others who were struggling with diabetes also. I was determined to become a Certified Diabetes Educator. Throughout the last 20+ years, my most rewarding moments have been watching the spark of understanding and hope light up in people's eyes. Helping a person actually do it, who never thought they could give themselves an injection, has been a proud moment. Hearing someone say they are exercising regularly because they have seen my example is a wonderful motivator to keep it up myself. Being an instrument to help people set personal goals to improve their health gives me a real sense of accomplishment.

"Hearing someone say they are exercising regularly because they have seen my example is a wonderful motivator to keep it up myself."



Trudy Snawder

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1996

Kammi Bean

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1983



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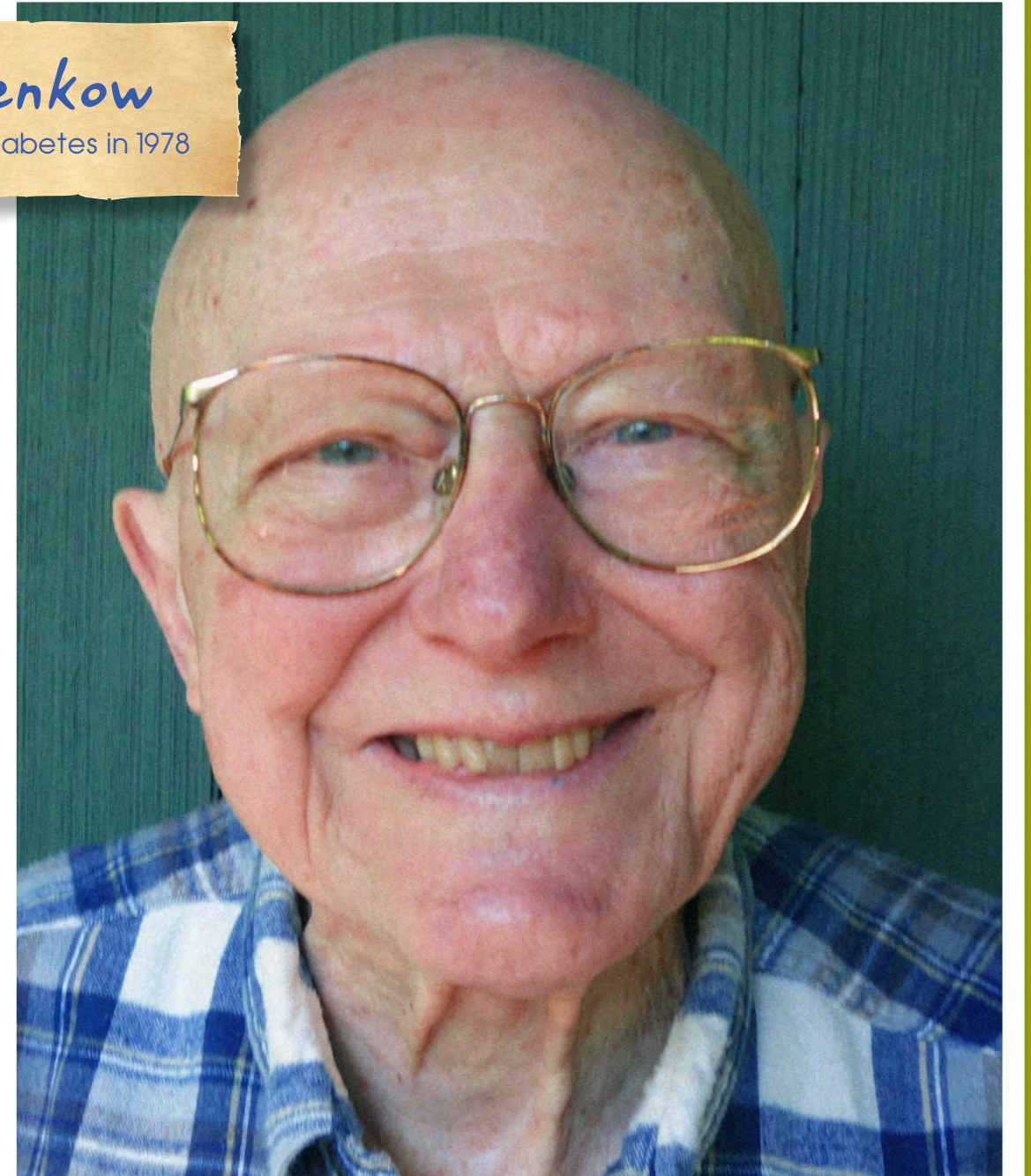
I remember a turning point in my diabetes management. As a society we were finally understanding that how one managed diabetes in the moment directly impacted how one lived with diabetes in the future. I wanted that control over diabetes! I had just moved to a new state as I began college life and embraced the idea of beginning new things. I recall a conversation with a new physician who told me my actions could make me healthier than my peers 20 or 30 years down the road. I thought, "How? Diabetes brings complications!" But, the lifestyle of choosing to eat healthy, planning exercise into my daily routine, and keeping regular appointments with my health care team, along with taking my medications, would be things many of my peers would put off for "tomorrow." Looking back, I see how pivotal that appointment was and how diabetes has been (more often than not) my friend - challenging me to care about myself. My healthy choices day in and day out allow me to live with diabetes! And, that's one gift for which I thank heaven every day.

I was married for 41 years until death separated us in 1996. One of my happy memories is when she told me that I was taking better care of myself now that I had diabetes. This later resonated when an airport agent noted that I was in my 80s and asked how I “managed to look so good.”

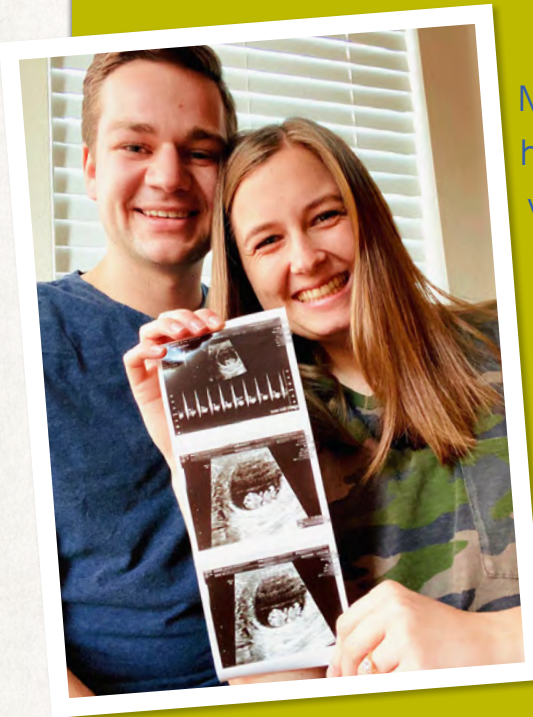
I replied that I had diabetes. The agent expressed sympathy not realizing that I had given a correct and positive answer - diabetes had encouraged my healthful living.

Bob Kolenkow

Diagnosed with diabetes in 1978



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My wife has had diabetes for 16 years. I've known her for 4 of them. In that time, she has filled my life with firsts including my first time seeing the ocean, first time to the East Coast, first time leaving the country, first time to Disneyland, first time to Disney World, first time skiing, and we are in the process of buying our first home. We graduated college together, have lived in three different states, and are now expecting our first child. My life has been more full and joyful since meeting her than I

could ever have imagined before. Insulin has not only allowed her to live her best life but allowed me to join one of the most amazing, gifted, and beautiful individuals this planet has ever produced on the great adventure of life.



Ammon Nimmer

Care Partner to wife Alyssa





Dawn Russell

Diagnosed with diabetes in 2008

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I was diagnosed in 2008, just in time for my 45th birthday. Just because I have diabetes doesn't mean my life ended. In fact, it was the opposite. I chose to live my life! Since then, I've gone to Hawaii and parasailed - something I never thought I would do, and to be honest, something I won't do ever again! I watched both of my children graduate from Navy boot camp and later both become Navy Chiefs.

But most dear to my heart, I met and fell in love with the perfect man for me! We are engaged to be married and plan to spend our lives together.

Life doesn't stop with the diagnosis of diabetes. It is a chance to be strong and move forward with confidence!





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