

# In 150-mile run, Delray man 'just had willpower'

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Michael Herbert during the 150-mile ultra-marathon through the Sahara desert he completed in October, 2010.



Michael Herbert recently returned from Africa where he completed a 150-mile ultra-marathon through the Sahara desert. Yes, 150 miles.

The 51-year-old Delray Beach resident had never even completed a normal 26-mile marathon before then, not to mention this was in 120-degree heat. So how did he do it?

"I am a non-athlete who ran this thing," he said. "I didn't have the luxury of genetics. I just had willpower."

He also spent an entire year training and lost nearly 50 pounds before the race.

But it wasn't just about proving something to himself. It was about raising money for a good cause. He raised \$50,000, which went toward scholarships for Caron Renaissance, an addiction treatment center where Herbert has been working since 1999 as a therapist for patients and their families.

Herbert was born and raised in New Haven, Conn., and joined the U.S. Navy immediately after high school. He worked for five-and-a-half years on the deck of an aircraft carrier, which is considered the most dangerous position outside of combat on the front lines.

Although he seemed to have to his life together, drugs slowly took over, and at age 29, he found himself in treatment.

After his recovery, he completed a 13-month internship program in upstate New York in order to become a certified addiction counselor.

By the end of each day in the ultra-marathon, which took five days to complete, Herbert said that he felt like he was "going to die." But then he remembered two of his former patients who had completed ultra-marathons in Chile and China last year.

"I was inspired," he said.

And he said he can't help but smile when he looks at his awkward tan lines from the race.

Now he is considering participating in another ultra-marathon in Nepal in November. His goal is to raise \$100,000.

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What is your favorite book?

Who Moved My Cheese? by Spencer Johnson.

If you could switch jobs with anyone, who would it be?

"I would be an African safari guide."

What are your hobbies?

"I have two dogs i;½ a Basenji and Rhodesian Ridgeback. I like to have fun with them. I also like to go out and eat, hang out in Miami, and, of course, travel.'

What would you do if you were invisible?

'I'd sit in that empty first-class seat and just travel the world."

Who is your hero or someone who has inspired you?

"A patient of mine about 15 years ago. He was a young guy, about 26 years old, very poor, never had more than one pair of shoes. He got into recovery, and his sister's husband ended up getting arrested and his sister suddenly died. He raised her four sons. I really admire that in him i;½ his ability to stay clean, take care of his nephews and raise them like his own."

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Choopersguide is committed to the recovery of individuals who suffer from the [disease of alcoholism and drug addiction](#). We are active in the [recovery advocacy movement in the State of Florida](#) and host an addiction treatment and addiction information resource site with over 30,000 treatment provider listings for treatment programs, methadone clinics, [suboxone doctors, drug and alcohol counselors](#) and [interventionists](#). Additionally, we post [addiction treatment and research articles](#) and national and international [addiction related conferences and recovery events](#).