

# Father and Son competing in Rocket City Marathon to fight opioid addiction

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HUNTSVILLE, Ala. - Daniel Ball III and his father Daniel Ball II are set to run in their fourth marathon together Saturday.

And for one of them, it's a run for his life.

The son, Daniel, said he became addicted to the painkiller, percocet, after a really

bad car accident in the early 2000s.

But to his surprise, Daniel said he was a highly-functional addict.

"I graduated college with honors, Ball said. "I was a pre-medical student. I was a drug addict but I was able to maintain."

But soon after, Ball said his life began to spiral out of control.

"I got in trouble and I did about two and half, three years locked up," Ball said. "Then I hit the streets and was just completely homeless, sleeping under bridges."

in 2016, Alabama's fourth congressional district had the highest amount of opioid prescriptions of any other congressional district in the country, according to a Harvard study.

Doctors were writing 166 opioid prescriptions per 100 people.

Ball said it took years of addiction and hitting rock bottom to realize he needed to change his life.

He found a 12-step program to help him face his addiction head on.

And for Ball, the Rocket City Marathon is just another 26.2 miles of steps on his road to recovery.

"I've been trying to do everything positive in my life in order to bounce back and be a productive citizen and running has really benefited me," he said.

Daniel Ball III's father believes marathons changed his son's mindset.

"What it does for him is help him to focus attention on something more positive in his life," said Daniel Ball II. "Running is a healthy habit, a healthy hobby. What I've seen is a complete change in him as far as his focus."

And Ball said looking over and seeing his son running next to him, in the fight to regain control over his life is a dream come true.

"Whenever I run with him, I just point out, this is my answered prayer," he explained.

"Right here. This is my answered prayer and so that's what we do. Just take it one day at a time."

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