

# Pass It On®...

## To All Who Are Lost: You will be Found Again.

*The amazing story of the missing marathon runner who turned up 54 years later.*

We all have started on some task or set a goal for ourselves that we didn't complete. Sometimes we lose interest or don't have the willpower to keep going. And sometimes, we just forget about the task and move on, not seeing the purpose of it all — that is, until something stirs us inside, and we go back and feel the joy of finishing.

In the 1912 Summer Olympics held in Stockholm, Sweden, Shizo Kanakuri competed in the marathon. A talented young runner, he was pushing himself the way all athletes do on the international stage. But the weather was unseasonably hot, and many of the contestants were struggling on the course. A runner's body heats up to keep muscles warm and blood flowing. Running on a hot day accelerates the overheating process. Runners often talk about pushing through physical barriers, but there does come a point when the body just won't move. That was the case when Shizo started to feel the effects of heat exhaustion: dizziness, nausea, muscle weakness. At about the 30-kilometer mark, he could no longer keep going. He feared he would collapse and suffer severe damage to his health if he persisted.

Shizo dropped out of the race, perhaps to get his bearings or cool down, but he could not recover and had to withdraw. However, beleaguered and losing focus fast, he didn't think to tell the race organizers about his decision. He was listed by the Swedish authorities as a "missing person." No official record of his withdrawal existed, and nobody knew his whereabouts. It became a mystery in Sweden: the case of the missing marathoner.

It wasn't until 1966 that Swedish authorities learned Shizo's story. In those 50 years, a lot had happened in the world. World War II had engulfed most nations and shaken the earth. Japan had been deeply involved, as had the Europeans. While Sweden remained neutral, it played a role in rescuing victims of the Holocaust. For two decades after the war, Europe was rebuilding, and the story of the missing marathoner got lost in the news. And then Swedish authorities received information that

Shizo Kanakuri was alive and had devoted himself to coaching. They invited him to come back and finish the marathon he had begun so many years before.

So, at the age of 76, Shizo Kanakuri returned to Sweden and finished his marathon. It was a world record ... for the slowest time ever posted by a marathoner: 54 years, 8 months, 5 hours, 32 minutes and 20.379 seconds. Shizo had finally fulfilled his goal.

The next time somebody tells you it's too late to finish something you started, remind them of Shizo Kanakuri, who achieved something truly remarkable — the slowest, and most memorable, marathon time in history.

**It's Never Too Late...[PassItOn.com](https://passiton.com)**

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

*The Foundation for a Better Life® promotes positive values to live by and pass along to others.*

Copyright © 2023 | The Foundation for a Better Life®  
All rights reserved. | [www.passiton.com](https://www.passiton.com)

Available under a Creative Commons Attribution NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 License (international):  
<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>