

RUNNING SHORTS

Refueling your motivation to run

By Niki Swearingen

The New Year is well underway and the enthusiasm that fueled the raging fire inside all of us to blaze our way through new milestones has more than likely dwindled to a smoldering pile of rubble or in some cases has been snuffed out in its entirety.

Those of us who are running (figuratively and literally) on the residual fumes lingering from our motivational gas tanks are in much need of a refueling pit-stop. Those of us whose engines have over heated and burned up have found ourselves stranded on the shoulder of the motivational highway, sulking in our own haze of smoke and are waiting to be towed away.

If you have found yourself in either of these situations, I urge you to reevaluate your inspirational fuel of choice. If you are one of the one's who has broken down, perhaps you are putting diesel in a vehicle that requires unleaded gasoline. If you're running off fumes, maybe you just need to top off your tank more frequently.

How do you do this? With challenge! Set new goals. Strive to run farther, faster and harder. Seek to achieve "flow" and run effortlessly. Set your sites on a race in a new location.

Too often we are creatures of habit, becoming prisoners of our own hum drum schedules. The key is to only remain routine in our diversity. By succumbing to these habitual and mechanical ways, we experience mediocrity. We confine ourselves to ordinary running performances, and rob ourselves of achieving the extraordinary.

I believe we do this out of fear. We all know what we are capable of achieving without risking failure. We are comfortable in our routines; too comfortable! Those who know me will tell you that I am the "Queen of Routine". I somewhat obsessively schedule and plan my daily activities. However, whether they are physical or spiritual in nature, I thrive and fuel off of new challenges. I constantly seek growth by pushing my body and mind to run longer distances in order to attain new spiritual heights.

I truly believe that our abilities are only confined to what we perceive as being possible. Dream big! Set no boundaries! Face your fears of failure and blow right past them. Set goals that will require you to vary your routine and force you out of your comfort zone. I think you will be pleasantly surprised at your capabilities. In the end, if you do fall short, look back at the journey to explore what you have learned. I guarantee you will have come away with more fulfillment than when you began.

Not only do I encourage you to assess and tweak the motivational fuel with which you run, but do so with the tank of life as well. Breaking new boundaries and living a life of unconventionality is significantly more rewarding. Go run!