

....it's like jogging.

The first days, the first months or even the first years of jogging are not necessarily an easy ride. Especially if this is the first time in your life you have decided to take up running.

Just as they say « Happiness is not a destination, It is the way... » Jogging isn't a destination either. There can't be a time where one confirms to oneself « I have arrived ». The secret, the challenge and the happiness to jogging is the everyday effort in which at the end of each round, you you get a sensation of having advanced one step ahead.

Having said that, if you are the type of a person that never give yourself credit on the little steps... you are IN for a big disappointment, because this would simply means, you will always have a problem finding any pleasure in jogging.

Every little step towards this new experience should be rewarded... and before you know it, small rewards will eventually turn into BIG ones and by reward I mean, this inner strong feeling of success that doesn't just come and go as it tends to do so very often during the first months but the real JOY that sits deep down within.

It's funny, for a long time, I never thought jogging was a journey, a journey within.... Even when every evidence of fatigue may appear to express the opposite of this ;the sweat, the body pains, the lack of a drive...etc, you will soon come to realise that Jogging is a journey WITHIN.

The first few months of jogging are a pure struggle. The minute you put on your trainers and you're ready to go, the soul (your right senses) suddenly disappears and the mind (the thoughts in your head) takes over. The mind then give way to thoughts of failure, fatigue and all sorts of negativity. The distance that lies ahead starts taking you over and control your thinking panel. The feeling of lack sets in and you soon find yourself longing for every little comfort that you have left behind.

Just as it is with every hard work, JOGGING is a struggle. There's a fight inside you which may seem to include two beings. One that tells you, it's not worth the struggle, this is the one that most of the times disagrees with you everytime you come up with a new constructive idea. The second person is the one that supports your ideas. Now I wonder, if there are 2 presence living in me and always seem to be in opposition, which one should I listen to ?

It wasn't until after many years of contemplation that I came into realisation, « if there are two people living in me and I can clearly distinguish them, «WHO AM I? Am I one of the two, both of them or rather

the third person ? »

The conclusion I came up with is that the two being, or several, that live inside me are simply part of me, they are unmovable, and I am that bigger picture, the BEING, watching over them and nourishing them.

I imagine this whole situation as, me being the tree and the other beings, the branches ?

Years back when I came accross the poem of William Henley « INVICTUS » with the famous line « I am the master of my Fate, I am the captain of my Soul ». I am not sure, I understood then, what I understand now... the knowledge of me being the tree and the other presence within being the branches. Now I am sure that in each one of us, in every person, there live one strong, grandeur BEING, that is bigger than our thoughts, bigger than the mind, a presence that surpasses our occasional feelings of Fear, Anger, Jealousy, Weakness, discontentment ...

This understanding has helped me go though life fearlessly, knowing that there is the bigger picture in me, the infinite being that knows what's best for me, that knows, what to say, how to say it and especially when to say it.

Through jogging, I have come to realize how easy it is to ignore the negative voices within, wipe them off and move forward with certainty. Funny thing is though, when the person within have failed to convince me into sitting idle at home instead of going out there and work out, it disappears as quickly as it comes in.

Throughout the years, I've watched the voices coming in and out of me in a very frequent manner. Now I know that instead of trying to shake them off build up a resistance against them, I am to learn to negotiate with them. On the outside, it may seem like I'm talking to myself, but I am convinced that I am not. My inner conversation would be something like this... « I know you are around, I can feel your presence, I know you want me to stay and continue dwelling on my life situation which is of no use to me at this moment, I suggest to first go for a quick jogging and when I'm back, I promise to I'll spend some time with you »

Now, this all sounds crazy to you I know, but, I can assure you, it works, it works for me. Most of the times if not always, when I get back from jogging, after having emptied my worries and cleared my mind, the negative person or presence in me disappears, why ? because I believe it simply can't sustain happy moments, it cannot survive under a positive atmosphere, it cannot feed on optimism.

Exactly within short instances of this realisation, in the absence of the

negative being, in comes the presence of the positive being (the one that's loving my company).

Sometimes, just before going for a run, the negative person can become so present that it can even attract some very strong possibilities (excuses) that may well seem like a relevant hindrance for me to leave the house. This makes me recall one particular morning, just as I had finished putting on my trainers and ready to go for a run, the rain started pouring outside like cats and dogs, it had started out of nowhere... It was obvious that one couldn't go for a run on such an extreme weather condition. Just as I was ready to sit down and rejoice of the evident excuse, I remembered and felt very strongly the presence of that negative person within, I collected myself, hurried to the dresser, grabbed my rain coat and off I went. You'll not believe it if I tell you that in less than fifteen minutes of running, the rain stopped as abruptly as it had started, giving way to the most beautiful rainbow followed by several other small rainbows... What a view it was !

I was now running on a wild unpaved coastal path alongside the atlantic ocean surrounded by numerous tiny bushes wherever I turned while taking in every sound coming of the huge waves crashing strongly against the ocean cliffs.

I don't remember being filled with so much joy in my entire life!

After years of this practice, years of being the « watcher » of the beings that live within, I have noticed that the mere fact of being aware, of being conscious has resulted into a better balanced state of being. I am aware of the presence, be it negative or positive but I no longer react to it in an impulsive manner. I watch it, recognize it, and let it pass through me. I am like a the transparent wall.

It hasn't quite disappeared as I am certain, it's part of me but I can at least say that, it is becoming more and more dormant.

Jogging has taught me to go WITHIN, to appreciate the simple things in life, it has taught me confidence, patience perseverance just to name a few. It has proven to me that we are stronger than we think. I have learnt that there is more to jogging than just the sweating, the straining, and the staying in shape.

*Having said that, you definately do stay in shape both physically and mentally. You stay in shape **also** within.*

*It has helped me to understand that I **AM** the big picture, that I **AM** related to all human beings, primates as well as nature. The tree, the hedgehog on the path, the infant in the pram... we are all one.*

Jogging is a journey, I look forward to every new day knowing that no matter the circumstances, if I am healthy and still breathing, jogging has its place within.

On a separate account however closely related, I wonder, « can a relationship, an intimate/ special relationship be compared to the very experience of JOGGING?

The entire journey that first starts with ADMIRATION then the DRIVE and CURIOSITY that makes us want to try it out, the many unavoidable CHALLENGES and eventually the struggle to UNDERSTAND and PERSEVERE until we finally come into the REALISATION or rather the SURPRISE of how much we can learn about ourselves from the relationship and finally, the UNDERSTANDING that it is the THE JOURNEY THAT COUNTS, it's the journey that makes us grow, that make us live and not simply survive.

If we can go a step further, go beyond this knowledge and look closely WITHIN we will eventually experience the real inner tranquility, the joy, the BLISS, true HAPPINESS...

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October 19th, 2017: France*