

# Run Your Own Race - Decide Your Own Pace



THINK BACK to a time in your life when you tried something new ...

When I was a teenager I volunteered to work the water station at a 10km race. It was called the “Heaven Can Wait” 10km run and ironically, it was sponsored by the local cemetery.

My job was to pass out water to the runners. I remember being so excited to see all the different kinds of people who passed by and grabbed a cup of water. Some ran past, some walked past and a few wheeled past. I saw so many types of people doing it, I thought maybe I can do it too!

So the next year I signed up for the race and gave it a shot. Back then I didn't do much to prepare except jog around my neighbourhood. I never tracked how far I jogged, or timed myself, I just ran around. I had no time goals for the race, no specialised training, no game plan, nothing. Needless to say that I prepare differently when I run races today, but back then my only goal was to finish.

On the day of the race, it was incredibly hot and humid. I remember struggling at about the fifth mile, thinking, “I must be crazy, why did I do this? What was I thinking? And at one point, I said, “I am never doing this again!”

Have you ever felt that way about something? You eagerly undertake a goal and in the midst of it comes a moment of struggle, and you realise it is much harder than you imagined it would be?

That first 10km race was quite an experience. I jogged, I walked, I jogged and I walked. At times, I didn't know if I could finish. Then came a defining moment.

At one point near the end, a 70-year-old man ran past me, very very fast, and I felt embarrassed that I was 50+ years younger than he and I couldn't even keep up with him. I felt defeated for a second.

## **But then I realised something. He was running his race and I was running mine.**

He had different capacities, experience, training and goals for himself. I had mine. Remember, my goal was merely to finish.

How often in life do we compare ourselves to others and feel disappointed in ourselves when we really shouldn't? After a minute, it hit me that this was a lesson I could draw from. I learned something about myself in that moment. I turned my embarrassment into inspiration.

I decided that I would not give up on running races. In fact, I would run even more races and I would learn how to train and prepare properly and one day I would be one of those 70-year-olds who was still running. As I crossed the finish line, I was proud of my accomplishment.

I am so glad I didn't give up on running. Today it is an incredible source of joy in my life. I have run several races since then, 5kms, 10kms and I run purely for fun. I have studied running books, made friendships with other runners and I can report that I love it now more than ever.

In life we all have those moments where we compare ourselves to others. It's only natural. Don't allow those moments to disempower you. Turn them into motivation and let them inspire you. Use them to show you what is possible. Every struggle is rich with opportunity. You define your own race when you define your own goals.

With the proper preparation, coaching and conditioning, you can improve your results to achieve anything you want in life.

The impact of fitness and nutrition on my life has been remarkable. I can do things now that I could not even do in my 20's all because of coaching, proper nutrition and conditioning.

You decide your race and you decide your own pace. Rarely in life will your destiny be determined by one little race.

“Success is a peace of mind which is a direct result of self-satisfaction in knowing you made the effort to do the best of which you are capable.” - Coach John Wooden

Life is a series of races. There are lessons in every race. There are life lessons to be learned every single day. If you don't win the race, but you get the lesson, and grow, you are truly a success.

*Jill Koenig*

**A best selling author, coach and motivational speaker Jill Koenig assists people in the areas of goal setting, time management and business success. Visit [www.goalguru.com](http://www.goalguru.com)**