Title of Abstract: Mindful Running – An ultimate way to Mindfulness Meditation

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Abstract

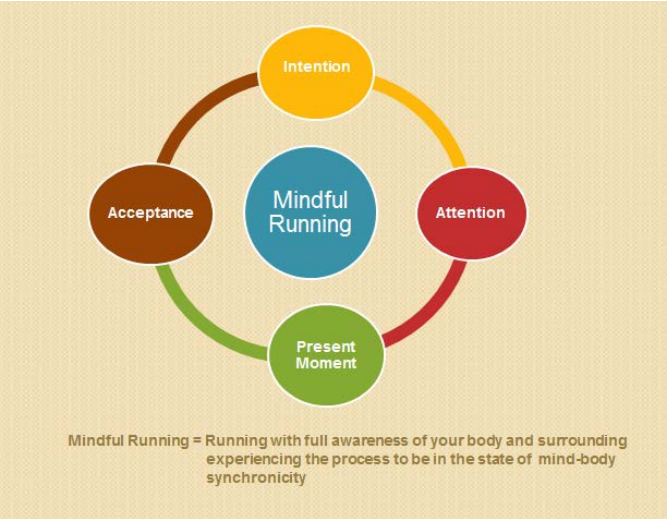
Last November while running my 4th marathon in NYC TCS Marathon 2017, I was out of all energy and fuel by 20th mile. And intuitively it dawn unto me to be focused and getting immersed into the beautiful running motion. I then started to feel my entire body running in synchronicity not alone focused on tired legs and fatigue. I found myself in sync with surrounding feeling the gentle breeze, cooling rains and started using my each sense and muscle to connect with nature and drawing the energy from it. I got into extreme sense of gratitude and getting this opportunity to run this world class race which calmed my nerves and more importantly grateful to my body for ability to run marathon. And after finishing my marathon with ultimate joy and fulfilled heart, I crashed.

Later, while I was recovering, I realized that mind had taken over my body and I had gotten into meditative state. The experience was beyond comprehension and for the first time realized that I have been many times running mindfully during my training runs with intention, attention, enjoying the moment and accepting what is. I later started doing reading and research to find deeper understanding of how being mindful during running can be so meditative. It led me to study the process around mindfulness meditation and running from the perspective of its effect on health and well-being.

I learnt from teachings of yoga teacher and Ayurveda practitioner Sarajean Rudman that meditation is about getting immersed in the process and the feelings and sensations of running (1). In recent years there has been a steady stream of research showing the power of mindfulness meditation to reduce anxiety and ease depression with significant positive health benefits (2,3,4). It turns out that mindful running combined with meditative state can potentially make both your brain stronger and set your mind free reducing anxiety and easing depressive thoughts (5,6,7).

The key to about all of it is that mindfulness meditation helps build your ability to focus, clearing & calming your mind, increasing awareness of breath, and mindful running inherently guides in attaining that state of mind-body synchronicity.

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Recent Publications & References

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About Roopak Desai – MarathonForLife

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Roopak Desai is a recently certified as **Positive Psychology Practitioner (CAPP)**. He participated in the first signature Habits and Happiness Program in 2012 conducted by The Institute of Advance Human Performance (IFHAP). He has been a practitioner of meditation, mindfulness and gratitude journaling since then. He now serves as a member coach at **Positive Psychology - The Science of Happiness** led by Braco Pobric and a passionate runner. Roopak's alter ego is **Marathon for Life** runner after running helped fighting and negotiating anxiety and depression. And he will be sharing how Running is an ultimate way for practicing mindfulness meditation which is the gateway to happiness, health and well-being. He has so far run 4 full marathons including 2 times NYC marathon and around 8 half marathons.

With the help of **mindfulness meditation** practices combined with the euphoric neural conditions that running creates, enabled Roopak was able to retrain my own brain and alter its neural pathways, allowing him to finally overcome 20 odd years of clinical depression. His sole purpose is to **make a difference** in world by helping people with their health, happiness and well-being by spreading awareness and knowledge. Recently, he also presented as a plenary speaker in 17th World Summit of Positive Psychology and Psychotherapy, Toronto which was attend by acclaimed presenters from over 25 countries and was well received with many accolades

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