

## Go For It

Written by Richard Ferguson, Ph.D.  
Monday, 09 December 2013 08:49 -

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Maybe you're looking at running in your first race, or possibly you're considering tackling a half-marathon, maybe even a full marathon. It may be that you have been running for years and have begun to consider running an ultra event or even a triathlon. But there seems to be a little problem, and that problem is you are a bit scared of the new challenge. You are constantly asking yourself, "Can I do this?" You may possibly have some fearful visions of not being able to finish that first race, marathon, or ultra event. Truth is, the real challenge may not actually be the event you are considering running in, but the thoughts in your head that are trying to convince you that you can't be successful. New things in any aspect of life do indeed present uncertainty and can make you feel scared from time to time. But negative thoughts and feeling scared of trying new challenges can rob you of ever achieving your true potential as a runner. If you want to try something new in running, then go for it! Don't let past experiences and negative thinking hold you back from achieving your dreams.

What would your running be like if you never attempted anything new? You probably wouldn't even be a runner. Didn't you feel a bit of apprehension when you first started running? Look how far you have come with your running and just how much better you are today than when you started running. Being scared to take on new challenges can keep you from ever experiencing the joy of personal achievement and growth. Opportunities in running are plentiful, so take advantage of them. Don't let the fear of failure keep you from experiencing things the great sport of running has to offer.

All things in life have to begin with some dream, some vision. So have a dream, have a vision of what you want to do in your running. See yourself running that first race, finishing that marathon or ultra, or running that new personal best time. Set a goal and keep yourself focused on the goal. Don't envision yourself where you are now, envision yourself where you want to be. It's not really about where you are right now; it's about where you want to be and where you can be through training, a positive attitude, and dedication. Once you have a firm vision of what you want to do in your running then it is time to begin the process of actually doing it!

[ad]All great achievements begin with a single first step, and so it is with running. Maybe you only run a couple miles three days a week, maybe you run some everyday, or maybe you run

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70 miles a week. That's where you are right now and that's great, but what do you need to do to get you to your new running vision? It might mean running just one more mile each day for a while or slowly increasing your mileage over a period of a year. It may mean running faster, more specific and better planned training runs. The important thing is to just move forward, even if it's slowly but surely. Remember that "yard by yard, life is hard, but inch by inch, life's a cinch." Just keep progressing toward your running vision of what you want to become. Believe in yourself and keep moving in the right direction. Don't just think about what you would like to accomplish in running, put your dreams into action. You can do it! If you never even try to reach a running vision, then you are guaranteed to never reach it. Months or years from now your vision of running that first race, that marathon, that ultra will be staring you right in the face. What once seemed so far off will become a reality. Just keep working toward the dream.

Be confident in your running gifts. Just think about how you have the ability to go out each day and run. How many people would give anything to be able to go out for a run everyday? Focus on the running talent you do have and not on what you don't have. You are a human being and human beings accomplish great things, just look around you. But to accomplish great things you must first believe in yourself. Your self confidence can be your best friend or it can be your biggest enemy. The ability to believe in yourself, even when things aren't going well, may be the biggest asset you can possess as a runner. The way you think largely determines the way you feel and the effort you put into achieving a goal. Confident thinking gives you energy and mobilizes you to act physically. Don't just train your body, be sure to train your mind to believe in yourself and be confident.

The road to reaching your running dream, in most cases, will not resemble a high speed, interstate freeway. The road to reaching your running dream will probably have many twist, turns, rough spots, and even detours. Failing from time to time is to be expected, but those failures are not a reflection of you as a runner. Too many athletes in all sports think the road to success will be straight and get frustrated when it's not. If you encounter setbacks like poor workouts, less than expected race performances, or even injuries, don't lose sight of the dream. Learn from setbacks and use them to make you a wiser runner and a runner that is better able to plan for your future training and racing. Reaching a running goal can be a long, albeit, rewarding journey. Just like with any long journey consider how sweet it will be to arrive at your destination. Just keep pursuing your goal in the best of times and maybe more importantly, in the not so great of times. Keep moving forward toward your dream and don't let minor setbacks dampen your enthusiasm or confidence. Setbacks are part of the process and it's the process that will lead to the product.

So if you have a dream about doing something new and exciting in your running, don't let fear and apprehension get in your way. Look down the road and set a goal, because it's not about where you are right now, it's all about where you're going in the future. Chase your running

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