

RUN TO FREEDOM...

I am sure we all (at least most of us) remember the classic movie 'Forrest Gump' back in the mid 90's. It was a great movie and in this weeks article I want to specifically refer to the part of the movie when Forrest started running. He was sitting in a rocking chair on the verandah of his home and he just got up and started running and kept running across the USA for 3 years, 2 months, 14 days and 16 hours until he stopped! For Forrest it was a liberating experience that allowed him to break the shackles of many of the obstacles that were holding him back in his life.



I had a similar experience recently and whilst I didn't run across the country nor did I run for more than 3 years; the 40 minute I did run was incredibly liberating. I had just rode my Vespa to Collingwood for servicing and I had no way to get home to St Kilda except run, so off I went. I am sure I have mentioned before my intense dislike of exercise, particularly running! For me to do the volume of exercise that I do, I have to play games in my mind.



In my mind I imagine that I am running in an olympic marathon with the adoring crowd screaming my name and I focus on the point in time when I will run across the finish line and feel fantastic. You may love running and exercise – I don't and so this is what I need to do. During the period of time leading up to this particular day I had some stress and anxiety about certain things in my life. As I was running home from the Vespa House an amazing thing happened... all of a sudden I got this incredible sense of clarity, freedom and peace.

Clear the mind and the clarity & inspiration comes

As I was imagining running a marathon, I got inspired and I made a decision that day that I will run a marathon. But not just any marathon, the Paris marathon in 2013 and combine it with a fabulous European holiday. I started getting excited and then an even more euphoric feeling came over me. I got a really clear sense of what I needed to do in the areas of my life that were causing the anxiety. The more I ran the more clarity I got and when I arrived home I had visualised a game plan in my mind and got into action straight away to make it happen. This was a real breakthrough for me!

The following week when I ran back to Collingwood to go and pick up my Vespa the same thing happened! I was able to clear my mind and the same feeling of clarity and peace came over me. I actually, for the first time in a long

time, enjoyed the run – just like Forrest, except the crowd were chanting “Run Jobbas Run!”

A moving body, a clear mind!

This really was a breakthrough for me because I am prone to be very busy in my mind and be thinking about what I need to be doing and what I should have done. Even when I exercise I am often thinking about getting it over and done with so I can get on with my day. On these two occasions where I had a certain distance to run - it was going to take time which I just had to accept. It allowed me the time & space to be clear in my mind and it was amazing what I came up with.



Find your space

You may need to work with me on this as there are lessons in this story, but they will impact different people differently. For me, the first lesson is quite simple; that we need to give ourselves the time and space to clear our minds and open ourselves up to the possibility of inspiration that is there for all of us. We can do this in many ways and doesn't need to involve running. It could be walking, meditation, gardening or whatever helps us to empty the useless and potentially damaging thoughts that can plague us.

Creating the space for exercise

In my mind the second lesson is a bit more ethereal and involves the importance of exercise. I am **not** talking about the fitness and health benefits of which there are many - but we already know this. I am talking more about the mental and emotional benefits around creating the space to exercise, not the act of exercise. Let me explain what I mean...

We either create a space in our lives for exercise or we don't - this is pretty simple to understand. What is more complex is the reasoning behind this, as it is different for everyone. In my example, up until recently, I had only created or allowed enough space for exercise to just get it done as it was really more of an inconvenience and something that I had to do – like the dishes!! I hadn't allowed myself or maybe felt that I deserved enough time or space to allow the magic to happen. Nor did I recognise exercise as that place where this type of clarity and inspiration would or could occur.

By creating the space to exercise we are saying to ourselves that **we are worthy**. We are telling ourselves that we deserve the benefits of a long, happy and healthy life. We are saying that ourself, our family and all of the things in our life are important enough to prioritise and find this time to run or exercise.

So if you have not created the space to exercise then you need to ask yourself 'why not?' Do you really feel unworthy of having that space and all the amazing benefits that come with clarity, inspiration and good health? I believe you are worthy, and so my greatest recommendation is that you start TODAY to **run to freedom**