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[Home](#)
[Life](#)
[Running](#)
[Photos](#)
[Musings](#)
[Home](#) > [Running](#) > [Articles](#)
More articles:

- [20K wisdom](#)
- [A fitting stage for heroism](#)
- [Cheers to you](#)
- [Durian Power](#)
- [Gear for Cold Weather Running](#)
- [Happily ever after](#)
- [Harvest of hope](#)
- [Hill training](#)
- [Marathon muse](#)
- [The other side of the fence](#)
- [Penang revisited](#)
- [Performance review](#)
- [Running again](#)
- [Running resolutions](#)
- [Running in the movies](#)
- [State of road running in Malaysia](#)
- [Sunscreen](#)
- [To marathon or not to marathon?](#)
- [Stride Length](#)
- [3 Phases of The Marathon](#)
- [Marathon Packing List](#)
- [Dubious Races & Incompetent Officials](#)
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- [adidas Tech Training '04](#)
- [Principles of Training & Lessons in Life](#)
- [2005: Year In Review](#)
- [My Bookcase](#)

Running Resolutions

With the year 2004 merely hours away, it's timely to think about how we runners can improve things out there...

People generally equate making resolutions as how they want to live the coming year. Some wishes are achieved but many fall by the wayside. I've largely refrained from making any resolutions as I've a tendency to believe that you are setting yourself up NOT to fulfil them. Also, it's my belief that if you want to do anything, you should do it regardless of the time of the year.

However since becoming re-acquainted at a more deeper level with the sport I took up some 15 years ago, I feel that we runners are empowered and in the position in many ways (because we've been there before) to spread what we enjoy and benefit from being runners to others. Here are just five non-timebound suggestions for which to guide us by:

1) Encourage others to adopt a healthier lifestyle

This can be to stop smoking, reduce their alcohol intake, stay active, take up running, whatever. By helping others, we will also be able to re-affirm our own beliefs.

2) Give back to the sport

We often take things for granted. In the running context, we expect to be served with good race organization, volunteers to hand out refreshments at the water stations and supporters to cheer you on in races. However during our off-peak times or when not in training, we can still get involved in the sport by standing on the other side of the fence by offering our services to hand out drinks and encouragement. No less important than the heroic runners conquering their time/distance/personal barriers, these acts will bring about a new level of appreciation for these unsung volunteers. Not challenging or fancy enough? Then perhaps coaching is another option.

3) Put in a kind word

When we see a novice runner/jogger out there pounding the streets, besides giving a wave, we can add "Looking Good!" or "Doing Great!". When falling into a conversation with someone just starting out in the sport, that they're doing the right thing. Tell them the benefits running will bring them - the mental and physical challenges and the rewards that come with conquering the barriers and hurdles. Then there's the chance to expand their social circle. Beginners need these affirmation and so do we.

4) Increase our personal effort

Be it training or racing, there are always opportunities to improve our level of commitment and performance. Granted, there will be dips and valleys but we should make conscious effort to elevate our current operating level. That's the only way to improve.

5) Try a new event

If you're bored with the regular humdrum road 10K, take a pick from Cross Country, Marathon, Relays, Track, Round Island Run, Triathlon and Biathlon. Enough variety to fill up a year's worth of running calendar. Alternatively, save up for a race overseas.

Here's wishing all of you many happy and productive miles in the coming year!

*The journey continues....
Jamie, Dec 31st, 2003*



