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Whatever editor

A 'RUNNER'S PERSONALITY' SHOULD BE ADOPTED IN EVERYDAY LIFE

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A little over a week ago, I completed my eighth half-marathon at the Legs for Literacy event. I have participated in this particular event for more than 10 years, which is quite a large portion of my life, considering I am only 17.

Needless to say, this event has an extremely special place in my heart and I am certainly prone to tearing up when crossing the finish line from happiness and excitement due to such an incredible event ... and also from pain. No one ever said long distance running was an easy sport.

Actually, few people would agree that long distance running is even any fun at all. Many of my friends, teachers, peers and pretty well anyone else I talk to are convinced that I'm half-crazy (pun intended) for finding such enjoyment in half-marathon running. I would argue that although running certainly takes a lot out of you, it gives back even more.

This is one of the first half-marathons that I have run alone ... usually I drag a friend or two into the event with me for company. This year, I did not and therefore spent the entirety of the run, for lack of a better word, people-watching.

We all do it ... listening to and observing those around us. It just so happens that when running in a large race, there are plenty of people around you to observe. Throughout the approximately two hours that I was on the Legs for Literacy course, I started to realize how inspiring the "runner's personality" was to me. Every runner in the race seemed to have similar characteristics and they were extremely interesting to observe.

Running is certainly an individual sport, but it is a remarkable group effort as well. This common personality trait among runners could certainly be applied to benefit humanity in everyday life. We all go about our days, accomplishing various workloads, dealing with different struggles, but at the end of the day, to quote High School Musical, "We're all in this together."

The friendliness of the "runner's personality" always surprises and overwhelms me when I am running races. I like to consider myself a friendly person, but it seems that this natural capacity is heightened in each and every runner when they are on the course. Saying "thank you" to volunteers, smiling at those around you, apologizing when bumping elbows with a fellow runner ... these are all small acts of courtesy that may often be omitted in our daily lives.

I can't help but cross the finish line with a huge smile plastered across my face at the end of a race. With many onlookers cheering runners on, no matter the weather and such a sense of accomplishment shared with all of the runners around you, it is such an enlightening atmosphere!

Speaking of goals and common goals, that is another aspect to the "runner's personality" that I find highly admirable.

Runners are highly goal-driven ... No one would be so enthusiastic to run super early on Sunday mornings if we weren't! Setting goals while training, personally and competitively, as well as setting goals on race day, there is always more on a runner's mind than the finish line. In life, it is so incredibly important to be goal-driven. Setting goals for yourself can help you improve as a person and serves as motivation to push yourself each day towards a greater achievement.

Along the lines of goals, running also teaches its athletes a significant lesson about pushing through hardships. Throughout the course of a race, I notice so many of my fellow runners struggling with various issues from pained feet to hitting a mental brick wall.

This could prevent a runner from continuing the race, if they let these hardships get to them. The vast majority of runners enduring hardships throughout a race push through the stress and pain to accomplish the aforementioned goals that they have set for themselves.

A final lesson taught while running that is significantly incorporated into a "runner's personality" is the idea of "mind over matter." This goes along with the idea of pushing through hardships and obtaining goals. In general life, if you focus too much on the "matter," something that is challenging you or making life difficult, it can become increasingly difficult to overcome. It is important to sometimes think "outside the box" and look beyond the matter, focusing on the outcome of your efforts instead of the roadblock in the way. This can be an empowering way of accomplishing a task and also makes some difficult goals more attainable.

All in all, I am arguably at my happiest point when I am running and this sense is only heightened when I am surrounded by runners around me. A pure love for the sport, as well as so many accumulative "runner's personalities" all around me contributes to an immensely uplifting and inspiring atmosphere. I believe it is important to foster your "runner's personality" every day and even more crucial for each person to find something in their lives that brings them unconditional happiness.

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