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Newsletter

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A Guide to Running Better & Enjoying Life More: 12 Tips to Enhance Your Effectiveness

Runners tend to be very committed and self-motivated once they set their mind to something, especially their run training. But what about goals that affect other areas of their lives, or even other modes of training, that may help them perform better on race day?

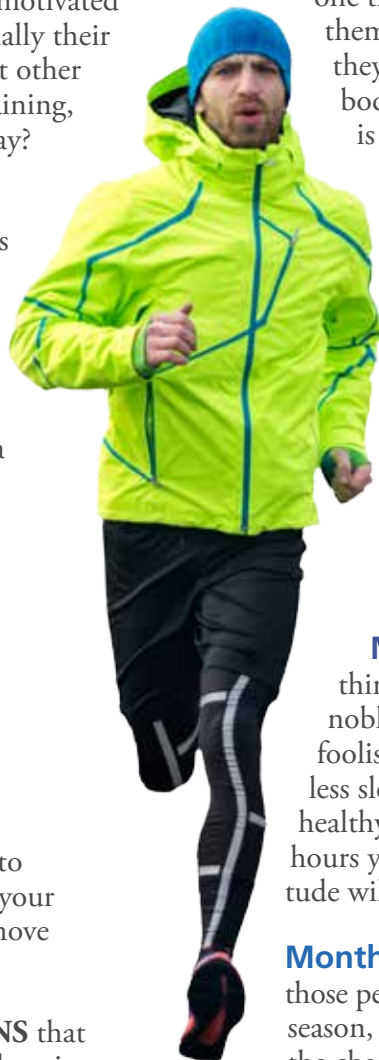
Most of us want to avoid becoming stagnant and therefore we know there are always things we can do to improve. Often that leads to New Year's resolutions — but most resolutions tend to be forgotten or abandoned by the end of January. So, if you think you have some improvements to make, I have a practical strategy that may help you become a better you in 2017.

That strategy is based on three simple steps:

1. Try to view your goals as life improvements and new habits rather than just a lengthy list of goals.
2. Tackle the items on your list one at a time. The narrower your focus, the greater your chance of success.
3. Pick up one fresh habit a month.

Remember that it takes most people 21 days to develop a new habit. Focus those 21 days on your single goal, and when a new month arrives, move on to your next goal.

HERE ARE 12 DETAILED SUGGESTIONS that support the idea of taking smaller bites and choosing



one thing each month to keep you focused. Not all of them have to point directly toward running — but they can improve the health and strength of your body and mind. Remember: One focus a month is the key. Twelve ideas to consider:

Month 1: Let the past go! One thing about runners is we don't let things go easily. We remember training plans, miles of running, successful and not-so-successful races, and the hard work it takes to train. So, keep this thought in mind: It's a new year, or a new month — a new book with empty pages to fill, right? Whether you're facing previous expectations or miles you feel you need to make up, let it go! You don't owe anything to past training plans or "unsuccessful" races. Start fresh — and start again.

Month 2: Sleep! For some reason our society thinks we're more accomplished or somehow more noble if we sleep very few hours. Where has such a foolish idea come from? Yes, some individuals need less sleep than others, but we all need enough to be healthy. This month get to bed on time and sleep the hours your body needs. Your training and your attitude will thank you!

Month 3: Change up your workouts! If you're one of those people who tend to do the same thing season after season, try something new. Your body will respond to the changes you make by becoming stronger, faster, and



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healthier. You can start implementing strength work, add speed sessions, or gradually build up your weekly miles. Whatever you think you can do to up your game, implement it into your regimen this month.

Month 4: Practice mindfulness!

Throughout the month take the time to focus on one thing at a time. When you're visiting with your family, turn off the electronics. While you're eating, take time to enjoy the food and savor the flavors. Put the phone down as you walk and smile at those passing by. Mentally prepare for your workout before you start. Enjoy the scenery around you. Ponder what you can do and make a conscious effort to be more focused in the days ahead.

Month 5: Manage stress! I don't even need to ask who feels stressed on a regular basis. Most everyone does. Stress isn't always a bad thing. In fact, some stress is good for you. The stress of a challenging workout will help strengthen your body and your mind. But watch out for too much stress too often. In those moments, slow down, relax, and take care of negative stressors. Meditation, yoga, coloring, a massage, reading a good book, or a comfortable walk may help. Schedule time to regularly relax this month.

Month 6: Eat more fruits and veggies! Do you find it difficult to get in all those fruit and vegetable servings every day? We know we need them. Our training

improves and we feel better when we eat well. This month make it a goal to get in all your fruits and vegetables each day. Maybe you can make smoothies, eat more salad with lunch and dinner, or get items you've never tried before. Your body will love the nutrients.

Month 7: Experience LIFE rather than THINGS! I once heard that people who DO things are happier than people who BUY things. This month I'm going to encourage you to test that theory. You could be as elaborate as planning a full-scale vacation or as simple as going on hike to someplace you've never been. Throughout the next 30 days, consciously think of things you've been wanting to do — and make them happen.

Month 8: Drink all your water! For the next month don't miss a day of getting in all your water. Eight glasses of water a day is a minimum. If you're exercising you need even more than that. Do what it takes to stay hydrated all month long.

Month 9: Change up your training! As I mentioned above, doing the same thing over and over will lead to slowed or no progress in training. Try cross training to work your muscles in different ways or hit muscles you miss in your day-to-day workouts. Have you always wanted to try Pilates? Start this month. What have you wanted to do and what can you do to switch up your workouts?



Month 10: Control your portion sizes! This goes along with mindfulness. We all know the American way of eating is to go big. I encourage you to take smaller portions, listen to your body, and stop when you're full. Remember moderation. Do you find yourself eating foods you don't particularly care for? If so, don't eat those calories and find a healthy option you enjoy. Pay attention, go smaller, and see how you feel.

Month 11: Learn something new! If it's been a while since you tried a new activity, what are you waiting for? Take up pottery, dance classes, rock climbing, skiing, martial arts, or even yoga. A new hobby is something you can try with your family too. Find something you haven't done, plan to do it, and get out. You may just find your next favorite hobby.

Month 12: Be grateful! In a society flooded with social media, it's easy to drown ourselves in a state of self-pity, unhealthy comparisons, ingratitude, and depression. Social media shows us all the highlights of our peers, but not the struggles they face. This month take the time to ponder the blessings you have. Write down at least one thing you're grateful for each day. When you notice yourself feeling down or inadequate, let that signal you to remember what you have. If you struggle through a

workout, remember how lucky you are to be able to freely move your body. There's always something to be grateful for. Hopefully you can take the time



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each month to develop a new habit. Then, at the end of your 12-month challenge you'll see what you've accomplished — and my guess is, you'll not only be a better runner, but you'll have a better life.

For more information about the TOSH Running Program in Murray, please call us at 801-314-2996 or email us at TOSHrunning@imail.org.

Rebecca Bennion
TOSH Running Program Coordinator

Eating for Strength: What to Eat to Help You Build Muscle in the Offseason

Off-season is a good time to participate in activities you enjoy other than running. It's also a good time to work on getting stronger for the upcoming season. Getting stronger means building muscle, and in order to optimize muscle growth you need to challenge your muscles and fuel your body right.

Food is your body's fuel and different types of food have different functions. Protein is needed for building muscles while carbohydrates and fats are needed for energy. Eating enough protein every day is important to build muscle, but eating enough carbohydrates and fat is just as important. If you don't eat enough carbohydrates and fats, your body will have to use the protein you've eaten for energy and building muscle will be much harder. Remember, your body already needs extra calories

because you're still growing.

Follow these tips to help build muscle:

- After exercise, choose foods that have both protein and carbohydrates in them. For example, try a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, grilled chicken sandwich, chicken burrito with beans and rice, and Greek yogurt with fruit and granola.
- Don't skip meals! To build muscle you need to fuel your body consistently. Make sure to eat breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks.
- Eat protein throughout the day, not just at dinner. Sources of protein include meat, dairy, nuts, beans, eggs, fish, and soy. Find a place for protein at every meal.

Some athletes who want to build muscle turn to supplements for help, but is this a good idea? Many supplements claim to build muscles, but since supplements aren't regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, they can actually do more harm than good.

Supplements can contain illegal substances, which can lead to health and performance problems. Choose to get your protein from real food to help you maximize muscle growth, health, and performance.

For more information on, visit our TOSH Nutrition website.”

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