

Does the Fear of Injury Paralyse You?

So here I am a week before my very first marathon (the Scotiabank Toronto Waterfront Marathon) and I am dreading it! Actually, to be exact, it is the first race I have ever run except for a 5km that I did this past summer. To be precise, I am not even a runner. And I'm not sure if I even enjoy running. And yes, I am doing the full marathon – exactly 42.2km! I am pushing the limits of my body and I really don't know what it will do to me, yet I am still on the road to doing it. I'm now thinking, with only a week to go, that this is crazy! The running has taken its toll on my body and I am nursing an injury to my left leg.

Well let me give you some background. I started training in May of this year and I haven't looked back until now. Actually the last two weeks have been the most stressful weeks in my head over this marathon. So I have been training with the Running Room and doing my regular cross-training at my studio. I have also continued my regular work of personal training and teaching classes and bootcamps to my clients. So my body has not had much rest from activity. I am constantly pushing my muscles and my heart to their limits within the boundaries of the classes and workouts. I have added in the running component and had some great learnings about my body and what it can do when I'm in the right frame of mind.

So, what's the problem? Well it started when I was doing my final long runs of 32km. I began experiencing sharp pains down the side of my left leg. As my running distance and pace increased, so did my aches and pains. I went from pain in my butt – so severe that I couldn't sit down without tears coming down my face – to pain in my hips and it continued to travel down my leg into my hamstrings and calf. The most severe pain I experienced was at the side of my knee, piercing my stride that I had to hobble back 9km from one of my 32km runs because of the severity!

So I'm now so scared about experiencing that pain during the running that I am questioning my ability to do the marathon at all! I took time off running for a week yet still taught my classes and continued working like normal. I continue to seek treatment with a chiropractor and a massage therapist to speed up the healing process. But my fear of pain when I get it in my running, which is usually at the 20km mark, is actually paralyzing me from the thought of successfully finishing the marathon.

Why is our brain wired to give us self-doubt? Why do we see the negative of achieving a goal instead of the positive? Why can the fear of failure be so paralyzing? Why does the fear of pain stop us from continuing toward our goals?

If you have ever experienced these same doubts about your fitness goals or are experiencing them now, then please give me a call and we can work together to achieve a solution!

Submitted by Nadia Bender

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