Running with Adonis

My Trials and Tribulations of Training for

Joseph's Miracle Run

I love my ancestors just as the rest of you.  So when "Joseph's Miracle Run", was announced a light went off in my head and I asked myself, "Can I do this? Is this something I could do? Train this fabulous flab over the year so I could run in the 5K next August?"  Obviously this is something to exercise faith in, you know weak things overcoming their weaknesses to become strengths. I am the prototype specimen for this principle. A weak thing. A true back of the gym class runner—I mean slogger. Fact is I hate running. It just hurts. Other physical activities aren't so bad, even enjoyable. Biking—well that's just plain fun. Hiking in the mountains—enlightenment. Running—stab me in the arm with a fork. I told you it hurts. But here is my chance. Brother Joseph calls.  I have a testimony! The church is true! "Courage brethren and on, on to the victory." What more need be said? I'll just exercise faith and Voila! Gorgeous, skinny, strong body bounding down the 5K trail. Long hair flowing behind me in the wind. Oooo--Venus. I was Botticelli's model. Yes! I can do this! THIS IS ME! Visualization is a part of exercising faith.

Besides that, I have a mentor in my husband. Now here's a genuine runner. An actual get-up-in-the-wee-hours-for-a-refreshing-run guy. A dash-off-an-easy-Saturday-morning-10-miles-just-because runner. An endorphin addict. Yes, he's a runner. Dark curly hair. Nice hamstrings. Solid pecs. A real Adonis, what can I say. We were shopping once upon a time and the sales associate asked me, “Can I help you find anything?”, “Yes” I responded, “Tall, dark and handsome. He was here just a minute ago.” Now that's a picture for visualization. Adonis. MY Adonis leaping down the 5k trail. Just hold on a sec, girls! Venus is bounding down the lane beside him and. . . what's that I see? A . . sign? Bold lettering: “He's taken, back off”.  Well I HAVE TO HOLD A SIGN! You can't just let Adonis loose on the trail. Think of the explosive reaction among the female camp when Mr. Adonis Hamstrings steps into position. Hey! He's married! That's visualization enough. I'm motivated and I've got my sign.

So I print up the trail map, figure out a training regimen and start where I am. And really who are we kidding. I'm on the bottom of the totem pole. Run 1, walk 5 and that's minutes not miles. But we're talking about exercising faith here, overcoming weaknesses and it's a beginning. It takes me a lot longer to increase my running intervals than I like to admit. Furthermore I haven't mastered the positive visualization thing. I really do love running. Right? This isn't pain, this is what “good” feels like. Nevertheless, my trusty fork remains in my back pocket. A few months into this and I have to grapple with a few problems. The lady with tree-trunked quadriceps at the running store solved my piriformis trouble with a pair of firm support shoes, so I'm over the sub-gluteal hip pain. But for heaven sakes what's this? Is it possible to be born with an overgrown uvula? I have to pull so hard for breath during my last running interval, it seems I'm triggering the gag reflex.

All of this brings me to the discovery of two truths. First: Time IS relative. When it's 6 a.m. and you absolutely must get up to tend to the needs of your children, time moves with lightening speed. The alarm rings, eyes blink once and a minute has already lapsed. Blink again and five more have disappeared. Three blinks and a quarter of an hour has vaporized into eternity. But when you're flopping through your last interval on the treadmill, it's amazing how many footsteps God makes you cram into a second of time before he's willing to turn the little digit on the clock. Those final, foot-plodding, lung-pulling, uvula-wagging, few seconds last a lot longer than the fifteen minutes you lost this morning when you blinked.

The next truth is more painful and this is the real reason running hurts. I have come to know for myself that you cannot exercise faith in a false principle. The final minute looms out before me like a vast untamed continent. I am pulling so hard for breath, that I can't stop to swallow. Drool is so unromantic. Yeah, I'm on the lung transplant waiting list, what of it? I admit. I am NOT Venus. Happy? Well SHE never tried to run a 5K in her 40s.  I've torn up my cutesy little homemade sign and ate it. I will not be running alongside Adonis in the picture perfect paradigm of marital bliss. You want truth? The truth is, the pure diamond truth, and this is what's so painful, I will be flailing behind him shouting, “You whooo. Handsome . . .Wait. . . .Waaaaaait!   Now where's my fork.

If I can suffer so valiantly for so noble a cause, SO CAN YOU!  See you at the 5k.

Ruth White