



BodyMind Balance Article August 2008

Limitless Living

Isn't Limitless Living a great term, (taken from Phil Keogan's book NOW (no opportunity wasted). It encompasses perfectly the fact that **we are capable of far more** than we think we are. As human beings we have so much potential that is unrealised. What potential in you is unrealised? Have you ever thought I would love to but..... And so never done it. Or perhaps you've heard yourself say: Oh I could never do that.... what is the that that you are referring to?

It is my belief that we often limit ourselves from fulfilling our potential or 'unlimitedness' through self-imposed limits, or limits we unconsciously agree to eg via our family, close ones or friends, and even society. It does not matter whether they are conscious or unconscious, we can make the choice whether to have a limitless existence or not.

Limitations

Limitations are like living in a box you are unable to see out of. Should you get a glimpse outside, the expansiveness can be frightening. And the thought of stepping outside or soaring above these limitations can be even more so. For some it is so threatening that staying within something that they now know is limiting is the preferred choice.

However, when we push past the fear and start living beyond our previous limits, our lives change. This can be subtle or very obvious.

My experience

For myself, I had an experience regarding self-imposed physical limitations. My catch phrase was 'I'm not a runner' so what was I? Exactly that - a person who did not enjoy or even partake in running despite playing club hockey for many years as an adult. A run for me was maximum 20mins of torture with the main self conversation was, this is awful, it's hard, I hate this, why am I doing this? etc etc...

When I decided to change my outlook, I was in awe of how much I had been underestimating my body but it also highlighted how much I had been limiting myself for most of my life.

Change the belief

What did I do? I made a resolution that I was now a runner, (one of those New Year, new start resolutions). This combined with a few key words uttered by my husband I went beyond my previous limits - I easily ran non-stop for 7kms the first time out. For those non-runners out there or those who have known me for a long time, you will understand the milestone that this was.

Commit

While I had extended beyond my limits I needed something to keep me going and to continue to move beyond my limits I set up a training programme with a goal to achieve every few weeks.

Change the limits

What limits had changed? My previous run distance was 3 – 4 kms, say 30mins. From a starting point of 7kms I realised that I could achieve longer distances and heaven forbid I actually enjoyed it!! Imagine my excitement when I ran 15kms. It really reinforced for me, how much **we underestimate ourselves**. For me it is my body, for you it might be your brain, your skills and talents, your relationship. We each limit ourselves, often unconsciously.

Ok, so my 8yr old son can leave me for dead on a 6km run, but I am doing it, at my pace and my way. It is all relative to yourself, not anyone else, as this is your belief and limit that you are moving beyond. So unless you are training for the world champs or similar, make it relative to you and encourage yourself. Be grateful and gracious.

The four steps or actions to take for a limitless life are:

1. **Identify the belief** – remember the statements in the first paragraph: Have you ever thought I would love to but..... And never done so. Or perhaps you've heard yourself say: Oh I could never do that.... what is the that that you are referring to? Reflections like this provide insights you can work with.
2. **Change it** – eg become a ie I am a runner, or I am a great cook, I express my creativity through painting or dancing, I share myself with the world through my poetry, I share my truth though inspirational public speaking etc etc ...
3. **Commit** - you need to be committed. How committed you are, determines how far you step beyond your limitations. You do not have to be focused to the detriment of all else, just a healthy commitment to yourself to take the first step, and then the next and so on.
4. **Extend or reset the limits** – this is where you reset your limits, proof of how far you have come and how far you now choose to go.

And then do it all again. For instance, my starting run is 7kms but a 'standard' run is now 10kms. I have no doubt that this will increase if I choose to do so. However I might also decide to challenge and change the limit in another area of my life and leave my running where it is.

Help with Fear

Sometimes **the fear of what will change in your life** if you do achieve is more frightening than the actual change itself. It may be that redefining or moving beyond a current limitation means that a key aspect in your life will be challenged, or changed such as a relationship or your belief about yourself. So why not take a small step and change another less frightening limit? Or think back to a time when you were really afraid but still did 'it'. More often than not the thought or fear of the outcome is worse than the actual result. Or break it down into smaller steps - change one part first and then another and so on.

Your observation around this could be you limit yourself on potential, imagined or expected outcomes. Is this how you live your life, always worried about what **might** happen, so missing out on what is? And what if the outcome was the expected one, how can you support yourself to deal with this?

Questions for reflection

When considering what the impact of the change would be, you can ask:

What would it mean if you then attracted more attention (real or perceived), would you be comfortable with the change? Or perhaps it would mean you needed to be more accountable for your actions or more honest and self-responsible. Again, would you be comfortable and happy to be more so? Are you prepared to take on the mantle of self-responsibility and stop blaming your partner, relationship, friends, genes, family, work etc etc.

We will always be challenged, that is the path we tread on this earth. But we also have huge opportunities to live fully - to live a **Limitless Life**

What will be your challenge?

Why not take the challenge and commit to something you thought you never would or could do? It could be physical, eg run half a marathon, undertake a cycle tour in a part of the country you have never seen; skills or talent based eg take up a new hobby, make a speech to a group of people, join a group; relationship based: eg try a different behavioural response; Learning based: eg learn a new language, go back to school, learn to read/play music.... The choice is limitless!

If it is a physical challenge you are wanting, some friends and I are running the Auckland Half Marathon on November 2nd, why not join us? There is a 5km, quarter marathon (10kms), half marathon (21kms) and a full marathon (42kms) on offer, walk or run – something for everyone. I have included a link for a beginners training schedule for the half from the Auckland Marathon website: http://www.aucklandmarathon.co.nz/preparation/training_beginners.asp

I would love to hear what limits you are moving beyond and your successes – email me on deb@bodymindbalance.co.nz

Go well and enjoy!

