



**ΝΑΜΙΒΙΑ  
UNIVERSITY  
OF SCIENCE  
AND TECHNOLOGY**

**RUNING MY OWN RACE**

**BY**

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**AT THE**

**SPRING GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**ON**

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**AT**

**SAFARI CONFERENCE CENTRE**

**WINDHOEK**

## **The metaphor of running**

Denver Kisting – Imagine that day,

Where you can finally say: “I did it!”

When you can say: “I never gave up. I never quit.”

Where these moments of pain turn into memories for that goal you wanted to obtain.

It might take long to reach that moment, but as soon as you get there, you’ll thank yourself for

## **THE REST OF YOUR LIFE**

- Source: Run a marathon (Facebook)

**Good morning ladies, gentlemen and all gender-nonconforming persons. All protocol as established earlier accordingly observed.**

Running is the greatest metaphor for life, because you get out what you put in.

Allow me to explain.

About two years ago, I was convinced by a friend to join him for a 7km trail run at Avis on the outskirts of Windhoek.

Up until that point, it had been years since I was able to even jog as far as around the block.

Despite the mental, physical and spiritual mess that I was at the time, his suggestion for this run resonated deep inside of my being. I think it was because I was overwhelmed by a burning desire to stop surviving but start thriving. The past few years before then had been nothing more than a struggle to hang onto this complex but beautiful thing we call life.

So, I decided to go for it.

Before the event, scheduled for a freezing Sunday morning, my dog, Google, and I attempted what can best be described as a tortoise-paced brisk-ish walk around the block. Well, we did two of those.

Don't let anyone convince you otherwise – ignorance can at times save you from chickening out of what could change the trajectory of your life. True story.

I was wholly and entirely ignorant about what a trail run through and over the Avis mountains and valleys entailed.

Had I known, I would definitely not have shown up.

Despite two serious car accidents and a suicide attempt prior to that, I don't think I have ever come that close to meeting my maker as I did on that chilly Sunday morning.

It was grueling and way more intense than I could fathom.

But I survived to tell the tale and today I am here to continue spreading the gospel of running.

It set the pace for the next course of my life – something I remain eternally grateful for.

Since then, I have run eight half-marathons – the last one last Saturday – and a vast number of 15 and 10kilometres.

Why do I say that running is the greatest metaphor for life?

Firstly, it teaches you the immense power of putting one foot in front of the other.

Life as a student must have been very tough at times. I want to promise you that the new journey that you are embarking upon today will get even tougher than your toughest day on campus. Adulthood is not for the faint-hearted.

But it's through getting back to basics – putting one foot ahead of the other and moving forward however slowly you can – that will empower you to overcome the obstacles that come your way.

Other than putting one foot in front of the other and making sure you keep on moving, running teaches us how crucial it is to keep on breathing.

This is something we take for granted.

But breathing through life where it meets you will provide sustenance in more than just a physical form. It anchors and calms you. It restores.

Speaking about breathing: Let me also talk to you about catching your breath by taking a breather.

When you are going through the most, when life gets hard, when tomorrow seems unlikely, we must prioritise taking a break. This is serious.

I know our families put pressure on us. Society does its part to exert additional weight. Social media amplifies all of it.

But, remember this: You are running your own race, at your own pace and in your own lane whilst you sip on your water, minding your own business.

Let me tell you, this 2019 society that we live in often doesn't want us to mind our own business. But we have to commit to this every single day. There is no alternative.

So, drinking water either whilst you are running or during your break helps you curb the effects of dehydration.

It's a fast-paced world. The future of work as we know it is being radically transformed by the Fourth Industrial Revolution coupled with artificial intelligence.

So, it is important, as it is on a long run, to remain hydrated.

How do we do that? We become meticulous about the company we keep. We become non-negotiable about radical self-care. We become super serious about healthy boundaries. We are particular about our physical, emotional and spiritual consumption.

The most important lesson the metaphor of running teaches me is that you get out what you put in.

In other words, it is an investment that, unlike the shady and dodgy ones we often see in some of our markets, that always, always, always consistently reaps rewards.

The more you invest in your training, in your recovery, in your rest and in your diet, the more rewards you see.

And when you become injured, as is a given in life too, we need to learn to nurse the injury responsibly and sufficiently before we hit the road again.

The test of years of blood, tears and sweat, which culminated in today's beautiful event, will now be put to the test for you.

Apart from shedding about 15kg over the last two years, the running journey has been about a lot more than my body.

I have been able to smash my personal and professional goals in ways that I never thought would be possible.

Running teaches me that if your investment is consistent, the following fruits will be at your regular disposal:

- 1.) Increased energy
- 2.) Sharpened focus
- 3.) Balanced emotions
- 4.) Restful quality sleep
- 5.) Enhanced productivity
- 6.) Intellectual strength
- 7.) Physical endurance

- 8.) Calmness amidst storms
- 9.) Inner peace
- 10.) Happiness

So, dear graduates, I would like to congratulate you with this accomplishment.

Moreover, I would like to invite you to embrace the metaphor and gift of running to steer your journey towards beauty and abundance.

Imagine that day,

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Well, today IS *that* day!

Thank you. Ndapandula. Ndanki. Kai aios. Baie dankie. Danke schön.

- Denver Kisting is an award-winning journalist, TV host, a runner, an activist and a master manifestor.