

## CHAPTER 1

### How can I make time for running?

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#### Setting the context.....

During casual conversation with family, friends and colleagues about exercise, do you find that often people (possibly you) first express an intention to exercise and then in the next sentence talk of the barriers stopping them? Now take a moment to reflect on your personal experiences as a runner or aspiring runner. What are the common barriers that have prevented you from going out for a run? Can you remember when you intended to run (or do exercise) and talked yourself out of doing it; why was that?

Having taken a moment of reflection, now take a look at the ten most commonly cited reasons for not exercising. How many sound familiar?

- I don't have enough time to exercise
- I find it inconvenient to exercise
- I lack the motivation to exercise
- I don't find exercise enjoyable
- I find exercise boring
- I lack confidence in my ability to be physically active
- I worry about getting injured or have been injured recently
- I don't have the discipline to set goals, monitor progress, and put in the effort to achieve them
- I don't have any encouragement, support, or companionship from family and friends
- I don't have parks or safe and pleasant walking paths convenient to home or work

Understanding the barriers you may face when trying to develop a running routine will not only help in the search for strategies to overcome them, but may also help you integrate running as a habitual part of your life. A lack of time is not only the most commonly reported reason for not exercising in the first place; it is also the most common reason for discontinuing exercise.

Do you find yourself saying that you do not have time for running?

Be honest, is your perceived lack of time genuine, or could it be the result of poor time management?

If there is a possibility that it is the latter, don't be hard on yourself, we're all guilty of poor time management, at least on occasion.

This chapter provides information and resources intended to help improve time management for running. It does so by detailing common time management issues, providing practical recommendations for improving time management, and concluding with two case studies focused on time management.

#### Commentary.....

##### Andy Lane

This is a fascinating subject and highly enjoyable chapter to read. It rings so many bells in my mind and my experiences. Tracey and Wendy provide a useful summary of academic work in this area that has sought to understand the barriers to exercise. Getting the nation active is vital given the rise in ailments linked to poor diet

and inactivity. People know they should eat more healthily and exercise more often, but struggle to act on their good intentions. Tracey's comment on guilt is what every parent relates to, and emotions such as guilt are powerful. If Tracey anticipates guilt when she thinks about going for a run, this will have a powerful effect on motivation. The strategy to regulate the guilt is to talk yourself out of running or reducing the length of the run. If every run involves overcoming feelings of guilt then going for a run is simply not as easy as putting your shoes on. In my own case, when my children were young my priorities changed from exercise to work, and I could manage guilt from not parenting by justifying the career related benefits of working and ultimately the collective benefits to the family.

A consequence of my time management when the children were young reminds me of Wendy's case study. I put on weight; lots – 21 kilos in 12 years! I exercised regularly but also gained weight. The lightning bolt came just before getting to 40 when my priorities changed. A simple message that "exercising more is worth it". I would challenge thoughts that I should work more and this was really difficult in the initial stages. A thought that I believe applies to both case studies is to think through your priorities and your goals. Think about how much time you will commit and anticipate emotions that will relate to trying to do this. It's ok to feel guilty if you think you are ignoring your children or not spending time with a loved one. The message guilt is telling you is that these people are important to you; that makes sense and one of your goals is to spend time with your family and share this sense of happiness and companionship. However, you also have a goal of running that appeals to your sense of achievement. You can have the two goals; but you need to schedule when they take place. This does not mean a heavily organised life, but it does mean thinking about the things that really matter and spending time doing them.

[http://www.amazon.co.uk/runners-guide-sport-psychology-nutrition/dp/1505575753/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1438029104&sr=8-1&keywords=a+runners+guide+andrew+lane](http://www.amazon.co.uk/runners-guide-sport-psychology-nutrition/dp/1505575753/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1438029104&sr=8-1&keywords=a+runners+guide+andrew+lane)