

Keep at it

Commitment is character, there is no getting away from it



LIVE LIGHTLY

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'Ek baar jo maine commitment kar di, fir main apne aap ki bhi nahi sunta' and the theatre erupts into euphoric catcalls and revelry. This is undoubtedly one of the most resounding Salman Khan one-liners, vital to the runaway success of a Bollywood blockbuster. This is a favourite Bollywood quip of mine.

I was talking to a fitness enthusiast the other day who seemed to have taken to running daily lately, "I've signed up for a #3Kchallenge – to run 3K every day for a month as I realised I had stopped running regularly. There is no getting away now."

Commitment

A client who worked with me on accountability and life goals, once shared that her minimum daily steps commitment is sacrosanct, "If nothing else, I now complete my step-goal walking inside my apartment however seemingly numbing it is." As I know, she has undergone an unprecedented shift in fitness and well-being, committing to small yet discernible changes in her daily schedule.

This is real life, made of small, yet defining personal

victories. Such stories don't make it to a bestselling autobiography but every inspiring autobiography is indeed a recount of personal challenges and hard-won victories in the writer's milieu. The common thread being that commitments made to the self succeed well above the promises made to appeal to others or our own unfavourable impulses.

So, this month, as I watched Nike's latest Colin Kaepernick commercial, it stirred connections to many stories of individual challenges and wins. To me 'Don't try to be the fastest runner in your school or the fastest in the world! Be the fastest ever!' is a big leap and a deeper, more insightful personalisation of the 'Just Do It' mantra. It operates at two levels – one, it urges us to consider resetting the bar to break through personal barriers and redefine goals; two, it speaks to the prowling hero in each of us.

The truth is, no one wants to be found out, no one wants to look bad at the end of the race and more insidiously, no one wants a confirmation of not being good enough. This exists as we focus outward, pitching the self in comparison with the other who is winning. It is endemic. I see many, a morning walker, break into a run when no one is watching, 'Let me try but let no one else find out' – is a basic urge. When that focus shifts inward the self-dialogue

is kinder – 'Let me find out how it feels! Let me do my best.'

Confidence-building

Getting around self-debilitating urges is achievable. I also believe that getting to that place of committing-the-self is a road made of many confidence and character building steps where we make promises to keep them. When you say you will arrive at 9.00 a.m., you arrive at 8.58 a.m. When you are tempted to commit to call back in two minutes, you stop! Instead promise to call in 10. To wake up at 6.00 a.m., set up the alarm for 6.00 a.m.; no snooze mode, you just wake up! These simple yet vital steps wins foster tenacity.

To win we must examine commitment as our very character on the line. No wonder we have to be unrelenting. Going a step further, we will publicise a commitment and deny it the cushion of anonymity. Small, frequent victories will form the bedrock of success and higher goals. Of course sleep, convenience, comfort, anonymity are collateral damage on this road. As Nike says, 'Believe in something, even if it means sacrificing everything'.

And then we will witness our confidence and character grow deep, ingrained roots.

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FREEPIK

Never too small: Every successful commitment is a victory.