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Just Keep Running, Running, Running

Well, here we are on an uncharted course. Boston Marathon-delayed. Indianapolis 500-delayed. NBA, MLB, NHL-postponed. Amway River Bank Run-delayed until October 24. Around this time, we typically are talking about where you are in training and encouraging you to push harder and harder. We should be discussing hydration and nutrition status. You should be addressing any lingering aches and pains so they are resolved prior to the River Bank Run.

I'm sure many of you are disappointed that you can't be at the starting line on the second Saturday in May. The staff and volunteers dedicated to the success of the River Bank Run also are saddened by the news. Please understand it is in the best interest of the community, country and world to delay the run. But note that we are still here for you and when the event finally takes place this fall it will be bigger and better than ever!

So, what should you do now? Keep yourselves healthy. Train. Run. Do not let this delay bring you down or take away from your goal of completing the River Bank Run. You have your training programs so keep on working on them. And on May 9, RUN! You can still run your 5K, 10K or 25K on May 9, despite the fact that the River Bank Run has been delayed. Sure, the course may not be the same. You may not be running with your group of friends or have the crowds cheering for you. But this does not mean that you can't run "virtually." Just keep running, running, running.

Most of us are cooped up inside based on the stay-at-home order handed down from the state to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The isolation and, for many, financial concerns can lead to uncertainty, anger, anxiety, depression and irritability. One of the best ways to control this is to exercise. I recommend trying to get at least 30 minutes of exercise a day, as this has been proven to provide many benefits.

As we have discussed previously, exercise can help decrease rates of depression, moodiness and anxiety. Exercise helps to alter the chemical and hormonal pathways in our brains and bodies to provide energy, euphoria and happiness. Exercise is addictive, so if you stop or dramatically alter your exercise program you may experience chemical changes in the body that can cause withdrawal symptoms.

Anything you can do for exercise right now is important. I have noticed a significant increase in the number of people getting outside to walk, hike, bike and run (while maintaining social distancing, of course), which is great. This would also be a great time to get your children involved in an exercise program. Get outside and kick around a soccer ball, throw a football or play basketball. Or start training the next generation of River Bank Run athletes. It is never too early to start a running program. How about training with your child and planning on running the River Bank Run with them?

This is also a great time to work on cross training. Incorporating strength training, alternative cardio, plyometrics, yoga and Pilates, for example, will benefit your training. If running is your only exercise, this may improve your run times and decrease repetitive overuse injuries. There is a wealth of free home exercise programs across many different streaming

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platforms. So, this is the perfect time to expand your workouts and get creative. Several workouts do not require any equipment, but if you need weights and can't immediately access any, find something around the house that can take their place, like canned goods, jugs filled with water or a bag of potatoes.

Together we will get through this unusual time. It is difficult to not have control over our lives. There is so much uncertainty. But all of us are in the same boat. There are many people working long hours to provide food, health care and emergency services. Be kind to everybody. Say "thank you." Call your neighbors, especially if they are individuals who are aged or disabled, to see if they need any help, food or just a simple conversation. This will pass, and we will get back to normal. But in the meantime, stay active. Keep exercising, just keep running and, most importantly, be patient and kind to everyone around you.