

# Have fun AND have your best races



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# Prepare physically AND mentally

- Physical preparation / training
- Mental preparation / training
  - Share: What is the biggest mental challenge for you as a distance runner?



Katelyn Tuohy

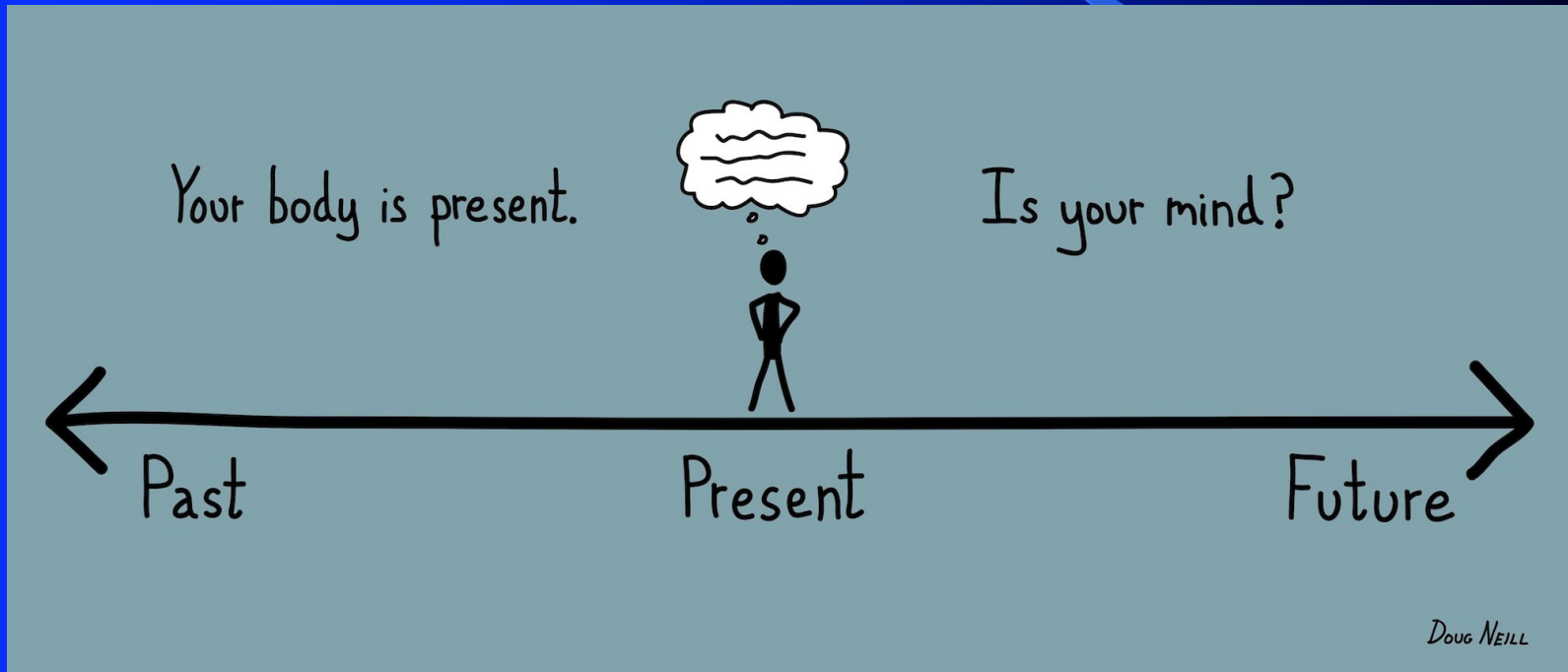


The biggest key the mental training developed was easily present moment awareness. It has so many uses. In races it keeps you observant and reactive to what's going on in the race.

In your everyday life it keeps you grounded and keeps your mind on track instead of overthinking and being hard on yourself.

Rocky Hansen

# Can you stay in the present?



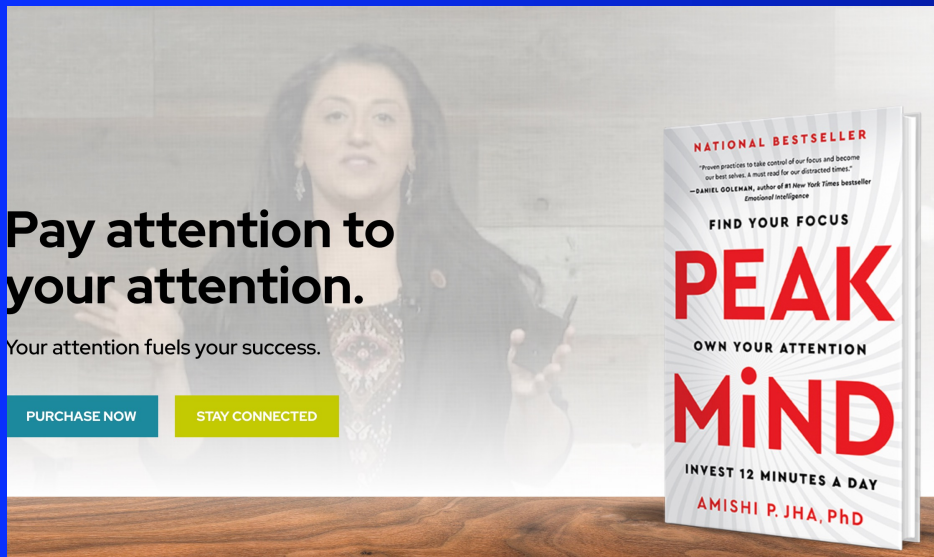


# Watch your thinking



# How to Tame your Wandering Mind

- Practice Daily
- 5-12 minutes of mindfulness training daily
- Goal is to strengthen attention and your frontal lobe
- Getting Started: <https://www.mindful.org/meditation/mindfulness-getting-started/>



Amishi Jha: TED talk



It keeps you out of your head. It felt so good to not fight with myself so much anymore. It was also comforting to know that the negative self talk wasn't me, it was just a thought.

Present moment awareness also helps with tackling one thing at a time; not thinking about what's to come or what happened in the past. That was very big for me.



# True or False?

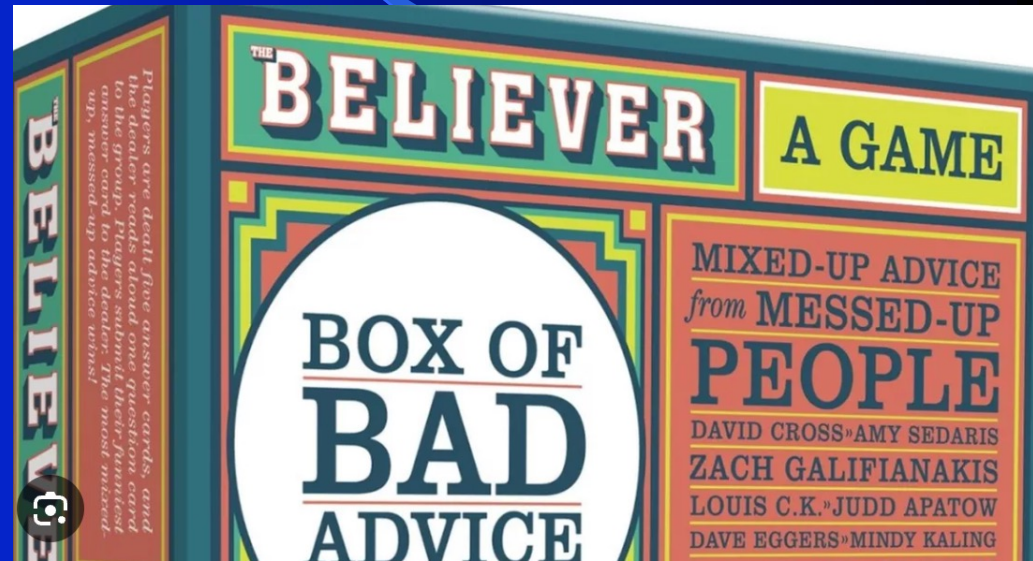
## Anxiety → Poor Performance





# What advice are we given?

- Just relax
- Don't be nervous
- It's just a race
- Try to zone out
- Don't worry... be happy



# Anxiety: Obstacle?

**I'm always nervous.**

If I wasn't nervous,  
it would be weird.

I get the same feeling  
at all the big races.

It's part of a routine,  
and I accept it.

It means I'm there  
and *I'm ready.* —ALLYSON FELIX

**RUNNER'S WORLD**



The most decorated  
female track and field  
athlete in Olympic  
history

# Negative / anxious thoughts...

Write down a negative, anxious thought or story that your mind tells you

**before** a big race

**during** a race

or **during** a tough workout.

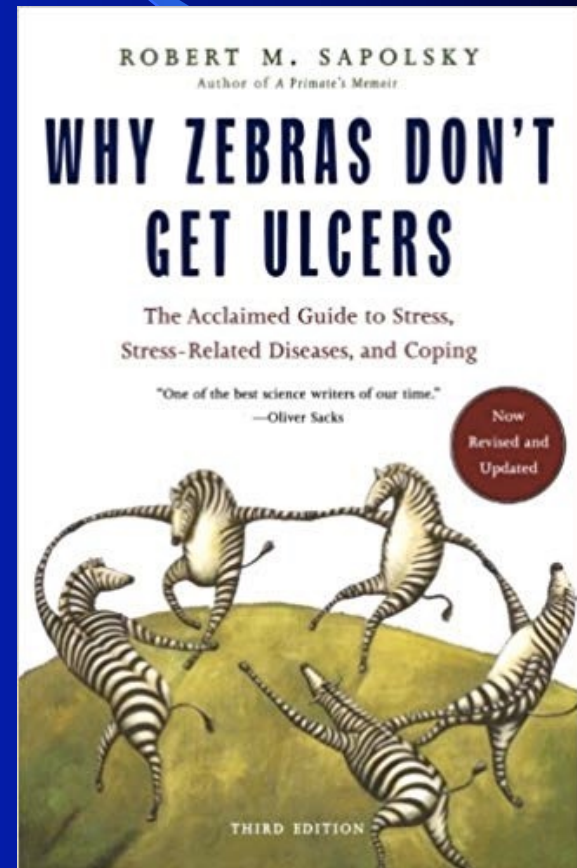


# The nature of your mind

- ❖ The mind is a *Problem-Solver*
- ❖ Your thoughts ARE NOT you  
(Demons on the ship)
- ❖ The aim is NOT to get rid of unwanted thoughts, but rather to see them for what they are – just thoughts – and then *defuse* from them
- Volunteers for some practice

# Focusing on what's important

- ❑ Zebras don't respond to *thoughts* of lions, they respond only to real lions
- ❑ Contrast this with what we (humans) do



# When a negative-anxious thought arises

- i. Notice it (thought, worry, sensation)*
- ii. Make space for it and then let go  
(Remember de-fusing strategies)*
- iii. Refocus in the present moment*





Setbacks are inevitable. Progression isn't a straight line. COVID wiped out my freshman year. I suffered a stress fracture the next year. I learned a lot from that injury, like how to push when the future is unknown.

I've had iron deficiency issues that set me back. Each injury or setback, I ask, 'what can I learn from this?' And the big lessons I have learned are to trust my training, not overthink things, and control the controllables: **Focusing on the process more than the outcome.**

# Can you focus on the process more than the outcome?



I will \_\_\_\_\_  
for \_\_\_\_\_ days  
so I can \_\_\_\_\_.

# Embrace the Race!

## Commit to

- ✓ competing (*strive together* for excellence)
- ✓ the present moment
- ✓ *surfing the urge* when you feel like slowing or when the mind starts to go negative
- ✓ viewing Race Day as an opportunity; as a day to celebrate all your training; a day for fun!

