



# BROOKLYN\_BORN

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## The power of community and resources to increase motivation

Monday, January 07, 2013

I've written once that change has to come from within and that's still true. However, a community of like-minded people provided with resources can fuel that change and keep it recharged.

Since retirement 5 years ago I've lived in a rural area with a large retired population. I had become somewhat of a hermit. I do have church activities (25 miles away) and a small gym (10 miles away) and a few neighbors on my country road, but so many of the area activities are aimed at people with different needs and interests than me.

Fortunately, I found SP and my "imaginary" friends to keep me on-track for a healthy lifestyle. The online information, advice and support are wonderful.

Still I've noticed that my distance activities (running/walking/biking/swimming) have been reduced since retirement. My aerobic/weights class twice a week is very good, but my max time on a treadmill or stationary bike is less than an hour.

The roads are dangerous, - curvy, narrow, no shoulders. You really can't run or bike on them. I stay close to home where neighbors are used to "the lady who runs" and repeat ½ mile loops like a caged hamster.

The only indoor pool is 25 miles away and lap lanes are limited by numerous water aerobics and arthritis classes – very valuable for those who need them, but sharing a lane with a flip turning guy in a speedo or an oblivious backstroker can be dangerous in itself.

It's been years since I've run a race longer than a 5K.

Yesterday, almost on a whim, I drove 25 miles in a different direction and joined a community event kicking off their "100 mile in 100 days challenge." Of course, we are encouraged to do more than that according to ability and the levels of fitness of the participants at the event varied greatly.

My first surprise was the location. It was a lovely, wide, paved trail at least 25 miles long judging from the mile markers – flat, scenic and safe. I walked 5 miles so I could interact with people and it was great. Real people with similar goals and interests! OK, it's still a drive, but no further than I drive to church, to swim or even to WalMart.

When I came home from the event, I joined a new SP team (The Virtual Walk/Run Challenge) where we log our distance traveling across America. Thanks SuzyMobile for telling me about this. I've also resolved to use the new trail to increase my mileage.

We'll see how it goes. I know well how illness, injury or a stretch of bad weather can dampen enthusiasm and motivation, but as for now I'm ready for a new challenge. 300 miles in 100 days is my goal, but even more important, at the end of that time I want to have increased my "long" runs from 5 miles to 10.

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**SWEDE\_SU**  
sounds like a great idea!  
3079 days ago



**SATCHMO99**  
Hi,



Have you read LDRichel's blog "The high cost of NOT running"? It is a wonderful article, and may help you justify gas costs to get to a safe place to run. Varying your route is always worthwhile anyway, as it brings so many benefits in terms of scenery and terrain.  
[http://www.sparkpeople.com/mypage\\_public\\_journal\\_individual.asp?blog\\_id=4980571](http://www.sparkpeople.com/mypage_public_journal_individual.asp?blog_id=4980571)

I am blessed to live in a city with hundreds of miles of "red routes" which are paths wide enough for four people abreast. The routes aren't tagged onto traffic routes, they are round lakes and villages and there are well lit underpasses to avoid road intersections.

You are worth the benefits you get from being fit.  
3080 days ago



**CD8467616**  
Good for you!



3080 days ago



**SUZYMOBILE**  
I'm so happy that you found this new place! I hope the weather treats you kindly, so that you can get there every day.



And you sure are right about a community of like-minded people with resources. My life is changing because of just such a thing, right now.



Your Little Imaginary  
3080 days ago



**SOUTH\_FORK**  
I grew up in a rural area, where the local roads were very similar to what you are describing. While we had acreage, there were few opportunities to go beyond your own property safely... How fun to have a new venue for walking/running. What more could you ask for???? Flat, scenic, safe- I hope there are some nice folks out there on your next visit!  
3080 days ago



**DAISYBELL6**  
The new venue sounds fantastic. I hope it works out for you. I also love the 100 mile challenge. I'm going to look for something similar in my area.  
3080 days ago



**COCK-ROBIN**  
May you have all the luck you need. You're doing great!  
3080 days ago



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**CD8113065**

300 miles in 100 days should be very doable. Driving 25 miles sounds like a great incentive to log as much distance as possible simply to justify the long drive.



Best of luck.  
3080 days ago



**BOILHAM**

Too bad about the local road conditions that prevent you from getting out there for the long runs. That is so cool that you found a nice place to run not too far away. Good luck with your new goal!!



3080 days ago



**SYNCHRODAD**

Rural area, rural roads, rural life, sort of. Get a mountain bike, go looking and get off road. The hamster in you will be released and become the cheetah (cheetah on a bike, a stretch, gimme' a break here) that is on the inside. There must be trails around there somewhere? Some of funnest times I've had are trail running. Just have to watch what you are doing a bit. Go cheetah!



3080 days ago



**WILSONWR**

Sounds great! You've found something local that gives you a nice change of scenery (and a challenge!).



3080 days ago



**HPSANDDOLLAR**

Great plan.



3080 days ago

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