



## Comfort Zones you have to push the envelope...

By Peter Hobson

Every morning in Africa a gazelle wakes up. It knows it must run faster than the fastest lion or it will be killed.

Every morning a lion wakes up. It knows it must outrun the slowest gazelle or it will starve to death.

It doesn't matter whether you are a lion or a gazelle – when the sun comes up – you had better be running!

Ah running! Even those of us who do it every day really hate it sometimes (most times actually, as I get older and grumpier). I think I hold the world record for running the infamous Everest Marathon in 2005 with no outdoor training at all.

Yes, you did read that right. I never ran a single yard outside of the gym before I committed myself to 26.2 miles at 17,000 feet.

However, pounding mile after mile, hour after hour on a gymnasium treadmill is a wonderfully contemplative opportunity, and a great perspective from which to watch one's fellow gym users. Which brings me on to this month's topic for discussion, comfort zones.

You see so many people in the gym, with the very best of intentions. They've actually done the hard bit and pulled



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themselves out of the chair, away from the TV, and now they want to do whatever it is they want to do.

Tone up, lose weight, build their bodies, stay young, whatever. So I watch them in those narcissistic mirrors that all gyms seem to be festooned with, moving from one piece of apparatus to the next, rarely breaking sweat, adjusting the weights so they are just comfortable, and stopping to change machines as soon as the exercise becomes uncomfortable. I'm sure they feel a psychological benefit, but I have seen little evidence over the years of any physical benefit, because it's all just too comfortable. If you want

to get faster, fitter, stronger, you've got to push the envelope. It's got to hurt. Even a growing child gets growing pains.

And the gym is a metaphor for life. If you want to get better, more successful, richer, happier, you've got to push out of your comfortable ways and stretch yourself a little. Think. Think now. Particularly at this time of the year. How many goals have you set, plans have you made, dreams have you dreamed, about making your life better than it is now, but you just haven't been able to break out of the comfort zone to make it happen?

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