



Runner's World The Runner's Brain: How to Think Smarter to Run Better

Jeff Brown , Liz Neporent

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As a runner, your biggest asset (or sometimes your greatest enemy) is your brain. What you think and feel on and off the road also has a huge influence over how you perform once you lace up.

Runner's World The Runner's Brain shows you how to unlock and capture the miraculous potential of the body's most mysterious and intriguing organ and rewire your mind for a lifetime of athletic success. The book is based on cutting-edge brain science and sports psychology that author Dr. Jeff Brown uses every day in his private practice and as part of the medical team of several major road races including the Boston Marathon.

Full of fascinating insights from runners of all abilities—including champion marathoner Meb Keflezighi and other greats—the book includes trustworthy information that's been proven to work both in the lab and on the road.

Runner's World The Runner's Brain: How to Think Smarter to Run Better Details

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Author : Jeff Brown , Liz Neporent

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From Reader Review Runner's World The Runner's Brain: How to Think Smarter to Run Better for online ebook

Tess Reyes says

The Runner's Brain is an informative guide that provides insight into the mental aspect of one of the most rigorous sports. The advice of Jeff Brown, a member of the Boston Marathon medical team and psychiatry professor at Harvard, conditions the mind to think in a way that best influences one's potential for success. Organized into chapters, each devoted to discussing one out of a range of topics from training motivation, to staying focused during race day, to strategizing, and even touching on magical thinking, this book provides the tools and tips necessary to perform at your highest potential.

Personally, as an avid runner myself, I found this book really amazing in helping me to improve. I have noticed my racing mindset to be more confident after referring to this book throughout both my indoor and outdoor track seasons. As a result, I have been able to race more competitively with the advice I have gathered. I would recommend this guide, which is formatted in a really easy to understand, accessible manner, to anyone who is also a fan of running, whether you are a professional or someone who is looking forward to starting. I guarantee you that you will not only see improvement, but also the sport of running in a whole new light: one that is as mentally demanding as it is physically.

Tom says

A bit lightweight - some of the "science" belongs in a shampoo ad or is based on tiny sample sizes - but it's usually entertaining and there are plenty of mental tricks, ideas and inspirations to refer back to. One or any of these could liven, change or speed up my running and it'll be fun finding out which.

There's a section of detailed quotations and thoughts from some of the great runners and coaches. Those are valuable and well worth having together in one place for easy reference (rather than across magazines and websites.)

Crystal says

I started reading this after running a marathon in which I mentally gave up a little more than halfway through. I was hoping to learn more about why and how I can prevent this in future races. While most of the material in this book was interesting and informative, much of it was stuff I had read many times before and some of it was just trivial (for example, if you want to think like a runner, dress like a runner). There were a few key takeaways though, and I will keep those in mind while training for and running future races.

Owen says

This is an interesting book and probably will get all sorts of ratings. If you know most of the information you won't be impressed, but if you learn a lot of new things you'll think it valuable. Some examples:

Good luck charms - the right type will make you run better. (Item should be portable, and remind you of your own abilities.)

Dress like a runner.

Run in groups.

At race speed think about the running and feedback from your body. At lower training speeds think about other things, music, talk or let your mind wander.

visualize

Learn to or pretend to love hills or any other hard challenge.

When hurt or sick, stay social with other runners.

Dr. says

Foundational intro to basic sports psychology.

Josh says

Provided some great ideas about how to conquer some brain negativity!

Neil Gaudet says

Solid book. A bit obvious at times but still enjoyable for a runner. Kind of reads like a long article (very long) from Runners World

Dave says

A good solid read.

Steph says

Need running mojo? #3wordbookreview

Every now and then my enthusiasm for running wanes. Rather than give up, and lose the hard won fitness I've gained, I read a book about running and that usually motivates me to keep going.

There wasn't a lot that was new in here, but good to learn some tricks for the brain. I especially liked reading the stories included about elite runners. Nice to know they struggle at times too!

Mateo Fisher says

Honestly, not much here you can't figure out with some google searches. I picked up this book because I enjoy running, and have tried different mental techniques, but not really anything formal. I know basically how to become a better runner physically, but I was curious about any mental techniques that people use as an edge. The main answer? People do all kinds of things, so just do what works for you. Some people disassociate, some associate, some do both, but the best runners probably associate, but if you're one of the best runners you already know that and don't need this book, and if you're not you can just google it...and probably don't this book.

Tim Thompson says

This particular book was okay, just okay. I had higher expectations heading into it, as I have read several books and articles on brain research. Unfortunately my high hopes were largely left unmet. The author is a psychologist with a special interest in how the brain impacts athletic performance. There were several solid ideas and strategies scattered throughout the book, but much of it came off as light and fluffy, pop-psychology, at least to me. Much of the discussions were repetitive and geared toward beginning runners. Some of the techniques were not very convincing.

Overall the book was solidly average.

The chapter I expected to like the least, actually left me with some of the best ideas to help support my running. This chapter was on goal setting. As an educator, I have dealt with this subject at length during my 21 year career. I thought I knew it all when it comes to goal setting, but I was definitely surprised. The author took a novel approach and really caught my attention. He suggested setting three goals at three separate levels for each race or running task you want to improve. Set a BEST, GREAT, and GOOD goal. Then you have at least three levels of achievement to reach for as you take on the task. This is a nice way to focus on the process of running and not get wrapped up on one unreachable goal. Growth as a runner can be done in large bounds or baby steps or a little of both. I plan to implement this goal setting technique right away.

Another idea that struck me was visualization. This might come in handy for me, as I often race several of the same races year in and year out. The author suggested visualizing how the race might go, or focusing on a particular segment of a race. He mentioned using all of your five senses as you imagine the scene in your head. This serves to further cement the vision in your brain. This will be a challenge! I tend to fixate on the visual when I create a racing image in my head, and neglect the other four senses. I have started trying this strategy out and I'm excited to see how it might help me in the future.

As I said the book is average. It might have something you are looking for as a runner. I did find several strong points throughout, but I still have to hold back from giving it a ringing endorsement.

L says

Great information.

Robin says

Despite the utterly ridiculous quote I will share, this book wasn't all terrible. It has good reminders to set goals both big and small, to use positive self talk, to identify oneself as a runner, and to visualize. Those are all a good idea, however much I hated visualizations with my high school cross country team.

This book, however, was way too long for the small amount of useful material inside, and one chapter on how to dress (? seriously ?) was laughable. If it'd been the first chapter, I'd have chucked the book straight back to the library without continuing.

"Once you have identified the article of clothing that symbolizes what you hope for in your run, put it on. Accessorize with the complimentary hat, sunglasses, and even water bottle that most accurately match your desired state of being."

And now it's time to rest my own runner's brain so I can crush my 8 miler tomorrow. Look, it's working already. If only I knew my desired state of being - how ever will I choose my water bottle?

Danielle Bessette says

A few helpful tips, but this is predominately written for new runners.

Courtney Jack says

The book The Runner's Brain, by Dr.Jeff Brown and Liz Neporent, is about how runners can advance their performance based merely on the mental outlook on their runs. There are 5 parts to the book, and 20 chapters in the book. The five parts in the book are called "Running and your brain," "Brain Strategies," "Training and Racing," "challenges," and "Resources For Runners." The longest out of the book is section 2, it is 6 chapters. It is like this because Dr.Jeff Brown gives a lot of detail on how running affects your brain. In this book, Dr.Jeff Brown also tells stories on his past experience on the medical team at the Boston Marathon, and quotes throughout the book successful runners and athletes.

In the first three parts of the book, Dr.Jeff Brown talks about three different topics. The first part, "Running and Your Brain" is based on his experience in the Boston Marathon, 5 ways running affects your brain and what it can do for your brain, and how when identifying yourself as a runner forms your identity as one. In the second part, "Brain Strategies" the book is about how goal setting can help you, the task of visualizing and focusing and how to do it to your advantage. The second part also talk about how to train your brain to respond to running. Most of all the second part of the book goes over finding your running bliss and how positive thinking will lead to positive outcomes, and how dressing like a runner will actually make you perform better. Then finally in section three it's kinda a given what it's about considering the title of it is, "Training And Racing" is obviously about racing, speed, and post races jitters. In fact one of the chapters

goes into weather you should race, and a chapter is even called “Managing Competition: OverComing pre-race jitters and post-race blues.” This chapter is especially helpful for runners who race, because any runner who has raced before would know these are two very hard things that comes with every race.

In the last two chapters of the book the author goes over two very helpful things. The 4th part of the book is titled “Challenges,” goes over the things that runners need to do to overcome certain challenges that most runners encounter. Like for example who to psyche yourself up to run in any kind of weather. It tells you how to be just as ready to run in the rain, as you would be to run in perfect weather, this goes for the same when it comes to running in hot weather. Another very helpful challenge that it teaches runner how to deal with is running on a treadmill, because sometimes the weather outside isn’t always fit to run in sometimes forces runners to run on the treadmill instead, which is evidently not the easiest thing for some runners to do because they simply get bored just running and going nowhere. Then the last part of the book is called, “Resources For Runners” this chapter fits the saying, “save the best for last” perfectly. This part of the book is referred to throughout the book because it’s a collection of three different already written things a runner can use to become better. The first one is a worksheet called “Healthy Mind and Body”, that is a set of a goal setting worksheet, a visualization project, and 4 other very useful things that every runner could use to feel better, and evaluate their feeling with their performance as a runner. Another thing in the last part of the book is the seven step fit brain training plan, which helps runners to be a better runner mentally. The last part is used to be inspiring to runners, because it’s just what the title says, it’s about learning how some of the best/most successful runners in world history think. It’s about all the things you can do to think like a successful runner, and thereforth become a more successful runner mentally.

I would definitely recommend this book to any body who runs. I would recommend this to anybody who runs because one of the many great things about this book is that, it’s not written to benefit a certain level runner. The tips and skills in it can help somebody who just started running. Along with the tips and skills, it makes taking on running a lot less scary. The book also benefits experienced runners because it gives good tips on how to improve your running, and it helps runners mentally become better at running.
